

Dear GFSD Students, Families, Teachers and Staff,

On Wednesday, December 16, 2020, Governor Inslee and State Superintendent Chris Reykdal announced new metrics and guidelines for the opening of schools in the state of Washington. Superintendent Reykdal specifically stated that he was aware that many school districts were planning to bring back students over a phased in, staged manner at the start of the new semester. Granite Falls School District is right in line with that direction.

In late January we are preparing to bring back in a hybrid model Pre-School, Kindergarten, identified special needs and ELL students, the latter of whom was in person earlier in the fall. We are also looking to bring back small groups of at-risk high school students, CTE students, and pods of athletes. Our district and our two employee associations have met regularly collaborating on how to best serve students in an environment and structure that is safe for all.

In February, March and April we are planning to bring in additional grade levels. From the guidance on Wednesday, we hope to be able to see students in PreK through 8th grade if health conditions warrant it. High school attendance in anything but small groups does not look promising this year, but if guidance were to change, we certainly would prepare for that scenario as well.

We know this does not answer all of your questions as our plan will be to communicate more details once we return from winter break, but we hope this gives a little hope and direction as to the district's plans. In the meantime, there are two tasks to contemplate over the holidays:

1) The learning model for your K-8 student(s) - blended or Virtual Academy. You don't have to do anything if you want to stay in your current model. High School Virtual Academy students will be receiving more information on their options on January 4th.

2) Disconnect from Zoom and school for a couple of weeks. It has been a stressful 9 months for students, families, teachers and staff. I know everyone is doing the best they can under this pandemic. Remember to practice some self-care, celebrate the holidays, and look forward to 2021 knowing that there is an end in sight for COVID-19.

Be well, be safe,

Dr. M