

 Prairie City School District

 P.O. Box 345 ● 740 Overholt Street ● Prairie City, Oregon 97869 ● (541) 820-3314

Dear Prairie City Families, August 4, 2020

I wanted to inform you that we will be starting school a week later than expected. The first day of school will be August 31st instead of August 24th. We made this change because we are wanting our staff to be fully prepared in reopening in a couple different manners, on-line and in-person. This will allow for more trainings and professional development to effectively deliver the instruction.

We are offering a hybrid model of instructional learning. This means we will have our own K-12 online curriculum if you choose to do distance learning instead of the on-site, in-person instruction. We have purchased all the necessary equipment to run an online school if another mandate comes from Governor Brown to close schools in Oregon.

Attendance will be taken and grades earned for our online school in addition to other accountability measures families are accustomed to. Our staff is ready for this challenge and are prepared to do whatever it takes to be ready for your child.

The guidelines to open in the fall are by meeting a set of metrics established by Governor Brown that reflect COVID-19 rates of residents. The first set of these metrics presented have it to where we would not meet the criteria of offering in-person instruction. We are in the process of trying to change those metrics. I and other superintendents met with Governor Brown and her team to discuss small rural school metrics and how the one size fits all blanket doesn’t work in Eastern Oregon. A task force has been formed to present her with new metrics. Fingers crossed, we hope she accepts these metrics. Our message to Governor Brown was that equity with-in schools is not going to work if we treat the small rural counties the same as the big metropolitan counties. She heard our discussion and is very curious of these metrics.

As of July 30, 2020, the current COVID-19 data on children in Oregon according to the Oregon Health Authority, is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AGE | Total # of kids in Oregon | # who tested COVID positive | # of Deaths | % affected Statewide |
| 0 – 9 years | 457,479 | 777 | 0 | .0016 (less than 1%) |
| 10 – 19 years | 486,525 | 1808 | 0 | .0037 (less than 1%) |

Regardless of the learning environment your children are in, meals (breakfast and lunch) will continue to be provided. It seems like something changes every day with the guidance but please know that we will continue to advocate for metrics to appropriately represent and manage the COVID-19 risk for Prairie City residents.

Our number one goal is to provide instruction on-site and in-person. We want to reassure you that our mission is providing and protecting the health and safety of all students and staff. We have all the essential equipment, as well as hired more staff, to make sure we have an extra-sanitized safe environment. We will be ready to open our doors on August 31, 2020.

I will be sure to provide you with an update and next steps as soon as I can. Prairie City School District #4 is committed to serving our students and families.

Sincerely,

Casey Hallgarth, Superintendent

Prairie City School District #4