



Reedsport School District 105

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Today, with Governor Brown's announcement, all Oregon school districts were reminded that education in Oregon is an ever-changing landscape. Staff in our Reedsport School District have up till recently been working on the safety considerations involved with opening the school buildings for the Fall of 2020. Their focus has been toward a HYBRID model which would allow for both IN-PERSON/in the building instruction and remote/ONLINE instruction. IN-PERSON models require a great deal of safety considerations be addressed. ONLINE models require less safety with a higher demand on technology and family supports. Both require substantial planning and communication. Families in our community have largely expressed their desire to have students return to the buildings IN-PERSON this fall while some continue to need the option of a flexible or ONLINE model of instruction. The building level planning teams *were* going to look at details that each building would need to address for Fall with a HYBRID model.

With today's announcement, Governor Brown provided clarity for all Oregon Schools about the timing for schools to open their doors to IN-PERSON instruction. First, Oregon will require that the entire state demonstrate decreased numbers of virus cases and that the number of cases be at or below a specific level. Then, Oregon school districts will be required to examine their counties number of virus cases for a decreased number at or below a specified level. Again, before schools can consider opening, Oregon must be "open" and then the individual counties must be "open" for students to be in the buildings. There is more to this directive but this is the core value of what we know. Oregon is currently closed to students being in school buildings. Oregon is trending positively toward being able to reopen school buildings. Douglas County is also closed to students being in school building. Douglas County is trending negatively and moving away from school buildings being opened. Both the State of Oregon and Douglas County must show decreased numbers of cases of the virus and be at or below a specific number before students can return to the brick and mortar school buildings. Education will continue in the Reedsport School District. It appears the entire state will be starting school with ONLINE platforms at this time under the new direction from the Governor and the Health Authority. Along with many of you, I am hopeful that our state and county can get control of the number of cases of the virus so that school buildings can reopen. Please use social distancing, wear a face covering, and wash your hands. We can all do our part to get students back in the school buildings.

Last spring, Reedsport School District along with the entire state was thrust into a statewide school building closure. Teachers everywhere went from being experienced staff to "first-year" teachers as they navigated the changes in how to instruct students through remote methods. It was certainly a time of learning and growth for both students and staff. In light of this, please know that we are committed to a rigorous model of instruction and one that increases the amount of time spent between staff and student; especially compared with last spring. The Reedsport School District will be ready with an

ONLINE platform. We will also have a HYBRID plan ready so that as soon as we are able to open school buildings safely to students, we will do so. At this time, we will shift our focus to ONLINE planning first and will follow with our HYBRID plan for in person instruction later. We remain hopeful that the state and county will meet the guidelines for our school buildings to reopen as quickly as possible. We can all do our part in this.

In preparing for ONLINE instruction, we are aware that families struggled to provide opportunity for students to access instruction online due to a variety of conflicts. We will be planning for models to reduce the amount of requirement of family members. We will be planning for models to increase the amount of direct connection between student and staff. We will be planning for our model to be nimble and translate quickly between fully ONLINE and HYBRID models with students and staff able to switch between instructional models in response to the ever-changing education climate. We will be planning to create increased WiFi hotspots to increase access for our students wherever possible. We will be planning multiple scenarios for online instruction. Note, Reedsport School District has exceeded the state cap on students transferring to virtual online charters. As a result, no student transfers requests of this kind will be approved until we fall back under the cap. This means that we will be prepared to serve all students residing in our boundary going forward.

With today's news, we are even more committed to keeping you informed of changes that occur. Many people have expressed shock in the rapid change of thinking that occurred today from HYBRID planning to ONLINE planning. Knowing how quickly things can change and have changed, communication remains extremely important and remains a commitment of the district.

In preparation of the start of the 2020-2021 school year, there are 2 major dates to be aware of. First, in response to all of the changes in the health climate around us, we will open a new survey to families the week of August 10 through August 15. We will have additional questions as well as similar questions to our first survey. We know that some families may feel the need to change some of their responses from the first survey. We would appreciate everyone taking the survey again and answering in the way that reflects how they currently feel. That survey will be used in helping us with registration and with any plans toward reopening the buildings.

Second, August 19, 2020 will be registration for both buildings. We are installing a new software system for the district and hope to have it ready for use prior to registration. If that is the case, registration this year could be in an online format. We will keep families posted on this status as we get closer to the actual time.

There will be new questions on the survey and registration material about transportation. With the current state of the pandemic, the use of bus transportation will evolve. Accurate data will help us do our best planning in the area of transportation. We have heard anecdotes ranging from families need school buses to families don't want extra risks of the virus through bussing. We will need to hear from you. Please answer all questions of the survey and all parts of the registration forms

This is all very challenging. Our job is to create the best possible education system we can. We will tap into the strengths of our staff. We will call on the continued support of our community. We will serve the needs of each student in our district. In an ever-changing climate, we need to continue to hear from families. We thank you for the time you put in to doing this. We will get through this together. Stay safe.

Jon Zwemke
Superintendent