

January 5, 2021

Dear Ridgefield Families,

Happy New Year! We welcomed back kindergarten students to in-person instruction today. I thank each of you for your patience as we safely and sensibly navigated to this point. Last night my kindergarten-age son, Declan, told Amanda and me that today was going to be the best day ever because he would get to see his teacher in-person at school.



As I shared before winter break, the Ridgefield School District plans to return elementary students through a phase-in approach. This phased approach allows the District to refine mitigation strategies and monitor COVID activity as we judiciously add more students. Our process is in line with guidance from OSPI and Public Health. We have added the inclusion of 5th grade on February 8 in our phased approach.



- Kindergarten starts Tuesday, January 5
- 1st grade starts Tuesday, January 19
- 2nd grade starts Monday, January 25
- 3rd grade starts Monday, February 1
- 4th and 5th grade starts Monday, February 8 (tentative - pending limited transmission at school sites)

You may be wondering why the District has changed our in-person instructional model to AM/PM cohorts for grades K-5. The District worked collaboratively with teachers to devise this new schedule. Given the current COVID-19 activity rate in Clark County, the AM/PM model provides some unique and pertinent benefits. These include keeping student cohorts tight, limiting the number of teaching staff that need to report in-person (for example, our specialists can remain remote). Most importantly, our students will receive intensive in-person instruction four days a week. Currently, this plan runs through March 4th. We will monitor the effectiveness of this instructional model when considering options for the third trimester.

With the opportunity for parents and students to select between in-person and remote instruction for grades K-5, our attention now turns towards grades 6-12. We have a responsibility to provide the same opportunities and choices for all students. We are actively working on plans that will provide the opportunity for secondary students to return when conditions allow. More information will be forthcoming. To the families of the Class of 2021, please know, we are committed to prioritizing your return to the high school.

I want to thank all the families that shared photos of their traditions and holiday celebrations with the District. If the holiday season was a bit too busy and you didn't find time to share, it is not too late. You can still send pictures of your family celebrating meaningful traditions in your household to student.photos@ridgefieldsd.org.



Stay well and remain #RidgefieldResilient.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nathan McCann
Superintendent