

Sector Email 3.25.2021

Subject header: Updates on COVID-19 from Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC)

Schools

Dear school partners,

Spring is certainly a season of change this year! In addition to the turning of the seasons, this year we are watching as guidance, recommendations and policies about navigating COVID-19 in schools shift. Public Health is working to keep you updated as these changes occur. This week's sector e-mail includes a number of updates and shifts in guidance from both the state and the CDC.

Reminder: please review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#), [related resources](#), and [training videos](#).

This week's Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Child Care Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity
2. Guidance Updates for Phase 3
3. Updated Distancing Guidance from the Department of Health
4. Vaccine Updates
 - a. Some youth now eligible for vaccination
 - b. How school and child care staff can access vaccines
 - c. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - d. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
5. Guidance for Spring Events: Prom and Graduation
 - a. Graduation
 - b. Prom
6. Please Share with Your Community
 - a. On-Demand Webinar: Ventilation and Virus Mitigation
 - b. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
 - c. Events
 - d. Pandemic EBT Update
7. Updated Guidance for Travel
8. Guidance Spotlight: School Bus Safety During COVID-19
9. Now that You're Vaccinated...
10. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity

DOH has removed its K-12 metrics toolkit to align with CDC indicators ([COVID-19 - School Reopening: Indicators to Inform Decision Making | CDC](#)). We will provide an updated data display next week.

2. Guidance Updates for Phase 3 of Healthy Washington

King County, along with the rest of the Puget Sound region, entered into Phase 3 of Governor Inslee's [Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery](#). There are a number of guidance documents that have been

updated, revised, or created to guide communities in meeting updated guidelines. The following are some of the resources that K-12 schools and child care providers may find helpful:

- a. [Outdoor Recreation During COVID-19, including overnight summer camps](#)
- b. [Weddings, Funerals and Events During COVID-19, includes guidance for dances and proms](#)
- c. [2021 Graduation and Commencement Ceremonies](#) (DOH)
- d. [Miscellaneous Venue Guidance](#)
- e. [Spectator Event Guidance](#)

3. Updated Distancing Guidance from the Department of Health

On March 25, Governor Inslee announced that the DOH is updating physical distancing guidance to align with recent changes from the CDC. These changes will require physical distancing of at least three feet or more between students within groups and in classrooms as much as possible. In certain circumstances (described below), students must still maintain six feet of distance. Staff should continue to maintain six feet of physical distance from other staff and students in classrooms and otherwise. Schools may choose to continue to use six foot physical distancing at all times.

At least six feet of distance must be maintained for the following circumstances:

- Between staff in the school building and between adults and students.
- For all staff and students
 - In common areas, such as auditoriums.
 - When masks can't be worn, such as when eating.
 - During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band practice, or physical education. These activities should be moved outdoors or to large, well-ventilated spaces whenever possible.

Full updated guidance is available on the DOH website, or [at this link](#).

4. Vaccine updates

a. Some youth now eligible for vaccination

People age 16 and older are now eligible for vaccination if they are pregnant or have a disability that puts them at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness. On March 31st, people 16 and older with two or more co-morbidities or underlying conditions will be eligible for vaccination (a full list of underlying conditions identified by the CDC is [available here](#).) Please note that Pfizer BioNTech is the only vaccine approved for use in people who are 16 & 17 years old. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are approved for use in people who are 18 and over.

Public Health recommends that 16 & 17 year old young people or their caretakers who are scheduling vaccination appointments try to confirm that the vaccination site carries the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine when scheduling.

b. How School and Child Care staff can access vaccines

The following are suggestions for school and childcare staff to access vaccination.

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#) is prioritizing vaccination of school staff and child care workers during the month of March. Pharmacies participating in this program will likely have the most vaccine supply and the greatest ability to vaccinate school and child care staff quickly. Use the [COVID Vaccine Finder](#) to find and schedule an appointment through the federal Retail Pharmacy Program.

- ii. Through OSPI and Kaiser Permanente’s [Get Ready](#) program partnership. You can sign up for appointments through Kaiser Permanente at [this link](#) or by reviewing the [Get Ready Program FAQ](#).
- iii. Use the online [“Phase Finder” tool](#) to confirm your eligibility and schedule an appointment at locations that have appointments available. The phase finder is available in many languages - translated Phase Finder tools are [available at this link](#). Paper versions of the tool are available on the [partner resources page](#).
- iv. You may also find vaccination appointments at pharmacies using [VaccineFinder](#). This site lists some pharmacies that are not in Phase Finder yet.
- v. Some school districts, health care providers, or counties may host clinics specifically for schools and childcare workers. [OSPI’s Q&A document](#) describes some opportunities that may be available specifically to educators.

c. Getting Vaccinated Resources

The FDA has authorized a third COVID-19 vaccine, made by Johnson & Johnson. This vaccine was shown to be 85% effective in preventing severe illness and only requires one dose. [Learn more here.](#)

The Public Health [Getting Vaccinated](#) page now has links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. The [Vaccine FAQ](#) page answers many common questions about COVID vaccine, and includes links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

d. Symptoms after Vaccination

With more school and child care employees receiving vaccines, questions have come up about if individuals need to quarantine if they experience symptoms of COVID-19 soon after receiving a vaccination. Employees may return to work and *not* quarantine if they have symptoms of COVID-19 within a few days of vaccine administration, **IF:**

- They **have not** been in contact with someone with COVID-19 **AND**
- They feel well enough and are willing to perform normal activities such as work **AND**
- They do not have a fever **AND**
- Signs and symptoms are **limited only** to those observed following COVID-19 vaccination (including pain, swelling, tiredness, chills, headache – [see a list of symptoms](#)) **AND**
- They **do not** have other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, such a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or change in smell and taste.

Public Health provides information on this and other frequently asked questions on our [Vaccine FAQ page](#).

5. Guidance for Spring Events: Prom and Graduation

- a. **Graduation:** When planning for in-person graduation, commencement, or moving up ceremonies, K-12 schools, colleges and universities must follow Governor Inslee’s Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery guidance for miscellaneous venues and outdoor spectator events. In addition to mask and physical distancing requirements, this guidance will limit capacity depending on which phase the county where the school or college or

university is located and outline additional requirements based on the event. Students who are graduating or moving up do not count toward the capacity restrictions. K-12 schools and colleges and universities should consider multiple, smaller events that do not overlap if capacity requirements are a limiting factor. The guidance can be [accessed here](#), and the Roadmap to Recovery guidelines are [available at this link](#).

- b. **Prom:** If schools would like to plan a spring prom or other dance, they should use the [Weddings, Funerals and Events during COVID-19](#) guidance available from the Department of Health. This guidance provides additional detail to the venue specific information available in the Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery document. The guidance includes capacity limits in addition to distancing requirements and masking. **On-Demand Webinar: Ventilation and Virus Mitigation**

The EPA has created a webinar, [Ventilation and Virus Mitigation in Schools: Creating a Game Plan to Reduce COVID-19 Risk and Make Lasting Improvements to IAQ](#), which can help schools learn how to develop a plan to acquire federal funds for immediate and long-term IAQ and ventilation improvements to reduce the spread of viruses and ensure safer, healthier learning environments. You can watch the webinar now at www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/forms/webinar-ventilation-and-virus-mitigation-schools-creating-game-plan-reduce-covid.

6. Please Share with Your Communities

a. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

The pandemic continues to rage on, harming not only our physical health, but also devastating jobs. Many people are finding themselves in sudden need to health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period for](#) free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – *Washington Healthplanfinder*. The enrollment period is open from **Feb. 15-May 15, 2021**. The enrollment period is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

b. Upcoming events

i. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19 updates, risk reduction, and resources:

1. Con Confianza y En Comunidad: Hablando sobre COVID-19 y temas que nos afectan
Martes a las 5:00 PM en español
Pagina del [Condado de King](#) en Facebook
2. Biweekly Community Partners' Call to hear updates and ask questions:
Every other Monday at 4:00 PM in English
Next call on Monday, March 29th at 4:00 PM
Join via Zoom: <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/93431287120>

c. Pandemic EBT Update

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits are now being mailed out to eligible students. If families with eligible students do not receive a notice in the mail, they should contact the P-EBT Contact Center at 1-833-518-0282. For more resources and information for schools to share, visit [OSPI's PEBT communications toolkit](#).

7. Spring Break and Travel – Updated Guidance

With spring break just around the corner, many schools have been asking Public Health about updated guidance regarding travel and quarantine.

Governor Inslee recently updated travel guidance to align with the CDC’s current recommendations regarding out-of-state travel. The safest option is to eliminate all non-essential travel to limit the spread of COVID-19. *Anyone* arriving from other states or countries – including returning Washington residents – should get tested 3-5 days after travel. Returning travelers should stay in quarantine for 7 full days after travel, even if the test is negative. If travelers are unable to get tested, they should remain in quarantine for 10 days after travel. Regardless of the quarantine period, travelers should monitor for symptoms for 14 days after travel and should avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness. The full guidance is [available here](#).

These recommendations apply to **all** people, **including those who are fully vaccinated**.

8. Guidance Spotlight: School Bus Safety During COVID-19

With Washington students headed back to in person learning in the next few weeks, many will be back to boarding school buses. Just like other aspects of in-person learning, we can take steps to keep students and bus drivers safer on the way to school. The CDC provides specific guidance for bus drivers, which [can be found here](#). Our environmental health staff also recommend [this article](#), with eight recommendations to support school bus safety. If you have questions about safer school bus rides – or other environmental health questions – Schools and Child Care Task Force members are available for consultation at Thursday office hour sessions.

9. Now that You’re Vaccinated...

While the vaccine trials established that the COVID-19 vaccine prevents severe illness and death in those who are vaccinated, we are still learning more about their effectiveness in limiting transmission of the virus to others yet. [Fully vaccinated individuals](#) may follow the guideline below in personal and public settings; ***the K-12 guidance must be followed while in K-12 settings.***

- a. Can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask in personal settings.
- b. Can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an [increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#).
- c. Do not need to quarantine or test if you’ve been around someone who has COVID-19, unless you develop symptoms.

10. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force office hours are held each Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm. Please come with your specific COVID-19 questions related to your K-12 school (e.g., environmental health, clarification of King County guidance) – *and please join us to share promising approaches that your school is using to implement COVID-19 protocols as well!* If you have questions prior to office hours, please submit them to schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov with the subject line “Office Hours.” We will do our best to answer them during the following Thursday office hours session.

****Attendees are expected to review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#) and the associated [training videos](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page) **BEFORE** attending office hours.****

[Join here](#) using password **COVID19**

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force

Childcare

Dear childcare partners,

This week's Public Health — Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Childcare Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Vaccine Updates
 - a. How School and Child Care staff can access vaccines
 - b. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - c. Symptoms After Vaccination
 - d. Child Care Vaccine Eligibility Videos
2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
3. Upcoming Events
 - a. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19
4. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs
5. On-Demand Webinar: Ventilation and Virus Mitigation
6. DCYF Early Learning Provider Toolkits

1. Vaccine updates

a. Some youth now eligible for vaccination

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 1. Every other Monday at 4:00 PM in English
 2. Next call on Monday, March 29th at 4:00 PM
 3. Join via Zoom: <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/93431287120>

4. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs

The CDC recently updated its Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs during COVID-19. The guidance includes information on mask use, screening, keeping children in contained groups, staggering schedules, ventilation, and more. The full guidance document can be [accessed here](#). In addition, CDC has created a document toolkit to support this guidance, [available at this link](#).

5. On-Demand Webinar: Ventilation and Virus Mitigation

The EPA has created a webinar, [Ventilation and Virus Mitigation in Schools: Creating a Game Plan to Reduce COVID-19 Risk and Make Lasting Improvements to IAQ](#) (Indoor Air Quality), which can help schools learn how to develop a plan to acquire federal funds for immediate and long-term IAQ and ventilation improvements to reduce the spread of viruses and ensure safer, healthier learning environments. You can watch the webinar now at www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/forms/webinar-ventilation-and-virus-mitigation-schools-creating-game-plan-reduce-covid.

6. DCYF Early Learning Provider Toolkits

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has assembled classroom toolkits for early learning programs to help with implementing COVID-19 guidance. This toolkit includes materials and books to use with children in your care during daily activities to:

- Promote social distancing
- Learn about germs and handwashing
- Support social-emotional needs

You'll also receive printed materials to use as resources when implementing COVID-19 guidance, as well as an introduction letter with some ideas on how to use each one of the items in your toolkit. Your local Child Care Aware office will coordinate the distribution of the toolkits in your area through various ways, such as delivery to your location or local distribution events. Early Achievers coaches will assist in this process and you can expect to hear how you can receive your toolkit in the next couple of weeks.

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force