



June 11, 2020

Dear Assumption Families,

Thank you to all of you for your participation in completing the recent survey. We had 84 respondents which helped inform some important decisions for next year. I've included a summary of the results at the bottom of this letter. Please remember that we are consistently evolving in our planning as we get specific direction from the Archdiocese of Seattle's Office of Catholic Schools and the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction. I'm so grateful to the Leadership Team and all of the teachers who have been able to think outside the box and help brainstorm possibilities for the upcoming school year.

Some of you may have seen the [Reopening Washington Schools 2020 District Planning Guide](#) published by OSPI today. The most hopeful news from State Superintendent, Chris Reykdal, came from his statement, **"To be very clear, it is my expectation that schools will open this fall for in-person instruction."** He remains hopeful that if we all do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Washington, we have the opportunity to explore our practices and really dive into what good teaching looks like to open in the fall. This includes reviewing parent feedback around distance learning and having a contingency plan if schools do need to close again during the school year.

It wasn't a surprise that the document recommends keeping students six feet apart while considering developmental ages. There are health protocols which we already knew about like taking a child's temperature and having an isolation room. One surprise was the definitive stance on masks for all students and teachers. We will follow what is best for the health of everyone, but we also know that masks for preschool, kindergarten, and first grade will be very difficult to manage and monitor. I am hoping for some flexibility in future documents on the requirement of masks. Within their recommendations, we hope to set up a model in which classes could be streamed at home and work can be done remotely for those students who can't be at school because they are in a vulnerable population, live with someone who is, or may be sick for an extended period.

Based on the feedback, about half of our families surveyed said that they have plans which cannot change in August or they would prefer a later start date. Considering this and the need for teachers to spend August planning and preparing for a very different format next year, **we have decided to stay with September 2nd as the first day of school for next year.** We hope this provides a much needed mental/emotional health time for children to be with each other. It

stays consistent with the calendar for the Bellingham Public Schools and provides the needed break.

Additionally, some Kindergarten families expressed hardship in having a half-day Kindergarten option in the fall. We don't want to lose any families because of this difficult arrangement, so if it fits within our budget **we will try to hire another adult to split the Kindergarten class into two smaller class sizes instead of doing half days.** Classrooms for these split classes are yet to be decided. Some of you expressed concern about your children having a long-term substitute for a full semester even if it is a credentialed teacher. We are exploring ways in which the two teachers will get equal time with both classes so that when we return to one class in December or January, all students will have a relationship with the lead teacher.

Regarding the Extended Day Program, about 17 families surveyed said they would need this regularly. **We plan to have all families pre-register for EDP and will limit the number of children to 20 each day for the first semester.** Drop-in/occasional use may be an option in the second semester but for contact tracing purposes in the first semester, we need to have the same students in EDP regularly and socially distanced in the library and/or technology lab.

I will continue to communicate with families by email throughout the summer as we update our policies and procedures. You will learn more about the teachers who will be supporting the split classes and what classrooms we will use. I plan to do another "Town Hall" Zoom call in early July for parents to be able to ask questions and for us to have dialogue as needed. If it is helpful, we can do this again in August.

Thank you to everyone who came to the "Moving Up" ceremony yesterday and for helping us celebrate Mrs. Campbell and Ms. Gottschalk. It was important to have closure to such a different year, and we are so blessed with a wonderful community of support. We miss you all and look forward to the day when we'll be back together at school!

Sincerely,
Dan Anderson

Survey Results- Planning for Fall 2020

84 families completed the survey

Number of responses from the following grades

Pre-K- 4

Kindergarten- 13

First Grade- 9

Second Grade- 20

Third Grade-11

Fourth grade- 15

Fifth Grade- 14

Sixth Grade- 17
Seventh Grade- 9
Eighth Grade- 22

School Bus

7 families would use the bus for the current stops
2 families would add the bus if we had a stop in North Bellingham
71 of the families surveyed said they wouldn't use the bus

Conflicts with August 12th

12 families had a conflict of dates that they couldn't change
8 families had a conflict but were flexible
29 families didn't have a conflict but didn't want to start that early
33 families prefer to start on August 12th

Kindergarten- Half-day possibility

4 of the 14 families need a full-day Kindergarten
10 of the 14 families could do a morning Kinder only

Preferred formats for online learning (Mostly preferred or Highly preferred)

Zoom 63% (NA 6 %)
Teams 49% (NA 13%)
Email 84% (N/A 3%)
Seesaw assign. 49% (N/A 25%)
Calls from the teacher 53% (NA 16%)
IXL, Khan Academ, RAZ Kids 53% (NA 6%)

Use of EDP

Most Days- 17
Occasional Days- 29
Early Release Only- 4
Extension Camps only- 4
Not using EDP- 29

Summary of feedback on tools and resources:

Combine teachers to teach different subjects (One teacher for math/science, another for LA/literature)
Collaboration was difficult for younger students (grades 3 and 4)
More lessons from IXL in different subjects if that's what the school is paying for
Workbooks over technology for primary grades
One-on-one meetings for at least 30 minutes per day
Email at the beginning of the week or the beginning of the day with assignments
Daily MS Teams calls helped keep a regular schedule, daily check-in with class, small groups, or individuals

Could it be in the classroom that the 5th-8th grade teacher shares the daily schedule, then sets students to work on tasks for the day with support there in person or at home? Younger grades- would it work to do math/science one day and language/social studies the next day?

Focus on required vs. recommended and be clear about expectations

Kids need time to check in with each other, but not during lessons. Many distractions during the lessons.

Seesaw should be used for posting asynchronous videos and post assignments

Don't have too many papers to fill out. Have workbooks if possible so parents don't have to print multiple copies.

Continue with IXL, RAZ Kids, Quill

Don't put resources in too many different places or use multiple platforms

Prefer not to take pictures of things and have to post them