

July 29, 2020

Dear Parents, Community, and Staff,

Here we go again! As many of you may have heard Governor Brown and the Oregon Health Authority have released new "health metrics to guide school reopening." These metrics are extremely restrictive compared to any prior guidance and have been implemented in response to increased COVID infection rates statewide.

Prior guidance allowed schools to open on a county-by-county basis. The new metrics have applied restrictions on county-based school reopening to no more than 10 cases per 100,000 for seven days. In addition, if the COVID test positivity rates exceed 5% in any county and/or statewide as a whole, all state schools must close with some exceptions.

As for Alsea, the exception means that we WILL be able to operate grades K-3 in person with safeguards in place. The safeguards are extensive as the Governor is also mandating face coverings be worn by students all day. Anyone who has worked with or raised small children knows that this will be a challenge. The good news is we will be providing face covering options as well as providing workspace isolation shielding for each student. This will allow students to remove their mask/shield while working at their station IF they need to.

In addition, we are dedicating two full time classified staff to do ongoing "crash" cleaning and disinfecting during the school day with nightly deep cleaning and sanitizing to be performed at night. Directional controls, social distancing, and frequent hand washing, and sanitizing are also part of the plan. Finally, all staff will be using PPE at all times as well as isolation shielding when appropriate. Our goal is to keep our students and staff safe, while providing a first-class education to kids, and full-service support for our staff and families.

#### Grades 4-12:

As per the newly implemented metrics, students in grades 4-12 will begin the school year in Comprehensive Distance Learning. As was the case last Spring, all students will be provided with technology, supplies, food service, and internet access (if needed). More details about scheduling, attendance, grading and student support services will be coming soon.

For Parents, this situation is difficult to navigate, but it is nothing short of devastating for so many of our students! Please know that the Alsea School District School Board, Administration, and Staff are here to support you and your student(s) regardless of the ever-changing circumstances we are dealt.

If you have any questions, need to vent, or wish to explore some of the fulltime online options we provide feel free to call me personally on my cell at (509)-220-5313, or respond directly to this email.

I would be remiss if I did not end this update with a quote from Governor Brown who opined in her press briefing yesterday, " EVERYTHING I have just shared with you is subject to change.\*)" Go Wolverines!!!

Here is the link the guidance document released by ODE/OHA related to COVID metrics: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Emerging%20Respiratory%20Infections/Ready-Schools-Safe-Learners-Community-COVID-19-Metrics.pdf>

Sincerely,

**Marc Thielman**  
Alsea Superintendent/K-12 Principal  
541-487-4305 Ext. 201