

Dear Salmonberry Families,

I know you're probably seeing lots of concerning articles and announcements regarding risks associated with opening schools in the fall. I want to reassure you that, at this point, Salmonberry is still planning to open 100% in person using all of the protocols mentioned in previous updates.

In fact we now have secured some beautiful off-site opportunities for some of our classes that will allow for even greater social distancing as well as facilitating exciting project-based, multi-disciplinary learning. It looks like the Eagles will be spending off-site time primarily at Coffelt farm. The Cedars look likely to start with off-site work at the Glenwood Springs Hatchery site's cedar grove (appropriately), and then later in the fall we'll move over to Mt. Baker Farm. (Emmy, Terry, Adrien and I visited the Mt. Baker Farm site today, and it was very exciting! It got our creative juices flowing. What a beautiful spot!!) The Salmon class will begin the year settling in at the school site, but is exploring off-site possibilities as well, for a little later in the year.

Plans for on-campus site enhancements to facilitate outside learning and allow for greater social distancing are also progressing well.

Laura, Kari and I continue to work with our County Health liaisons and I am collaborating with various private school allies to implement plans and protocols that I believe to be very responsible and as safe as possible, while preserving in-person learning for our kids.

According to recent updates from OISD Superintendent Eric Webb and OI MS/HS Principal Kyle Freeman, it now seems likely that the OISD will begin the year with primarily or entirely remote instruction. I'm sure this has been a very difficult but also very sound decision for them. Our situation at Salmonberry is quite different. Our class sizes are much smaller. Our capacity for "self-contained cohorting" is much greater. Our commitment to outside settings for instruction is helping a lot, as is our low student:teacher ratio and our particular facilities. So at this point, we continue to move towards an in-person fall opening, essentially as previously described.

And, it is true that at some point we may receive an executive order from either local or state authorities that could forbid us from participating in person. For that reason, we are also working on a Plan B that may have to include remote strategies. For now, though, we continue to work towards in-person school in September. More details will follow in the coming weeks.

Let me know if you feel a need for a private meeting to discuss any thoughts or concerns you may have, or meet me at my Zoom office hours each Tuesday at 9:00.

And remember, please plan on self-quarantining beginning August 19 through September 2. That means no out-of-county travel and no out-of-county visitors for two weeks prior to our first day. This is a very important piece of our reopening plan, and something I hope every student, family member and staff member can support.

Warmest Regards,

Paul