



Skagit County Public Health

Jennifer Johnson, Director
Howard Leibrand, M.D., Health Officer

September 18, 2020

TO: Skagit County Public K-12 Superintendents
Skagit County Private School Administrators

SUBJECT: Review of Skagit County COVID-19 Disease Activity and Learning Decision Tree

On July 31, 2020, I forwarded to School District Superintendents and Private School Administrators a memo detailing my support as the County Health Officer for your education planning efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, Skagit County and much of Washington State was experiencing a high level of COVID-19 activity with a 2-week case rate well over 75 per 100,000 population.


In recent weeks, COVID-19 activity has decreased in Skagit and surrounding counties. Local efforts to counter COVID-19 within our community have moved Skagit County into the moderate disease activity level (25-75 cases) as defined by the Washington State Department of Health Decision Tree for Provision of In Person Learning. As of today, the state disease activity dashboard shows Skagit at 49.5 cases per 100,000 population over the 14 days prior to September 5, 2020. The state dashboard uses a 10-day delay for this metric to assure all posted data is final. Estimates derived from local data following September 5, 2020 demonstrate a further decrease in the Skagit case rate.

My guidance and support in the July 31 memo continue to apply today. Skagit County Public Health supports School District and Private School plans that allow for the highest level of educational experience as long as schools are able to follow all of the requirements within the Washington State Department of Health K-12 Guidance, most recently updated on September 2, 2020.

I support districts and private schools if you plan to expand in person learning in accordance with the Decision Tree, starting with the youngest learners and those with highest need. I also understand that the requirements of the K-12 Guidance are extremely challenging. Each district and school will need to carefully evaluate their ability to expand in-person learning while meeting the health and safety requirements of the K-12 Guidance. In order to meet guidance specifications, the highest level of learning possible to many students in districts and schools will likely continue to be remote learning for some time.

We will remain in close communication with you, providing Friday weekly email updates on COVID-19 activity in Skagit County. Our department is available to review your evolving plans and answer questions. Thank you for your diligent work to provide learning during this pandemic.

Sincerely,


Howard Leibrand, MD
Skagit County Health Officer

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