



Ellensburg School District #401

1300 East Third Avenue Ellensburg, WA 98926, www.esd401.org, Phone: 509-925-8000, Fax: 509-925-802

August 24th, 2020

Hello Parents

I trust that this letter finds you and your family safe and healthy. I want to take this opportunity to update you regarding students receiving special education services for the 2020-2021 school year.

As you know, the Ellensburg School District, like many other districts in our state, is beginning the school year with virtual/distant learning.

The guiding factor in making that determination was the health and safety of students and teachers. This was made in collaboration with Dr. Larson from the Kittitas County Health Department.

OPSI has asked districts to prioritize students receiving special designed instruction for in-person learning during COVID-19. As the metrics in Kittitas County continue to indicate the need for remote learning, I have applied for a waiver so that our most involved students can receive in-person services. The safety plan will be submitted to Dr. Larson the week of August 30th for his approval.

Parents can expect the following before school begins:

- Parents of Lifeskills/Autism and The Connections Program students will receive phone calls from case managers before school begins to discuss the class schedule and safety measures being taken by the district. In order for in-person services to occur, the Personal Protective Equipment must arrive in the district. In-person services cannot begin until the equipment arrives in the district.
- Students receiving services from a resource room teacher or in a co-taught classroom will be called by the case manager, a building administrator or the Director of Special Programs. These will be check-in calls with parents. Our priority is for in-person services only for students in Lifeskills/Autism and The Connection Program classrooms. We are hoping to bring in those resource room students who have difficulty accessing specially designed instruction due to their disability. These students will be determined through an IEP meeting on an individual basis.
- Students enrolled in the Ellensburg Virtual Academy will receive a phone call from Pearl Rossi, Special Education teacher for the Virtual Academy or Patty Kimmel, Special Programs Director.



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Students will be assessed using our district-wide MAP Assessment. Case managers will also use other assessments to update student progress on IEP goals.

The Ellensburg School Districts intent is to provide small group instruction to students as determined by the IEP team. Our current timeline for the majority of students receiving special education services will be based on the logistics of returning to in-person learning for our teachers, students, families and other critical operational and staffing processes needed to safely open the buildings to more small groups of students. As a reminder Dr. Larson will need to give approval to any plan regarding the addition of small groups of students in buildings.

I am hosting a parent webinar on August 31st from 5:00pm-6:00pm and will host a second webinar for spanish speaking families on September 1st 2020 from 5:00pm-6:00pm. To register please click [here](#)

Finally, it is important that you know that our special education teachers are beginning to learn our new educational platform Schology and Edgenuity which is the curriculum for secondary students. Elementary teachers will utilize Pathblazer (K-5).

The department will order supplemental on-line materials to support our preschool students and families and students in our Lifeskills classrooms. We have also ordered on-line curriculum to address Social/Emotional and Behavioral needs.

Thank you for your continued patience with staff and administration as we prepare for the 2020-2021 school year.

Sincerely,

Patty Kimmel