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RAINIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

To our staff, community & families:

In collaboration with the Gates Foundation and the Washington State Department of Health, Rainier School District is participating in a state-funded pilot for a voluntary COVID-19 screening and testing program. This pilot program will help contain the virus, protect our communities, and keep students and teachers safe and healthy whether they are remote or in-person. We believe that safe, in-person schooling is a priority, and while it may be difficult, it is a challenge we can solve. We are excited to participate in this pilot and are one of ten schools across the state that have been selected to do so. Our testing begin date is to be announced.

We recognize the pandemic has been hard on everybody. Our students miss their friends. Our teachers miss their classrooms. Our parents are balancing work and school from home. Every one of you has already been doing everything you can to adjust to living with COVID-19. We also recognize the guidance has changed over time as we learn more about how the virus behaves—one thing we are learning is that by working together, we can keep our communities safe and open our schools.

The pilot will be open to all district staff, students and families. Here is how the voluntary testing protocol in this pilot will work. Details of each step can be found in our [Frequently Asked Questions](#):

1. daily symptom attestation
2. free and easy COVID-19 testing
3. an outbreak response plan
4. contact tracing
5. isolation or quarantine

Because this is a pilot program, we may need to make adjustments as we go. We are committed to open and transparent decision-making and communication, and we will keep our teachers, staff and families informed of how we are doing and any adjustments we might make.

This testing protocol fits into our larger strategy to contain and control the virus, and all of our protocols are fact-based and built on the most updated science. We are still making changes to allow for social distancing, and we are still asking everybody in our community to mask up, wash their hands, avoid crowds, and watch out for symptoms. Each precaution we take is like an added layer of protection, and when used together, they dramatically decrease the risks.

We want to get and keep our buildings open and our students back to in-person classrooms and on campus with their friends. Our goal is to put the best possible protocols in place so that our teachers, staff, students and families feel safe, protected, and comfortable focusing on teaching and learning—and so our students can get back to the comprehensive educational experience they deserve. The decision to participate in this pilot is a step towards achieving that goal.

Thank you for your partnership,

Superintendent Bryon Bahr