



January 13, 2021

Dear students, staff, families and community,

Thank you to all of our Junior High and Senior High School parents for completing last week's survey choosing between remote and hybrid learning for your children. We have been using that information to plan for the transition on February 2nd. For more information, please plan to join the [MBJH and MBHS Community Forum](#) tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m.

As most of you know, the research is telling us that with the proper safety precautions in place, school is a safe place for students to learn at this time. Our schools are committed to following the guidance from the Health Department and Center for Disease Control to ensure that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 while on campus is remarkably low. The following considerations factor into the decision to implement secondary hybrid learning and increase the number of hours we offer in person instruction at the elementary level:

1. 0.0% transmission rates in our county schools, to date. Schools are not adding to the increase in cases in Whatcom County.
2. From the beginning, our benchmark criteria has been the county Health Department's guidance. We are not health experts and we collectively decided early on to use them as our expert voice.
3. The Health Department has approved us to return to in person learning for all grade levels.
4. There are a number of counties in our state that have considerably more cases per 100,000 than we do. Some are over 1000 and are providing in person learning without in school transmission.
5. The Health Department is not using "hard and fast" metrics, but looking at trends in specific areas. The original metrics proved to not be helpful for schools as we have had 0.0% transmissions in various school settings. They are looking at a few areas of interest, or criteria, for on-going decisions. Those include a) hospital rates and capacity, b) transmission rates in school, and c) contact tracing systems (ensuring they aren't overwhelmed).
6. The Health Department expects us to peak (post holidays). These high numbers do not make them change their guidance for opening to in person learning, nor do they predict eminent closures or restrictions (although no one has a crystal ball on all of this).

The above in mind, we are excited to announce that, starting on Monday, February 8, the elementary in person learning will be extended from 9:00am-12:00pm to 9:00am-2:30pm following the same A/B cohort schedule.

Elementary schools will be permitting learning program changes for a final time for the 20-21 school year. In this message is a form that needs to be completed IF AND ONLY IF you would like to CHANGE the program for learning for your student(s). These changes will also take effect Monday, February 8. If you wish to continue in the learning program your student is currently enrolled in DO NOT complete this form. They will remain in their current program.

Please know that in order to most equitably manage resources and support our students, once you have made your enrollment decision for the remainder of the school year, we will not be able to support changes.

Here is the [MBSD Elementary Program Change Form \(English\)](#)

[MBSD Elementary Program Change Form \(Russian\)](#)

[MBSD Elementary Program Change Form \(Spanish\)](#)

Thank you for your support. As always, I welcome your calls and emails with any questions, concerns, and/or feedback.

Go Baker!

Sincerely,

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