

Bend-La Pine Schools' Families,

While the start of this school year has presented many challenges, I continue to be impressed by our teachers' creativity and our students' eagerness to learn. Kindergarten students are sharing their stories with one another, middle school students are conducting scientific observations in their yards, and high school students are debating online. I am grateful for the commitment and partnerships that continue to support our students.

### **Weekly Metrics**

As many of you may have seen, our weekly [reopening metrics](#) were updated on Monday. We are excited to announce that for the first time in three weeks, Deschutes County met the benchmark for K-3 in-person learning! If the county can meet the benchmark for two more consecutive weeks, we will be able to begin Balanced/Hybrid instruction for our K-3 students November 9, beginning with an orientation week for students.

If families are still wondering why K-3 students have different metrics for reopening, it is because what I call "three-dimensional learning" is critical to our youngest students' success: they need to touch, feel, and move things as they learn, and they need the side-by-side guidance of a skilled adult. While almost all students benefit from these strategies, they are critical for those in K-3.

### **Preparing for Balanced/Hybrid Instruction for K-3 Students**

Families may have questions about the precautions taken by schools to keep students and staff safe. Most of you are aware that the district must meet hundreds of standards for masking, cleaning, contact tracing, physical distancing, and hand washing, for example. To prepare, each school has submitted a checklist with details about how the school will handle these requirements. [These checklists for elementary schools are posted on our website.](#)

Over the next few weeks, district and school staff will continue to provide information about all these details, as well as the balanced/hybrid schedule for each school and K-3 grade.

### **Limited In-Person Instruction**

Thanks to our hard working operations and school staff, our schools have begun [Limited In-Person Instruction](#), following all state requirements. We have trained staff, measured classrooms, separated desks, installed additional sanitizing dispensers, posted signage in hallways to encourage physical distancing, and much more.

The limited in-person Instruction model is an "exception" offered by the state for students who had difficulty accessing distance learning last spring and continue to experience similar challenges during Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) this fall. School teams look at student needs based on several factors: attendance (ie. connectivity issues, inability to participate online), behavior, and subject proficiency, for example. They then determine which students may benefit most from limited in person instruction. Limited in-person instruction is offered for up to two hours a day with cohorts of 10 students maximum.

## **High School Attendance**

At the high school level, a new six week block schedule begins Monday, Oct. 26. As students begin their new schedule, our schools are starting a new practice to take attendance to provide consistency for all of our classes.

Starting Monday, in order to be recorded as present in class, a student must open Canvas for every period and click on an "Attendance" button on the teacher's home page. Students who complete this task between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. will be marked as present for that class for the day. In practice, this means students should be opening Canvas every day, for every period they have on their schedule for that day.

We believe this standardized attendance taking method will provide consistency and clarity for families and staff regarding attendance.

Students who cannot login to Canvas should email or call their teacher. If a parent/guardian knows a student will be absent, they can call our attendance line to let us know of their intended absence.

In closing this week's update, I hope all our students, families, and staff take care and stay healthy in every way.

Sincerely,

Lora Nordquist, Interim Superintendent