



Dear Kalama School District families,

There is no question that the upcoming school year will look and feel different than any we have previously experienced. However, thanks to your input and the tireless efforts put forth by our staff and School Board, the path forward is looking much clearer.

When the 2020-2021 academic year kicks off on Wednesday, August 26, our schools will reopen using a primarily remote, “soft start” strategy. A planned transition to full-day, in-person learning (starting with K-5 students) will begin on Monday, October 5 unless public health officials deem it unsafe.

Now you may be thinking, what exactly is a “soft start?” The spirit of this strategy is to give students, families, teachers and building administrators the time they need to get to know one another and to provide them with the tools, training and resources they need to succeed. That will be a major difference between last spring and this fall!

For the first two weeks of school, students will engage with their teachers and classmates primarily online, with some targeted opportunities for in-person activity, such as materials pick-ups and parent/teacher conferences. Practice assignments and activities designed to increase students’ comfort level with technology will gradually transition to graded assignments and a more structured schedule in the two-to-three weeks that follow.

Prior to the conclusion of the “Soft Start,” families will be asked to select an in-person or home-based remote learning track for their student(s). More information about these options will be provided in September.

Speaking of more information, we’ll have additional reopening details coming to you over the next week. We’ve also identified a few key dates to plan around:

- Thursday, August 13: Schools Provide Reopening Updates
- Monday, August 17: School-based bell schedules & “Soft Start” activity schedule published
- Friday, August 21: Elementary Teacher Placements are published
- August 26 – 27: Technology is distributed
- Sept. 2 – 3: Instructional materials are distributed

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If you have any questions, please contact your student's school or the district office. We are all here to support you and your student in this transition. You can also check out our new "[Return to School](#)" web page featuring the latest announcements, reopening resources, updated health and safety metrics from public health officials and frequently asked questions.

With that said, I must thank you once again for your continued partnership with us. I have no doubt that the work we are doing now will promote learning, relationships and success for all students throughout the upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

Eric Nerison  
Kalama School District Superintendent

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