

November 18, 2020

Dear Ridgefield Families,

I am writing to you today to share the latest news regarding our planned return to in-person instruction for our youngest learners. The Ridgefield School District is delaying the start of in-person instruction for kindergarten until Tuesday, January 5, 2021. This decision weighs heavily on me, as I am well aware of the social/emotional toll and academic struggles that remote learning has on many of our students and families.

Currently, we are experiencing precipitous growth in the 14-day COVID activity rate. In fact, the ascending rates across our state led to Governor Jay Inslee mandating new community restrictions earlier this week to slow community spread. While schools were not named in the order, the Ridgefield School District is delaying our return to in-person instruction until after winter break in hopes that COVID transmission rates will have stabilized.

As I have shared with you from the beginning of the pandemic, our plan for a return to in-person instruction has always been based on a safe and sensible approach. While empirical evidence suggests that in-person school is safe and does not necessarily contribute to community spread, the unknowns associated with the current county conditions make delaying our return the sensible choice.

While I understand that January 5 may feel far away, we are fortunate to have Winter Break from December 19 - January 4. Pausing our plan just a little provides valuable time for the new restrictions to mitigate the rise in community cases.

The COVID-19 Activity Level is not (nor has it ever been) the only metric public health and school districts use in referencing a potential return to in-person learning. However, with the rapid increase over the past few weeks, this is an important metric in this decision at this time.

I am thankful for your continued patience and support of the Ridgefield School District. Stay well and remain #RidgefieldResilient.

Sincerely,



Dr. Nathan McCann
Superintendent