



The School District of Washington's Board of Education held a meeting on Friday morning, Aug. 7, to approve a final decision on how the 2020-21 school year will begin.

The first day of the school year is set for Monday, Aug. 24.

The Board unanimously approved to begin the school year in the Scenario 3 (Yellow) - Hybrid K-12 model.

An Executive Summary and Re-Entry Overview document went out to District staff and families on July 20. [Click here](#) for the Re-Entry Overview document.

Scenario 3 (Yellow) - Hybrid K-12 of the SDOW's Re-Entry Overview will be adopted to start the school year, which states the following:

- *All students, grades K-12, attend on a modified schedule designed to reduce class sizes (on campus two days per week, e-learning three days per week) on A or B days (schedule coming soon).

- *Curriculum is taught with an emphasis on focus skills and the Google Classroom learning management system used to support classroom content, organization and student intervention.

- *Implementation of health practices as advised by CDC guidance and local public health departments (screening, distancing where applicable, scheduled transitions, frequent hand washing/sanitizing, etc.).

Face coverings will be required for all staff, as well as students in grades 4-12. Students in grades K-3 are encouraged to wear face coverings. Students and staff may wear their own cloth face covering or one will be provided. Drinking fountains will be closed. Water bottles are allowed.

The K-12 hybrid model will be followed for the first four weeks of the school year. It will be re-evaluated three weeks into the school year, in which a decision will be made to remain in Scenario 3 or possibly move to another scenario.

SDOW Superintendent Dr. Lori VanLeer has been in regular, often weekly, meetings with area superintendents, medical professionals, public health officials, and District administrators to discuss re-entry plans. Surveys went out to parents and staff to solicit their feedback. Many individuals from the staff have been through training or have provided insight in the plan's development.

The decision was made at this point in August to see what Parent Choice: E-Learning From Home registration looked like and what direction COVID-19 cases in the area and county were trending toward.

"We want to proceed cautiously. This allows us to walk slowly and see how consistently our protocols are being followed. We're going to need a good partnership with parents and teachers," VanLeer said. "I know this is difficult for parents. We did everything we could to try to make five days per week work. We looked at every piece of data. We just couldn't get there. It's not in our best interest at this time."

Since the publishing of the Comprehensive Return to School Plan, the school district leadership team has been working to align individual building protocols to the District's reopening plan.

The first task in this analysis required an extensive review of the district wide class sizes. The analysis took into account the registrations for Parent Choice as well. After several hours of review with the entire administrative team, the recommendation was to pursue Scenario 3: K-12 Hybrid for the first four weeks of the school year. The rationale for this decision is as follows:

- *Inability to social distance to the extent recommended in grades 7-12, especially in areas such as classrooms, hall-ways, etc.

- *Inability to social distance to the extent recommended in grades K-6 at multiple locations (estimating 7-8 additional teachers would be needed to satisfactorily meet the requirements along with 2-3 additional teachers to monitor/teach the virtual programming (10 total FTE).

- *Approximately 10-15 percent registration rate for Parent Choice: E-Learning at each building did not create enough of a reduction in class sizes.

- *The hybrid model also positively impacts First Student, our transportation provider; reducing the roster on all school buses.

- *Administration will re-evaluate the decision three weeks after the first day of school using the following criteria:

-Infection rates in Franklin, Warren and St. Charles Counties (case counts, transmission rates, upward or downward trends)

-Absenteeism of students

-Absenteeism of staff

-Substitute fill rates

-Health Department guidance

*Desire to monitor our procedures and remain in school part or all of the time for as long as possible.

*Desire to proceed cautiously out of concern that the green scenario (5 days per week with an inability to properly social distance), in light of the community transmissions, may contribute to the problem causing classroom, building, district or larger scale closures more quickly.

Additional Information

In light of the K-12 hybrid decision, anyone wanting to register for the Parent Choice: E-Learning From Home option can do so by Wednesday, Aug. 12, at 4 p.m. [Click here for the enrollment form.](#)

Additionally, anyone who is already registered for the Parent Choice: E-Learning From Home option and no longer prefers that option may opt out by calling the District Office at 636-231-2005 by Aug. 12 at 4 p.m.

The Challenge Program (Gifted) will attend daily, as this is a one-day per week program for students. The classroom is much larger than the typical classroom, and parents may opt for their child not to attend.

Four Rivers Career Center will coordinate with sending superintendents and high school principals regarding their students coming to FRCC. Each District will be using a different schedule, making coordination highly necessary. Washington High School students will attend in the hybrid schedule based on their A or B day assignments; however they will also attend on Wednesday without sending students. Director Andy Robinson is aligning building protocols to the District Plan.

Students who receive educational services through an Individual Education Program (IEP) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act will be required to attend as scheduled on their corresponding A/B day and may attend on the opposite days for assistance on course work relative to their IEP goals. This does not include Wednesdays when the District is in the

hybrid model. More information will be communicated by the Director of Special Education in this instance.

The Early Learning Center will run full time with lower class sizes. Director Dr. Dawn Hellebusch will communicate with those families.

The SDOW is working through several ideas to assist families with internet accessibility or connectivity issues. More information will be forthcoming.

Please understand that a significant amount of planning and communication will occur leading up to the first day of school.

We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation during these unprecedented times.