COVID-19 Update

House COVID-19 Response Committee
June 3, 2022

Today...

- Recognition & Thanks

- Current School Health Advisory

- Resources for Healthy and Safe Learning this Summer

- New CDC Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools to Support Safe In-Person Learning

- The Local Communicable Disease/COVID-19 Management Plans for 2022-23

Recognition & Thanks

# Navigating Unexpected Changes & Challenges
Loss, Grief and Hardship

We've navigated pivotal moments.

- Personal experiences
    - Illness, loss, financial hardship
    - Fatigue, social isolation, increased stress and responsibility

- Shared experiences
    - The first case of COVID-19 at an elementary school in February 2020
    - Distance Learning for All
    - Shared responsibility for public health

Oregon's Epi Curve
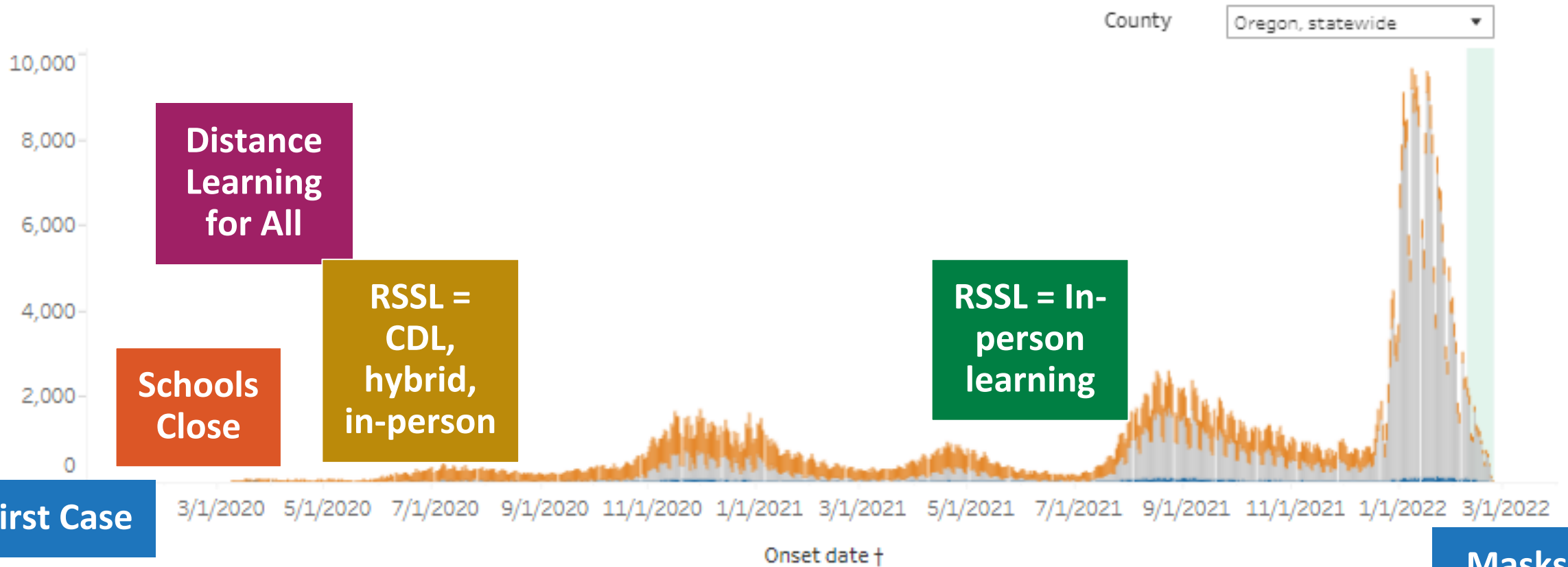
Oregon's Resilient Educators
Gratitude for their tireless

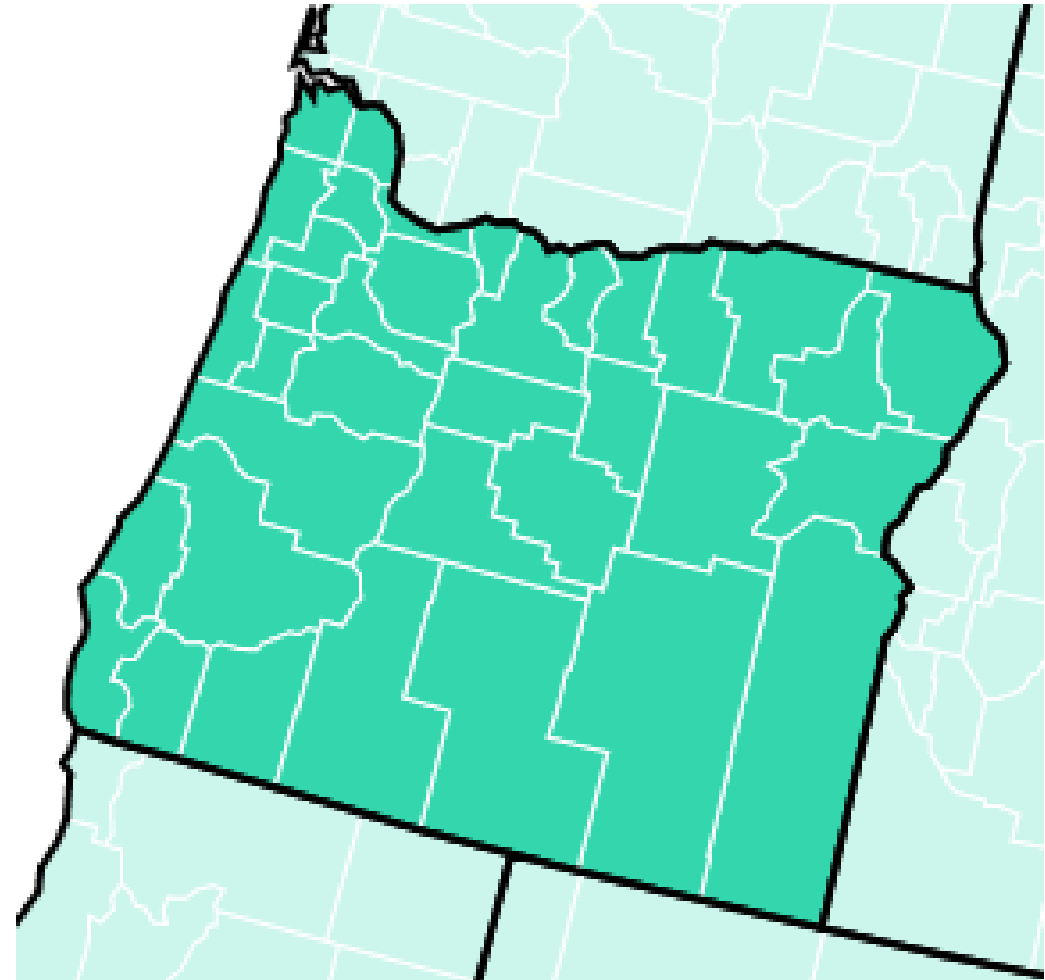**Educators took on a heightened role during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

- Educators became experts in health and safety protocols - using face coverings, physical distancing and more.
- School staff had to take on new and expanded responsibilities, like quickly distributing technology, reinforcing health and safety protocols, and most importantly, making students feel comfortable and safe.
- They transitioned in and out of distance learning, navigating new technology.
- They reached out and created strong relationships with students and their families.
- Administrators experienced staff shortages, filling roles and responsibilities like bus driver, cafeteria worker and office staff.
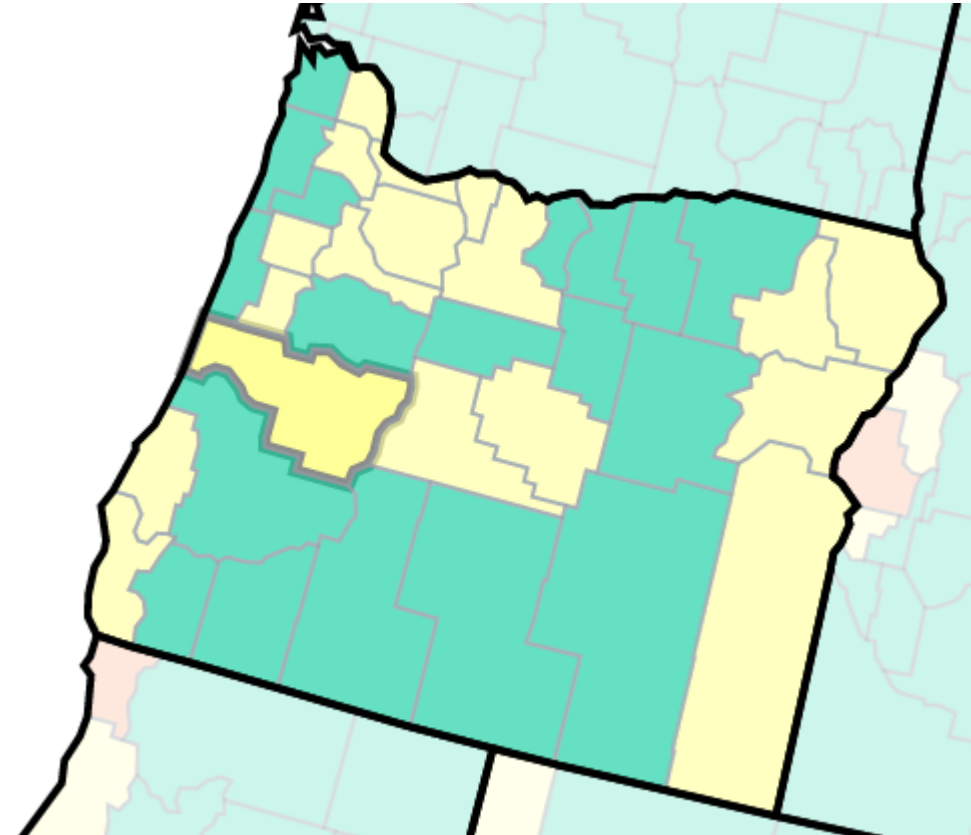
Current School Health Advisory

CDC COVID-19 Community Levels (April 21)

Community Level	Mask Recommendation
Low	No recommendation
Medium	If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask
High	Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status (including in K-12 schools and other indoor community settings)

CDC COVID-19 Community Levels (May 19)

Community Level	Mask Recommendation
Low	No recommendation
Medium	If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask
High	Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status (including in K-12 schools and other indoor community settings)

North Star Goal

- Provide equitable and inclusive access to full time, in-person learning for every student, every school day.

- Districts and schools should maximize implementation of layered mitigation strategies, including recommending face coverings or implementing universal use of face coverings, prior to contemplating a move to remote instruction or other closure of in-person instruction.
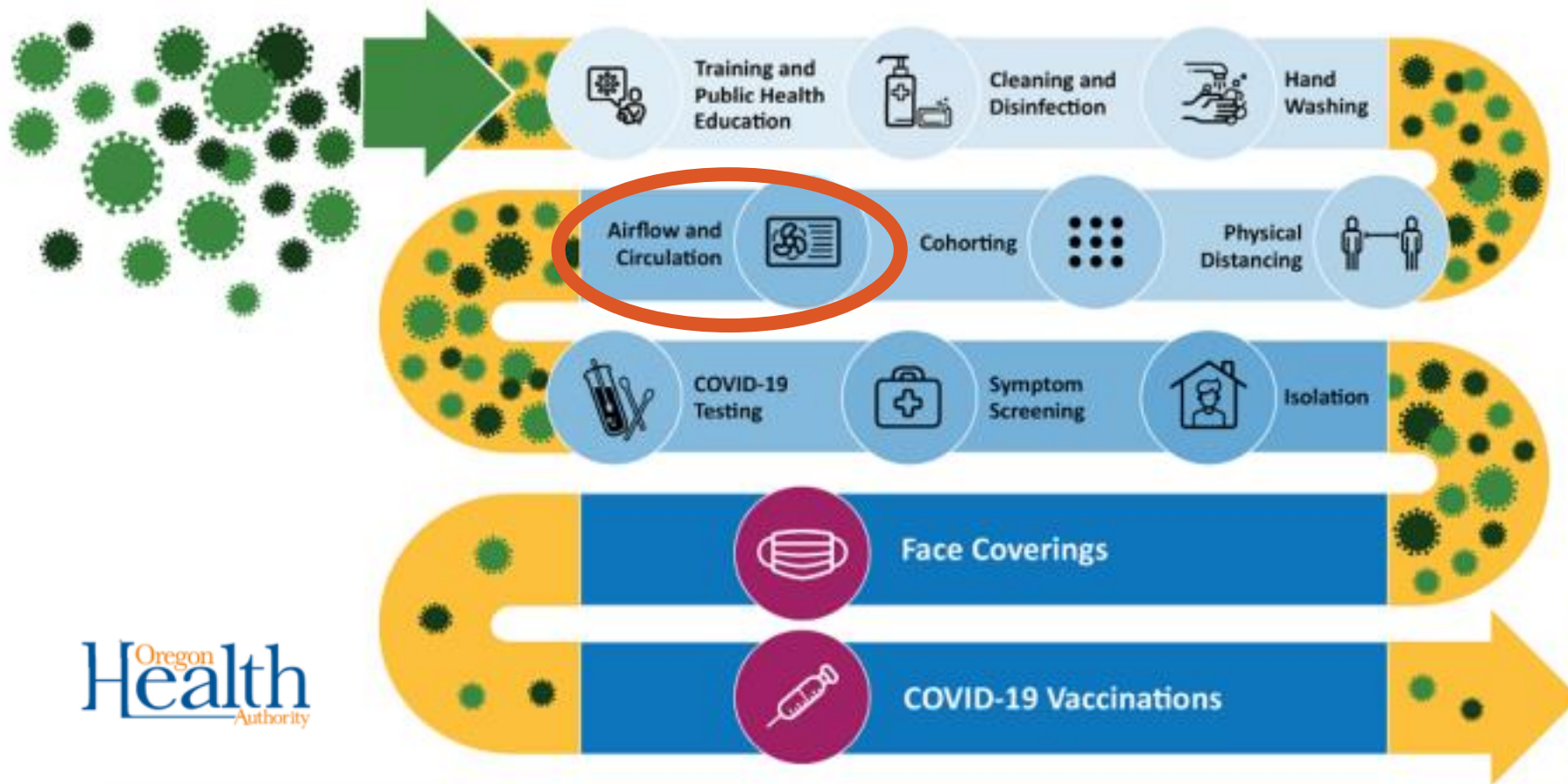
For Schools:

1. Continue to closely monitor COVID-19 transmission within your county through COVID-19 Community Levels. In alignment with CDC and ODE, OHA strongly advises universal masking in K-12 settings when COVID-19 Community Levels are high. At all levels, individuals may choose to mask based on their individual risk assessment (e.g., increased risk for severe disease or family or community members at increased risk for severe disease).

2. Schools should continue implementing free COVID-19 testing programs for students and staff.

3. When districts or schools are considering a shift to remote instruction, they should first maximize implementation of layered mitigation strategies, including recommending face coverings or implementing universal use of face coverings, prior to contemplating a move to remote instruction or other closure of in-person learning.

4. Schools should monitor unusual absenteeism or illness within a cohort and notify their LPHA about unusual respiratory disease activity if the following thresholds are met.
   - At the school level: ≥ 30% absenteeism, with at least 10 students/staff absent.
   - At the cohort level: ≥ 20% absenteeism, with at least 3 students/staff absent.

5. If students or staff have COVID-like symptoms, schools must exclude the individual per OAR 333-019-0010 (3) & (4). Schools may offer COVID testing to the individual through OHA's Diagnostic Testing Program.
   - Primary and Non-Primary Symptoms of COVID-19 can be found within the Planning for COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools on page 6.
   - Centralized support is available for schools and families through the Positive COVID-19 Test website and COVID-19 Case Support Hotline.

Getting vaccinated and wearing face coverings are the two most effective tools to help

REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Layered health and safety measures help us provide equitable and inclusive access to full-time, in-person learning and reduce disruptions for students, staff and families.

Training and Public Health Education

Cleaning and Disinfection

Hand Washing

Airflow and Circulation

Cohorting

Physical Distancing

COVID-19 Testing

Symptom Screening

Isolation

Face Coverings

COVID-19 Vaccinations

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Oregon achieves . . . together!

Oregon Health Authority

Updated May 2022

For Families:

1. If your child is sick with [COVID-like symptoms](#), **do <u>not</u> send them to school**.
2. Seek a COVID-19 test. Contact your local school about a testing kit or your [local pharmacy](#).
3. Eligible students ages 5 and up should get vaccinated and boosted when they become eligible.
    - Vaccination remains the best protection against serious illness from COVID-19 and reduces spread of the disease.
    - [Get Vaccinated Oregon](#).

Resources for Healthy and Safe Learning this Summer

Summer Learning COVID-19 Protocols:

- Operate from current school year guidance including the [School Health Advisory](#) and district's or school's current [Safe Return to In-Person Learning & Continuity of Services Plan](#).

- **Learning outdoors** is an opportunity for summer programs. COVID-19 transmission rates are much lower outdoors. **Schools are encouraged to use outdoor learning** to support safety, reduce the number of students and staff gathered indoors, and allow for [place-based learning, STEM exploration, and outdoor play](#). [Supplemental Guidance for Learning Outside,](#) created by ODE and OHA in April 2021, is available as a reference to support incorporating outdoor learning into summer programs to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

  - **Extreme Heat:** The Oregon Health Authority's [extreme heat](#) webpage provides easily accessible resources for members of the public, local health departments and other organizations to assist ongoing outreach efforts to those most vulnerable to extreme heat events. Tools include [knowing the warning signs and symptoms](#), [health threats from extreme heat,](#) and [fact sheets in multiple languages](#).

  - **Reducing Health Effects of Wildfire Smoke:** Wildfires and smoke can create dangerous conditions for youth, especially those with chronic health conditions. The Oregon Health Authority's [wildfires and smoke](#) webpage offers information about current wildfires, wildfire smoke conditions, and what you can do to reduce the health effects of wildfire smoke with tools such as [wildfires in Oregon](#), [health threats from wildfire smoke](#), and [FAQs in multiple languages](#).

Summer Learning Best Practices:

On May 19, Oregon Department of Education (ODE) released the companion toolkit to the Summer Learning Best Practice Guide. The toolkit supports the planning, managing, and implementation of robust, equity-driven summer programs by offering practical tools and resources. Please visit the Summer Learning website to find resources and additional information.

New CDC Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools to Support Safe In-Person Learning

Oregon is Largely in Alignment with the New CDC Guidance…

- New [CDC Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#) was released on Friday, May 27.

- It includes:
    - Strategies for Everyday Operations
    - COVID-19 Community Levels and Associated Prevention Strategies
    - Considerations for Prioritizing Strategies

- Schools, with help from local health authorities, should consider local context when selecting strategies to prioritize for implementation. Schools should balance risk of COVID-19 with educational, social, and mental health outcomes when deciding which prevention strategies to put in place. Considering: Age of population served, access to resources, equity & communities served, pediatric-specific healthcare capacity, and impacts on students experiencing disability.

Attending to COVID-19
in the 2022-23 School Year

North Star for the 2022-23 School Year

Provide equitable and inclusive access to full time, in-person learning for every student, every school day.

Meeting districts, schools, students and families in this moment

- The pandemic, and the state's response to the pandemic, have exposed and exacerbated existing equity issues.
  - Communities of color, Tribal communities, and those navigating poverty and houselessness are carrying a greater burden of COVID across their lives, not just in education.
  - Students who experience disability and their families are carrying a greater burden of COVID across their lives and are less likely to be well-served by education systems.
  - People living in rural parts of Oregon are experiencing COVID in ways that more urban areas of the state may not be.
- School, healthcare, wellbeing, employment, housing – the pandemic has brought challenges to every area of life for many families – including educators and their families.

Shifting to understand and respond to the implications of COVID

Future Focus:
- Identifying and quantifying the impacts of COVID on students, educators and education systems - with an emphasis on understanding disparity and disproportionality;
- Intervening meaningfully through inclusion, engagement and antiracist policy and practices in these areas of impact while centering on equitable metrics and goals;
- Maintaining a focus on whole person wellbeing in schools; and
- Utilizing antiracist and strengths-based approaches that acknowledge strengths of individuals, families, and communities and build on existing success.

In the now, we are making communicable disease management part of the operational muscle of districts and schools. And, carrying forward the antiracist and equity focus.

Rationale for the 2022-23 school year

- The last 2 years have set districts and schools up to be **ready for a more robust locally held response to communicable disease outbreaks**, including COVID-19

- The last 2 years clarified the systems and structures needed to **operate through a sustained communicable disease threat**

- The coming year will mark changed expectations for **how districts and schools operate during a communicable disease event**

- COVID remains a concern for the coming year; schools **need to be ready to respond to cases and outbreaks**

- Other respiratory illnesses will again be a concern, as student and staff gather indoors without the protection of face coverings

Design for the 2022-23 school year

- Shift schools from Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework guidance and documents to **locally developed, held, and practiced communicable disease management**.

- **Integrate requirements** for a communicable disease management plan, clear school-level operational plans, and the ESSER-required safe return plan **into one set of assurances and a set of tools and a template for school-level operations**.

Three requirements in one submission:
- Operational Plan (OAR 581-022-0106(4))
- Communicable Disease Management Plan (OAR 581-022-2220)
- The Safe Return Plan (Section 2001(i)(1) & Interim Final Requirements)

A Template that is intersectional

ODE, OHA, and OSNA have pulled together a template that:

- Centers students and families that systems regularly underserves.
- Builds on other mental health support planning.
- Builds on ongoing and future community engagement to align student success.
- Builds on other emergency response and operational continuity planning.

Template, instructions and training tools will be released in the next 2 weeks.

Building from existing plans in districts

Using the template and supporting documents, schools would create a plan that meets and aligns with other operational and emergency plans they already have in place.

The overall package includes:

- Roles and responsibilities of schools, students and families, district and local public health partners
- An operational response which centers equity
- Key components of COVID-19 outbreak prevention, response, and recovery

Schools may use the template provided, or provide the same information a different format.

Training and Technical Assistance

ODE: Training to ESDs to prepare for work with districts. Communication of template and expectations under existing rules. Work with ESDs to address questions that arise during their work with component districts. Transition the ODE COVID-19 Inbox to technical assistance on OCDMP.

OHA: Training to ESDs along with ODE.

ESDs: Trained as trainers/primary technical assistance to support districts and schools on the template and assisting with submission to ODE.

Questions?