

Dear Families,

Bringing students back to in-person learning is the ultimate goal as we consider all of the complicated pieces of this ever-changing puzzle. Following the announcement from Governor Brown, her expectations for moving forward are:

1. A prioritization for school leaders and educators to work together to resume in-person instruction, ensure adequate staffing capacity, and employ equity in the decision making.
2. Alignment and compliance with ODE's Ready Schools Safe Learners guidance.
3. A review and possible update to the new advisory Health Metrics for Returning to In-Person Instruction to be published on or before January 19, 2021.
4. Schools should partner with their staff, community, and local public health authority.
5. Schools should consider stability of student learning.

After collaborating with our staff, the Board, the Benton County Health Authority, and our liability insurance company, the decision was made to look ahead to January 25th as the anticipated date of return to in-person learning for grades K-3 for the following reasons:

- We will continue to follow recommendations of our local health authority who will not be providing further guidance until after OHA releases their updates on the 19th.
- Following advice from ODE and OHA is highly recommended by our liability insurance company.
- Avoid additional transitions to/from the classroom as much as possible.
- Provide a buffer after the holiday travel/gatherings.
- Opening with case rates around 100 per week without updated support/information from our health authorities is different than what we experienced in the fall with only 30 cases per week.

There is a planned materials pick up day scheduled for tomorrow, Friday the 8th for grades K-4 (except 2nd grade) from 12:00-4:30. If you are unable to make it to the school during this time frame, please email Michelle in the front office to confirm a time that works for you.

We have opened successfully and safely before and we look forward to doing it again with more information, guidance, and support from our local health authority. After we transition our K-3 grades, plans for grades 4-8 will follow.

Thank you for your continued patience and support as we navigate through these tough times.

Sincerely,
Rachel Sechler
Interim Head of School