

Dear Cashmere School District Families,

We truly appreciate the support and grace our community and families have demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout our pandemic response, the Cashmere School District's goal has been to provide an option for a return to full-day school for as many students as possible per Department of Health (DOH) official's recommendations. We are committed to keeping our families informed and recognize there is much interest in the district's response to the change in guidelines by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Governor's Office as announced on March 25th, 2021.

The DOH's adoption of the CDC's three (3) foot physical distancing rule in classrooms brings us one step closer to a return to normal, *but there are some important details we must keep in mind*. Currently, we are already planning for larger groups of students, how students will enter and exit the building, on-site lunches, increased cleaning demands, and enhanced ventilation to name a few. These details impact our ability to bring additional students into schools sooner and require careful planning on the part of the district. Further considerations from the guidance include:

- The three (3) feet of physical distancing allowed is only between students in classroom settings. The guidance still requires six (6) feet between staff/staff and staff/students;
- Cohorting (keeping a group of students together throughout the day) is also recommended if the three (3) feet of physical distance is adopted;
- Six (6) feet is still required when masks can't be worn (at lunchtime for example), in common areas (like hallways and foyers) and during certain activities where there may be heavy breathing (like choir or PE);
- Even with the three (3) foot physical distancing rule being implemented, in the event of a reported positive case of COVID-19, we must contact trace and potentially quarantine all individuals within six (6) feet of the positive individual;
- When there is high community transmission, middle and high school students should stay six (6) feet apart, if cohorting is not possible. (Per Dr. Butler at CDCH, "community" is defined as Chelan County when considering transmission rates)

These details in the guidance are very important because they require us to do extra planning to keep everyone safe in our schools, which takes time and requires us to think differently than we have before.

Please know that our team is working hard to get more kids back in school and our community back to normal. We ask for your patience as we rework past practices, collaborate with staff and our local health department and implement these recommendations (and all of their important details).

Here is a link to view the Washington State Department of Health three (3) foot physical distancing in classrooms [guidance](#).

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/FallGuidanceK-12.pdf> .

With this in mind, your voice is critical to our planning process. Soon, you will receive a survey asking you to indicate if your child will be returning to full day instruction. We will provide as many details as

possible within the survey to guide your decision-making process. In addition, if you have multiple students in our schools, we are also requesting you complete the survey for each individual student so that we can get specific information for differing grade levels. Your input is invaluable to us as we strive to provide an option for a return to full-day school for as many students as possible, and we thank you in advance for completing the survey. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to your teachers, principals, or the district office with questions, concerns, or comments.

Sincerely,

Glenn Johnson