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IMESD District Board Talking Points

August 2020

I used to think education experienced consistent “winds of changes.” Since COVID, these winds are now at hurricane force!

School re-openings continue to dominate our thoughts. Recent highlights include:

- The Governor’s Office recently released statewide metrics to open in-person. This collaborative effort between ODE and OHA detailed the benchmarks the state and county must reach. As I pen this update, no district in Oregon is eligible to open with in-person or hybrid models, based upon the overall state metric. However, this state number is trending in the right direction. In our region, Baker and Union counties are trending toward opening, but Umatilla and Morrow counties are significantly above due to high case numbers.
- The public is obviously looking for answers. At his point, a pragmatic response is “Districts are planning to open with Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) models that will be much better than the spring. In addition, districts created hybrid safety plans to implement once it is safe to return to schools, as determined by the state metrics. “
- I participated in a task force consisting of rural legislators, commissioners, educators, and public health representatives to modify the metrics based on the unique characteristics of our rural and remote districts. It was very collaborative and positive. If the Governor makes changes to the metrics, we would receive updated information during the week of August 10-14.

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IMESD Superintendent