



CASHMERE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ensuring a Quality Education for Every Kid

District Communication & FAQ

The Cashmere School District is looking forward to reopening all schools for full-time in-person learning starting on Wednesday, September 1, 2021. The following frequently asked questions (FAQ) document was created to share details of what students, their families, community members, and school staff can expect this year. Additional information on returning to school will be shared by your student's school principal and teachers in the coming weeks.

This information is subject to change and will be updated as requirements change.

What will school look like this fall?

OSPI, DOH, and the Governor's Office share the expectation that **all** students will have the opportunity to attend full time in-person learning (five days per week) K-12.

Will students have an online option for learning?

Yes. While we strongly believe the best option is in-person, live instruction, the Cashmere School District will offer a distance learning option for K-12 students who choose to remain remote this Fall. For parents interested in this option, please contact your building principal. Students intending to pursue this option to start the school year must notify the school prior to Friday, August 27th.

Will schools be required to screen all students, staff, and visitors for symptoms?

No. For summer 2021 and the 2021–22 school year, DOH removed the requirement that schools need to screen students, staff, and visitors at entry to school buildings (temperature and COVID-19 questioning). Nevertheless, our schools will continue monitoring students, staff, and visitors for symptoms, and follow the protocols included in the DOH guidance for responding to someone who shows symptoms of COVID-19.

Will schools be required to group students in consistent pods to support risk mitigation, aka “cohorting”?

No. This mitigation strategy is no longer required by the DOH.

Will face coverings be required for students, staff, and visitors?

Yes (Indoors). The Governor, OSPI, and DOH have made it clear that all school personnel, volunteers, visitors, and students must wear cloth face coverings regardless of vaccination status while at school, when indoors, and when riding school transportation.

No (Outdoors). Outdoor masking is not required.

LEGAL REFERENCES: MASKING

In a recent letter to board members and superintendents, State Superintendent Reykdal informed School Board Directors and Superintendents that: “By constitutional authority and [RCW 28A.300.040](#), one of the state Superintendent's clear powers is, “supervision over all matters pertaining to the public schools of the state.” “Apportionment amounts and timing are shaped by additional law but let me be clear: Boards or districts that intentionally disobey, dismiss, or shun an explicit law, including a Governor's executive order, which has the power of law, will see an immediate halt to their basic education apportionment, and their federal funds that

come through OSPI.” For further clarification and legal references regarding masking requirements review [this message](#) from State Superintendent Chris Reykdal.

What mitigation procedures will be in place to protect staff and students?

Physical Distancing: DOH recommends 3 feet of physical distancing in classrooms and 6 feet elsewhere to the greatest extent possible. The language in the guidance is flexible (i.e., “to the greatest extent possible” and “to the degree possible and reasonable”) ensuring that schools are able to provide full-time, in-person, instruction to every student and family who wants it. If a school needs to distance at less than 6 feet in common areas and less than 3 feet in classrooms to accommodate all students and staff, it is allowable within the guidance.

Ventilation & Disinfecting: All Heating, Ventilation and Cooling Systems (HVAC) have been adjusted to maximize outside air intake and to provide 3-4 air exchanges per hour. In addition, all classrooms are equipped with air purification systems. Regular cleaning and disinfecting routines will remain in place from the previous school year.

Transportation & Bussing: To ensure ventilation and airflow on school buses and motor pool vehicles, windows will be cracked during operation. All passengers and drivers will wear masks. Physical distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

Quarantine Protocols: Have been updated to reduce student exclusions. The close contact definition excludes students who were at least 3 feet away from an infected student when (a) Both students were wearing face coverings/masks and (b) Other prevention strategies were in place. Exemptions from quarantine include:
(a) Close contacts who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms,
(b) Close contacts who had confirmed COVID-19 in the past 3 months, have recovered and have no symptoms
Note: In both cases above, although quarantine is not required, these individuals should still watch for symptoms and get tested should symptoms develop. For more details, you can review the most current guidance from the DOH for this Fall [HERE](#).

Will the COVID-19 Vaccine be required for eligible students in the Fall of 2021?

No. The State Board of Health, who has the sole authority to set immunization requirements for students, has not discussed requiring the COVID-19 vaccine for children in school settings. However, as per DOH and CDC recommendations, we encourage vaccination among all eligible students, staff, and volunteers.

Can a local school district decide to mandate the vaccine for students, even if the state doesn't?

No. State law ([RCW 28A.210.140](#)) provides full authority to the State Board of Health to establish the procedural and substantive requirements for immunizations for students.

Additional COVID-19 K-12 Resources:

COVID-19 guidance and resources for schools can also be found on the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website.

CDC: Schools and Child Care webpage links to a number of national public health recommendation documents for K-12 schools and childcare providers.