

REPUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #309

"The community of the Republic School District, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, shall empower every student to achieve the highest level of knowledge, skill, and attitude in order to pursue personal success and productive citizenship."

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6/12/2020

Re: School Re-opening in the fall

Republic School District Patrons,

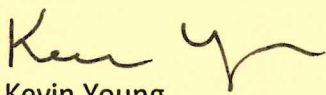
As you may know, OSPI (Office of State Public Instruction) released guidance for reopening schools in the fall. To my surprise (and contrary to what I was hearing), OSPI's guidance is that most schools will be open for in-person learning in the fall of 2020. We have been planning all along to resume classes on August 27th, 2020. The other positive aspect of the 55 page guidance is that OSPI acknowledges the fact that local school boards have local control of decisions that affect their students. This is all positive news!

I, along with many of you, do have some concerns about the guidance. While we may not be able to perfectly implement social distancing, we certainly can do our best. We can easily implement rigorous cleaning schedules and encourage washing hands, etc. In my mind the biggest issue will be regarding the use of face coverings by staff and students. I personally am very uncomfortable wearing a mask for more than a very short time. But I also want recognize that there will be strong opinions on BOTH sides of this issue. While I'm not comfortable wearing a mask, there will be families who won't be comfortable if people aren't wearing a mask. We need to respect each other and find a solution that works for us LOCALLY. This will take many conversations and some planning.

As we have seen over the last few months, things change. I believe we have time to wait before making decisions on how best to come back to school. Many districts have been planning for weeks around the idea that they wouldn't be allowed to start school "normally". We have always believed that we NEED to start school in-person and on-time. For families that may not feel the same way, the Republic School District does have an alternative learning program (Parent Partner) that can be done exclusively online. The biggest advantage to our program is that we have a certified teacher who is available to help students in person if they are struggling.

Please enjoy the summer months with your family. We will have some staff here working to make sure the start of 2020-21 goes off smoothly. As August 27th approaches I will be reaching out with proposals and invitations for input to the school board regarding our official "re-opening plan". No decisions will be made without the opportunity for community/parent input.

Sincerely,



Kevin Young

Superintendent Republic School District