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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attachments: Press release includes link to full resolution (see below)

KCSD Board of Directors asks governor to prioritize in-person instruction

The Klamath County School District Board of Directors on Thursday passed a resolution urging Gov. Kate Brown to prioritize return of all students to in-person instruction by establishing metrics that follow the most recent science (from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) or allowing local districts and public health officials to determine when students can safely return to school.

The district's 6,800 students are currently distance learning from home with their classroom teachers because COVID-19 case rates in Klamath County do not meet state metrics for in-person classroom instruction.

"One of our primary goals is to educate students well, focusing on their physical, emotional, and social wellbeing," said Steve Lowell, chair of the KCSD Board of Directors. "Despite the efforts of our teachers, who are doing a phenomenal job, many of our students are struggling with distance learning, and their education and mental health is suffering."

Board members and school officials say that safeguarding the health of the district's students, staff, and families is its highest priority.

"Overall COVID-19 case numbers in the county are spiking right now, and this is not meant to be interpreted as a recommendation to return students immediately to in-person instruction," said Glen Szymoniak, superintendent of the Klamath County School District. "We are just asking the state to follow the latest science so when our numbers do come down we are able to return students to the classroom."

Board member John Rademacher voiced reservations about the resolution.

"I don't feel comfortable at this time sending a message that we want children back in schools while positive test results are so high," he said. "I would feel better if we had a testing plan in place."

District head nurse Laura Limb told the board that Klamath County Public Health and the CDC recommends testing when there is a strong likelihood of direct exposure, but does not recommend frequent testing of students.

Over the past three months, Klamath County School District has successfully provided in-person instruction to all K-3 students and K-12 students in its small, rural schools. During that time, two cohorts (cohorts are small groups of students) quarantined because of a positive case.

"Schools are demonstrating that they are not creating super spreader events, but in fact, serve as guardians against transmission because social distancing and masking are adhered to, contact tracing is performed, and robust communication with local public health authority occurs," the KCSD board stated in the resolution.

Read the full resolution here: [Resolution of the KCSD Board of Directors Regarding State Guidance](#). The Medford School District Board last week passed a similar resolution.