

Oregon Department of Education Ready Schools, Safe Learners Guidance Talking Points for School Leaders

Elevator Speech

The state’s guidance [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) -- is a framework for school leaders to plan for the 2020-21 school year. The guidance prioritizes the health and safety of all students and staff and the families they return to each day. It’s important to note that the guidance describes what ODE and OHA know now, with an understanding that all education leaders across the state will need to navigate a consistently changing landscape to mitigate COVID-19 alongside other community impacts. ODE is regularly releasing updated versions of the guidance based on evolving research and feedback with a priority on health and safety in partnership with OHA. We will continue to stay as informed as possible in order to share information with you.

The 2020–21 school year will look different from previous school years.

- Learning will happen everywhere for students, just in new and different ways.
- We currently anticipate most students and families will be learning next year with some on-site instruction and some distance learning.
- Schools may need to close in response to an outbreak, each school must develop a plan to implement Short-Term Distance Learning for students and staff.

Based on local needs, each school (including private schools) will select one of the following ways to begin school in the fall:

- Return to a school campus (on-site learning)
- Return to school with a blend of on-site and comprehensive distance learning (hybrid learning), or
- Return to school through comprehensive distance learning (off site entirely).

By August 17, 2020 each school and all private schools are responsible for creating an Operational Blueprint for Reentry. The Operational Blueprint:

- Is unique for each school and indicates which of the three instructional models a school will plan to operate under as the year begins.
- Must include a school's response protocols to an outbreak in the event there is a single positive case or cluster of cases of COVID-19.
- Will be completed using [the state template](#);
- Must be submitted to the school board or governing body (for private schools), the local public health authority, and ODE; and made available to the community on the school, district, and/or ESD website.
- Local public health authorities will review the operational blueprints and they may suggest changes to school protocols. Local public health authorities will commit to working with schools to mitigate COVID-19.

The design of our Operational Blueprint(s) and decision-making for the coming school year are up to us.

- There are hundreds of important decisions to make. ODE has provided a [decision making resource](#) to support the leadership these moments require.
- It's going to take all of us -- from school leaders, teachers, staff, school board members, students and families -- who know our community and school-specific needs so that we can create a local plan that provides a high quality, equity-focused education for all students.

Our focus is on the Safe Reentry of Students and Staff to School.

- Our school district will continue to work closely with our local public health authority and the Oregon Department of Education to meet our obligations for health, safety, equity, and quality instruction across the state.

We know you will have questions about how we'll take the appropriate steps to safely operate our schools.

- The state has provided us with a framework to work from and it's our job as school leaders to assess our current circumstances and move forward in implementing a clear plan. We will communicate with our students and families through our established communication channels.