



Ellensburg School District #401

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

June 15, 2020

Dear ESD Staff and Parents,

Good Evening,

Let's start with some celebrations!

Congratulations to our Class of 2020! Please join us on Friday June 19th at 7pm by clicking <http://esd401.org/>, <http://esd401.org/ehs> https://www.dailyrecordnews.com/classof2020/ellenburg_high_school/ for the graduation celebration, and then enjoy fireworks at the Andreotti Field.

Congratulations to our ESD Retirees! We appreciate the many years of dedication that these staff members have given to ESD and for the many lives they have positively impacted. We wish them the very best for their future. These amazing folks include;

Retired: Administrators

Arlen Parker - Assistant Principal - Morgan Middle School - 38.5 years total Exp. - 21 with ESD401

Dan Patton - Principal - Mt Stuart Elementary - 43 years total Exp. - 9 with ESD401

Retired: Teachers

Carla Ketchum - 4th Grade Teacher - Mt. Stuart Elementary - 36.5 years total Exp. - All with ESD401

Beth Vogt - 3rd Grade Teacher - Lincoln Elementary - 47 years total Exp. - 45 with ESD401

Retired Classified Staff

Signe Bannister	Secretary	2/28/2020	8/11/1988	32 Years
Pamela Fowler-Coe	School Bus Driver	11/12/2019	9/09/1994	25 Years
Matt Headland	Custodian	9/27/2019	8/30/2006	13 Years
Mary Langley	Migrant/Bilingual Coordinator	12/12/2019	11/25/2001	18 Years
Debra Morse	Food Services	1/10/2020	1/27/2004	16 Years



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Safaira Ogden	Parapro	1/6/2020	2/14/2003	17 Years
Paul Schneider	Custodian	6/30/2020	3/19/1980	40 Years
Cheri Ward	Secretary	6/30/2020	12/20/1996	24 Years

Models for Next Year

As you are probably aware, OSPI released their guidelines last Thursday for the reopening of schools for 2020-2021.

<https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/Reopening%20Washington%20Schools%202020%20Planning%20Guide.pdf>

Administrators reviewed this information last Friday. **Some of the major challenges for next year include our desire to have students back in school and to also follow the required guidelines by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

Model I: Bring All Students Back Every Day

There are advantages and disadvantages to bringing all students back to school every day next year. The CDC guidelines for reopening school states: “Pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible, **and promote social distancing of at least 6 feet** between people if events are held. **Limit group size to the extent possible.**” It also states that the model of bringing all students back together at once is in the “high risk” category for transmission of COVID 19. **We are willing to consider this model as a possibility, if the overall recommendations from the focus groups and June 17th committee favored this model over some type of hybrid, and we were allowed to do so by Dr. Mark Larson, Kittitas County Public Health Officer.**

Model II: Hybrid Model

The hybrid model that this administrator group brainstormed last Friday was an A/B block type of schedule with an added virtual pathway for the “at home” day. Group A students would attend Monday; Group B students on Tuesday; Wednesday would be an online day for students; Group A students would attend again on Thursday; Group B students would attend on Friday. Wednesday would be a day for teachers to connect with smaller groups or individual students as needed, as well as, engage in other tasks like planning for instruction, providing feedback to students about their learning, and participating in professional development. The CDC lists a hybrid model as a “moderate risk” for transmission of COVID 19.



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Students could be divided into A and B groups by processes like splitting the alphabet and then rearranging, as much as possible, students within the same families into the same A or B groups. We also recognize that there may be certain subgroups of students who will need to attend school daily due to the goals on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The A/B model is the current hybrid model being considered. We are willing to consider other hybrid models that may be recommended by the majority of participants in the focus groups or June 17 committee.

Additionally, some parents may not want their children to be physically at school next year. We are also in the process of creating a **virtual pathway** for these students that would include online learning with virtual check-ins by teachers.

Below are tables that summarize the factors to be considered for each of these models. We may be so restricted in our options that we may end up having to choose one. Because we're not at a place where we know for certain some of those pieces, we want to gather input on both models. The tables below are the ones that the focus groups will use to record their feedback.

Model #1: Everyone back in School or Online/Virtual Option	
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students are able to return to school 5 days a week as long as state and county safety and wellness guidelines are followed (safety guidelines pg. 16-23 of this document) An online or virtual only option will be available for families, but they cannot change choice mid-year
Benefits Compared to Other Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kids are in school full time!
Drawbacks Compared to Other Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting health guidelines much more challenging and 6 feet rule nearly impossible Not as prepared for a potential shift to completely distance May have higher rates of staff and students having to quarantine which makes education less consistent
Wellness Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being present more often makes it easier to manage and support social and emotional wellness, but potentially more difficult to manage wellness related to Covid 19 Easier access to regular nutrition Students can be with <i>all</i> their friends/peers Implications for wearing masks all day



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical activities (like recess, assemblies, and lunch) looking very different • Protocols for sick staff and students (e.g. if there is a student or staff member who is positive, the entire class may be quarantine for 14 days) • Protocols for students who can't wear masks 	
Operations and Facilities Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all communal property, materials, school supplies etc. are properly handled • Potentially maintaining social distancing for things like lunch • Staffing both in person and virtual options • Transportation considerations • Ensuring our facilities and how we use them meet all health and safety guidelines • Maintaining 6 foot distance where at all possible 	
Instruction and Technology Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have their students each day • PD is more difficult than model #2 (which we will still need to prioritize somehow) • Better opportunities for collaborative learning • Better opportunities for 1:1 or small group instruction • Learning (particularly with younger children) may be difficult while wearing masks all day 5 days/week • Developing an equitable option for virtual/online option • May have to transition quickly to total distance learning and won't be as prepared for that as we would if we were model #2 • Normal ways of collaborating with students may not be possible • Limiting exposure to numbers of students (so keeping cohorts together as much as possible) • Some classes may look very different (e.g. choir, band) 	
Strengths	Stretches	Deal Breakers

Model #2: Split/Rotating Schedules or Online/Virtual Option

The Ellensburg School District No. 401 complies with all federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, creed, religion, age, veteran or military status, disability, or the use or a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the School District Superintendent/Title IX Officer, Jinger Haberer or the Director of Special Services/Section 504 Coordinator; 1300 E. Third Ave., Ellensburg, WA 98926 or by telephone at (509) 925-8000.



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Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: Two-day rotation, A/B rotation, or two-week rotation, ½ days with all students at once or on separate portions of day • Student provided assignments to support learning on the days in which they do not report to school • Days students attend are based on family input or alphabet • More time per day or number of days for students most impacted • Staff uses one day/week for professional development, collaboration, providing feedback on distance learning, and planning • state and county safety and wellness guidelines are followed (safety guidelines pg. 16-23 of this document) • An online or virtual only option will be available for families, but they cannot change choice mid-year
Benefits Compared to Other Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes health guidelines easier to meet than model #1 • Teachers and students engaging in distance learning and more prepared for any potential shutdowns
Drawbacks Compared to Other Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More fragmentation than model #1, which impacts staff, students, and families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning has to be done at home part time ○ Teachers have to manage two realities ○ Families have to manage kids at home
Wellness Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure is to fewer students than model #1 (which also mean fewer students need to go into quarantine if a someone is positive) • Would be able to deep clean mid-week if students weren't in buildings on Wednesdays • Students only see ½ the school community (may not go on same days as good friends) • Implications for wearing masks all day (though wouldn't be 5 days a week) • Typical activities (like recess, assemblies, and lunch) looking very different
Operations and Facilities Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers having to manage in class and distance learning • Ensuring all communal property, materials, school supplies etc. are properly handled • Potentially maintaining social distancing for things like lunch



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing meal service for in person, distance, and virtual each day Staffing both in person and virtual options Transportation considerations Ensuring our facilities and how we use them meet all health and safety guidelines Still maintaining 6 foot distance where at all possible (though considerably easier than model #1) 	
Instruction and Technology Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have a significant amount of learning still occurring at home Making the connection between home and school work meaningful If kids are absent for in building days, makes distance portion even more difficult Learning (particularly with younger children) may be difficult while wearing masks Developing an equitable option for virtual/online option May have to transition quickly to total distance learning (though teachers and students would be slightly more prepared than in model #1) Normal ways of collaborating with students may not be possible Some classes may look very different (e.g. choir, band) 	
Strengths	Stretches	Deal Breakers

Model #3: Virtual Learning 2.0

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will only occur if it is not safe for any large groups of students or staff to be in their school buildings together All districts will establish a plan to shift from in-person, face-to-face instruction to remote learning should they need to close school facilities in the short-or long-term. Enhanced version of learning that took place in spring 2020
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Focus Groups: The purpose of the focus groups is to provide opportunities for multiple voices to be heard from all stakeholders and to gather input that will later be synthesized in order to make a final decision.

- **Last Tuesday evening** we hosted student focus groups. Please see the middle school student feedback [here](#) and the high school student feedback [here](#).
- **Monday June 15:** Elementary Staff at 4pm; Secondary Staff at 5:15 pm; Parent Focus group in Spanish 6:30 pm
- **Tuesday June 16:** Elementary Parents at 5:30 pm; Secondary Parents at 6:45 pm

Stakeholders Committee June 17th by Zoom:

This committee will be made up of staff, parents, students, administrators and ESD Board members. We will need for people who are on this committee to have attended one of the focus groups. Focus group members will be sent an invitation to signal their interest for being on the June 17th committee. We will look at the list of people who are interested and do our best to choose people who represent a variety of different perspectives.

The June 17th committee will begin the process of synthesizing the information from all of the focus groups and identifying the common themes and interests from these groups. Ultimately, the goal will be for them to make a recommendation to the superintendent regarding a model that they have identified to be the best fit for ESD for next year.

On June 24th, the ESD Board of Education will review the recommendations from this committee. Dr. Mark Larson, Kittitas County Public Health Officer, will also be present at this meeting and will be available to provide his input on the recommendations, from a health and safety perspective. The ESD Board of Education, if ready, will make a decision regarding this recommendation. Any adoption of a model for next year may also be modified or affected by pending agreements with the Ellensburg Education Association and the Public School Employees of Washington related to their negotiated agreements.

The decision about adopting the very best learning model for reopening schools next year is complex. Safety and caring for the whole child are important priorities for Ellensburg School District. We are confident that by working together we will implement a learning model for next year that will support the needs of all students and empower them to thrive. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have at jinger.haberer@esd401.org. We are ESD strong, and together we **ARE** better!

Sincerely,

Jinger Haberer, ESD Superintendent