



October 27, 2020

Dear Everett Public Schools' families,

Please watch [this video](#) from Dr. Saltzman about the timing of students returning to school buildings.

The district would like to share the difficult decision the board and superintendent have made to remain in fully remote learning until January 11, at which time we will begin bringing our youngest students back only if health conditions allow. This does not apply to the Developmental Kindergarten, Developmental Pre-K, Life Skills and Strive students whom we plan to bring back to the classroom on November 16. This is a two-week adjustment from the original announcement. This adjustment is being made to allow for more time to complete IEPs, transfer caseloads, continue training and finalize plans.

Waiting until after winter break was not an easy decision, but we do not want to transition to hybrid learning only to have to close buildings again due to infections. We also want to provide consistent, stable information for families, so they do not worry about information and conditions changing weekly.

We realize this may be disappointing for many of our students, families, and staff, but we believe it is necessary due to the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases over the previous several weeks.

In addition to the amazing volume of community feedback we have received through our Let's Connect sessions, as part of our decision-making we review several metrics weekly to determine if the time is right for a return to school. At this time, our prime concern and the reason for our delay to in-person learning is growth in COVID-19 positive cases in Snohomish County. We will continue to track the health metrics below and provide regular updates on the trends we are seeing.

Current Metrics 10/22/2020

- Snohomish Health District – Total number of cases over the last 14 days per 100,000 residents
 - Status: 101.1 (prior week 70.6)
 - Trend: Increasing
- Testing positivity rate (target <2%)
 - 4.6% (previous week 4.0%)
 - Trend: Increasing

- Number of COVID-19 cases in Everett Public Schools buildings
 - 5 cases in last 2 weeks

When we initiated plans to bring elementary students back into classrooms, the rate of cases in Snohomish County was 42 cases per 100,000 residents over a 14-day period. Considering the current level of transmission and the steady increase we have observed over the last several weeks, we do not feel that we can successfully mitigate risks to health and safety if we are to bring larger numbers of students back into our school buildings

What this means:

- Elementary students will only be brought back for broad in-person learning January 11 or after. Any decision at that time will be subject to review of the health data conditions for Snohomish County.
- Secondary students will only be brought back for broad in-person learning for the second semester of the school year. Any decision at that time will be subject to review of the health data conditions for Snohomish County.

We will continue to provide in-person services for our most vulnerable students as allowed by Department of Health guidance.

Please read our [Family COVID safety handbook](#), which will help answer questions you may have regarding what it may look like when students return to the classroom. Also, there is a return to building [Frequently Asked Questions](#) you may find helpful.

We understand there are still some unanswered questions about what the hybrid models will look like on the remote days, what the schedules will be and if students can be guaranteed their same teacher, to name a few. We will be answering those questions and more in the next several weeks.

We know the date of January 11 may be impactful to many of you and we did not make this decision lightly. Our commitment to providing the best education to our students remains strong as we all navigate this historic and disruptive time. We appreciate all you are doing as we continue our partnership for student success.

Be safe and be well,

Dr. Ian Saltzman