

11/23/2020

On behalf of HSD I wish each of you a happy and safe Thanksgiving! As some may recall, on September 28, 2020, the Yakima Health District (YHD) provided written guidance that allowed local districts to implement a “hybrid/in person” on site learning environment. The guidance called for a phased-in approach following specific safety guidelines and protocols. Due to that guidance we implemented in-person learning at both MWC and TIS on October 26 and HJH on November 16. The in-person hybrid format has been successful from both a safety and a learning perspective. The staff has enjoyed having students back in the buildings and it is clear, based on my observations, that the students are just as excited to be back. In addition, staff and students have been very diligent in following the safety protocols and procedures that are in place.

Due to that diligence we have had no COVID-19 spreading within the buildings. The few scenarios that we have had to address have been due to community spread. In order to communicate to families when applicable, we have established communication plans to share in a timely manner to those families and students that may be affected by COVID contact.

On November 15, 2020, YHD issued new guidance for in-person learning due to the increase of COVID-19 cases. Please find the press release by YHD ([here](#)). In essence the guidance allows in-person learning to continue in grades K-8, while pausing plans to start high school on-site hybrid learning, if districts had planned to start HS before January of 2021. Our current plan as far as bringing in HS students in a hybrid model have not changed due to this guidance. Unless we are advised differently, we will start on-site hybrid learning at Highland High School on January 19, 2021 which is the beginning of the second semester.

As the Superintendent of the Highland School District, I am very grateful for the patience and understanding the community has shown during these difficult times. We are committed to communicate any changes and pledge to do our very best to meet the needs of all our students, families and employees of the Highland School District.

Mark Anderson  
Superintendent