



General Metrics for Returning to In-Person Instruction

Instructional Model	Definition of Model	Metrics to Meet Instructional Model	
On-Site	Students in all grades may return to on-site instruction with all students or using a hybrid model.	Case Rate (counties >30K)	<50.0
		Case Count (counties <30K)	<30
		Test Positivity Rates	<5.0%
On-Site and Distance Learning	Students in elementary schools may return to on-site instruction with all students or using a hybrid model. (this includes 6 th grade only if the district model includes 6 th grade at elementary)	Case Rate (counties >30K)	50 to <100.0
	Secondary school remains in CDL and may transition to onsite if the elementary schools can show that local safety precautions are limiting COVID transmission to students and staff.	Case Count (counties <30K)	30 to <45
	Test Positivity Rates	5.0% to <8.0%	
Transition	For counties that move <i>into</i> the transition metrics <i>from</i> on-site or on-site and distance learning, monitor cases and potentially move to CDL to limit spread. <i>Must move to CDL once metrics reach that level.</i>	Case Rate (counties >30K)	100.0 to <200.0
		Case Count (counties <30K)	45 to <60
		Test Positivity Rates	8.0% to <10.0%
Distance Learning	All learning is conducted through CDL with limited in person instruction supplementing CDL. Once a county reaches this metric, the district does not have a choice to remain open.	Case Rate (counties >30K)	>200.00
		Case Count (counties <30K)	>60
		Test Positivity Rates	>10.0%

Source: [Oregon Department of Education](#)



Exceptions to General Metrics

Limited In-Person Instruction

Offering limited in-person instruction is not intended to replace Comprehensive Distance Learning and school districts must continue to provide CDL for students. Districts also cannot require students to attend LIPI if it is offered to them. School districts must also follow all the [requirements set out by ODE for LIPI](#).

- Student cohorts limited to 20 per cohort. Students are limited to two unique cohorts per week, including transportation.
- Staff members cannot interact with more than three unique cohorts in a day and no more than five in a week, even if that staff member is serving in multiple roles.
- If a staff member is only administering special education assessments or evaluations and only working with individual students – not cohorts – they may only interact with up to 30 individual students in one week.
- Students are limited to two consecutive hours in one day.
- There is no longer a maximum number of students who can be served by LIPI each week, but the above limits must be strictly adhered to.

Small, Remote Schools

Under the previous metrics, small, rural and remote schools with fewer than 250 students could be granted exceptions to the metrics. That is no longer the case. However, small and remote schools with fewer than 75 students in total located in a county that doesn't meet the county metrics may reopen in:

- The school has an enrollment of 75 students or less.
- The school is more than 25 miles driving distance from any town or city with a population over 3,000.

Low Population Density, Large Population County Exception

This only applies to Malheur County, which has a population of more than 30,000 but a population density of less than 6 people per square mile. Malheur County schools may return if:

- The total county COVID-19 case rates in the 14 days is <100.0 per 100,000.
- There is not community spread in the school catchment area.
- There is not community spread in the communities that serve as the primary employment or community centers.
- The school is isolated from communities that have reported community spread of COVID-19.

If the county metrics reach the level of high risk as defined as 200.0 cases or more per 100,000, then the schools must remain in CDL until the metrics return to the exception provided here.

Exceptions for Schools Impacted by Wildfires

Three school districts – Phoenix-Talent, Santiam Canyon and McKenzie River – were granted exceptions to provide in-person instruction because of the devastating impact of wildfires in September 2020. Several other districts were given the exception to provide in-person instruction to students who lost their primary residence as a result of the fires. A full list and the requirements [can be found here](#).



Calculating Case Rates and Test Positivity Rates

Each Monday, OHA and ODE will publish a report that contains data for the preceding 14-day period. For case counts and case rates, OHA assigns cases to a week based on their true case date, which is the date when public health first identified them as a confirmed or presumptive COVID-19 case. For percent positivity in testing, persons tested are assigned to a week based on their specimen collection date. Positivity rates are calculated by dividing the total number of cases identified by the specimen collection date by the total number of cases tested by specimen collection date. OHA will update the data each week, which sometimes results in minor fluctuations in the rates and cases reported (usually less than 1%).

OHA releases a number of reports each week. School decisions are based on the [School Metrics Data](#) report released on the ODE and the OHA websites.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will my school/district go back to school?

Each Monday afternoon, ODE and OHA release a [report](#) with the latest health metric information. School districts have a 14-day window to reopen schools once the county qualifies for a specific instructional model. This is intended to give the school district time to collaborate with staff, communicate with parents and families, and prepare schools with the appropriate safety measures.

The [state metrics](#) are only mandatory in that schools cannot enter into an instructional model if the county does not qualify for that instructional model. Just because a county qualifies does not mean that a school or district must reopen under the model it is eligible for. Local union leaders should work in collaboration with local school and district leaders to ensure that all safety measures are in place prior to returning to on-site or hybrid instructional models. Several other considerations outside the metrics may apply including your local collective bargaining agreement.

My school was already open under the old metrics. Will it stay open?

For most school districts that previously reopened to in-person instruction, there were not significant enough changes based on the new metrics to change instructional models. However, some school districts have been given “safe harbor” to provide stability for families.

If a district still meets the metrics in the green or yellow columns (“On-Site” or “On-Site and Distance Learning”) than it may remain open to in-person instruction but continue to monitor cases. These districts will have to plan for a transition and move fully to CDL if the metrics change moving forward.

For districts that now meet the metrics in the orange “Transition” column, the district must work with the local public health authority and consider spread in the schools and the local community. The district may move to CDL based on these factors. The district would have to move fully to CDL if the metrics change moving forward.



For districts that now meet the metrics in the red “Distance Learning” column, the district has until Jan. 4, 2021 to transition to CDL or the county must meet the metrics for returning to in-person instruction by that date.

My school district pulls a lot of students and staff members from the surrounding counties. How does this impact reopening?

School districts that draw substantial number of students or staff from multiple counties should consider the case rate and test positivity rate in each of those counties. A substantial number is defined as 10% or more. This is different from the previous metrics, which focused on school catchment areas. This applies to both public and charter schools. While districts who have substantial numbers of students or staff living in multiple counties are encouraged to work with Local Public Health Authority to determine whether the adjoining county metrics will impact the school’s ability to open or to remain open.

When do these metrics go into effect?

The metrics go into effect Friday, Oct. 30. This is intended to allow districts flexibility to increase Limited In-Person Instruction as early as Monday, Nov. 2. School districts will begin using new data published Monday, Nov. 2 to make decisions about when and if to open schools to instruction.

For my county, one metric is in one column and another metric is in a different column. What does this mean for my district?

The more conservative metric applies so if test positivity is low but case rates and case counts are higher, the higher metric is the applicable metric.

My school isn’t following the safety requirements of Ready Schools, Safe Learners. What should I do?

[Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) is the comprehensive set of requirements and recommendations from ODE that schools and districts must adhere to. If your school or district isn’t following the guidance, there are several actions you can take depending on your circumstance. First, if the failure to follow the requirements seems like a simple mistake or misunderstanding, start with a conversation with your school principal to resolve the issue and concern locally. Your building rep or union leader can help with this conversation. If the failure is intentional or your efforts to discuss the matter with school and district leadership do not work, you may file a complaint with ODE and/or OSHA.

- Confidential school hotline: 1-833-604-0884
- OSHA: <https://osha.oregon.gov/workers/Pages/index.aspx>



I've heard that ODE can't keep my name confidential if I file a complaint. This makes me worried about filing a complaint.

ODE is bound by public records law. Prior to establishing the above hotline, the department was collecting public complaints regarding Ready Schools, Safe Learners and school and district compliance with safety measures and the metrics. While ODE was not actively sharing complainant information, there are no rules or policies that would protect anonymity of complainants if someone filed a public records request. OSHA has these rules and policies in place already and the new tip line is confidential.

What face coverings are required and can I wear a face shield instead of a face covering?

All persons in the school building including all adults and students in kindergarten and up must wear face coverings at all times. This [ODE FAQ](#) goes into detail about what is required. Face shields are *only* an acceptable alternative in specific circumstances outlined in the Ready Schools, Safe Learners guidance. This includes medical conditions that prevent masks or when people need to see mouth and tongue motions for communication.

Face coverings must also be worn outdoors including during recess. Group "mask breaks" are not allowed, though some students may be eligible to take mask breaks under certain conditions.

Face coverings *may not* be removed even if students or staff can maintain six feet of distance from each other.