



KELSO SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Kelso Families,

We are excited to announce our district will be implementing a soft start for kindergarten students beginning this fall. Because these children have not been in school yet, this practice will help support kinders in transitioning into the school setting successfully by:

- Helping to build stamina with shorter initial days
- Better absorption of learning routines (classroom, playground, lunches, pick-up, dismissal, etc.) when taught in smaller groups
- One-on-one parent/teacher conferences the first week making it easier for teachers and other school staff to address questions/challenges families might have during the first few days
- Smaller class sizes the second week allow teachers to give more individualized attention to students and build a stronger classroom culture for the remainder of the year
- Aligning with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) best practices

For kindergarteners, as happens every year, the first three days of school are reserved for WaKIDS conferences. Someone from your school will be contacting you to set those up. The second week of school will begin the soft start, with shorter days and half the kinders in class Tuesday and Wednesday, the other half in class the Thursday and Friday (no school Monday in honor of Labor Day). Please see the attached schedules (click [here for Wallace](#) and [here for all other schools](#)) for specific dates and times. You will learn which group (A or B) your child is in at your WaKIDS conference.

For many years, Kelso School District has had a soft start for 6th and 9th grade students in which those grades alone are in school buildings for the first day. This transition of easing them into a new environment has been a great benefit for our older students, and we are confident this best practice will have the same effect for our youngest learners.

If you have any questions, please call your elementary school. Thank you for entrusting us with your children.

Respectfully,

Kim Yore
Director of Teaching and Learning