

January 11, 2021

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor, State of Washington

Dr. Umair Shah
Secretary of Health, State of Washington

Dear Governor Inslee and Secretary Shah:

Evergreen Public Schools, Vancouver Public Schools and other Clark County school districts have announced plans to expand in-person learning for K-5 students consistent with the Washington Dept. of Health guidance for schools updated Dec. 16, 2020, and contingent on COVID-19 activity in our county.

Staff are preparing our schools, providing the required PPE training and engaging in collaborative discussions with our employee associations. Evergreen and Vancouver plan to begin the expansion of in-person learning on January 19 and add other grade levels on January 25 and February 1.

To safeguard our employees as we expand in-person learning to middle and high school students, it is necessary to vaccinate educators, school leaders and support staff. Approximately half of our workforce is age 50 and older. **We therefore are requesting that ALL pre-K through 12th grade school district employees be moved to Phase 1, B2, in the state's vaccination schedule, allowing this group to be vaccinated in February.**

As stated since the start of the emergency proclamations, school district employees are essential workers. They continue to work tirelessly to serve students during this extraordinarily difficult time. To reopen the economy and address pre-K through 12th grade learning loss, the State of Washington must reopen its public schools. In doing so, the state's top priority must be keeping our staff, students, families and communities safe and healthy.

Clark County superintendents are working together with Clark County Public Health to identify ways that school districts can help expedite the vaccination process. We are offering, for example, the use of our facilities and grounds and the assistance of our personnel to help health care providers administer the vaccines.

Thank you for your consideration of our request as an opportunity to demonstrate the State of Washington's strong commitment to public education. We appreciate your support of our schools and the approximately 50,000 students we serve in the Evergreen and Vancouver districts.

Sincerely,



Mike Merlino, Superintendent
Evergreen Public Schools



Steve Webb, Superintendent
Vancouver Public Schools