

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a parent of 3 grade school children. It has almost been a year since our children have seen the classrooms, they belong in. It is time to change this and we need immediate action. We need K-12 open ASAP, and it needs to be mandated by Kate Brown that this happens by a certain date. She said, "lets open schools" but then it left it open ended to all districts. This gave each of them the ability to push back and say when they want to open. We as parents are no longer taking the bait to string this out for those districts and teachers that choose to not return. It is unfathomable to me that this is being allowed. If I chose to not go to work for whatever reason, I would lose my job and easily be replaced. This is un-tolerable, and we need to put a stop to it. Why are the teachers special when they are teaching the least vulnerable group?

Start asking yourself these questions? We are allowing "big box stores" like Costco and Walmart to have hundreds of people in them but our schools can't be open? Restaurants are closed and it's hurting families trying to make a living and yet we can go to the outlet mall and go shopping? These are far from essential! What is essential is the academic and mental well-being of our children. Our kids are starting to ask these questions and as parents and citizens we are questioning the intelligence of the ones making these decisions.

I am exhausted mentally from helping my children with their schoolwork **(and by the way, not getting compensated for this)**. As well, I am mentally tired of seeing my children struggle with schoolwork on a computer. I have numerous pictures in my head of the many times my child and myself were in tears trying to learn something that did not make sense to them over a computer. I

work part-time (as a nurse) and see Covid daily. I have worked in the thick of it for the past year, have not gotten Covid (neither have any of the 50+ people I work with).

A particular metric that needs to change, the ODE RSSL needs to be updated to include larger cohort sizes and smaller per student square footage. It has been proven by private schools and other states that have been open since September that students can return and it can be done safely. Children are not spreaders and there has been little to no cases from these schools being open. Kate Brown announced that Oregon has the lowest Covid infection and death rate. So.. with that being said, let's open the doors for our children so we don't hurt their future! Instead of coming up with reasons we shouldn't go back, why are we not focusing on the reasons they should go back?

We cannot shutdown the most important thing on our list; **EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN.** This should be at the forefront of every person and every issue at the State level. We are hurting them in far more ways than this virus is, and I refuse to call it a Pandemic. That is over with, we are just stringing this out as long as we can to prove I'm not sure what? Let's move on. I hope that whoever is reading this is advocating for the generation at the greatest risk of mental health, our children. Please put them back in the classroom where they belong before we see more repercussions from this, i.e., Suicide.

In regard to the teacher's union, enough is enough. The priority of a teacher should be the student, not themselves. This has become a selfish battle among the teachers and as parents we are done with the excuses to return. We as parents did not have a choice to do schooling at home, nor were we given the options for childcare. We had to figure this out, so do they. It's time to return to the classroom and quit holding their hands. The teachers are getting put to the forefront of our most at-risk population, the elderly to get their

vaccine. So... they get the vaccine or not and get back in the classroom, end of story. At this point, you as the administration of these educators should be saying, "this is enough"? We are paying taxes for our kids to be in the classroom building, and that is not happening. If this doesn't change, the parents will go elsewhere with their children, private schools and homeschooling. Public schools will be a thing of the past! Let's not let that happen. Please advocate to change the mandate to get our kids back into school.

I am including this picture (below) that I found of the curve of Covid cases in comparison to Idaho and Oregon. Idaho is fully open with kids going to school and contact sports but yet our curve looks almost exactly the same. Let's start looking what others are doing and not focusing on what we don't want to do, open schools.

Oregon

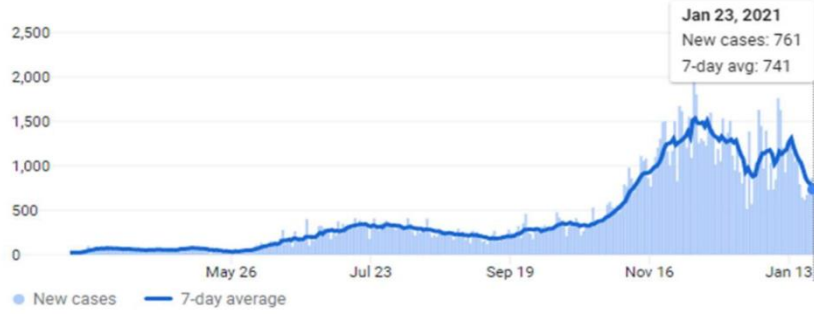
Oregon

Idaho

Idaho

Daily change

New cases United States Oregon All time

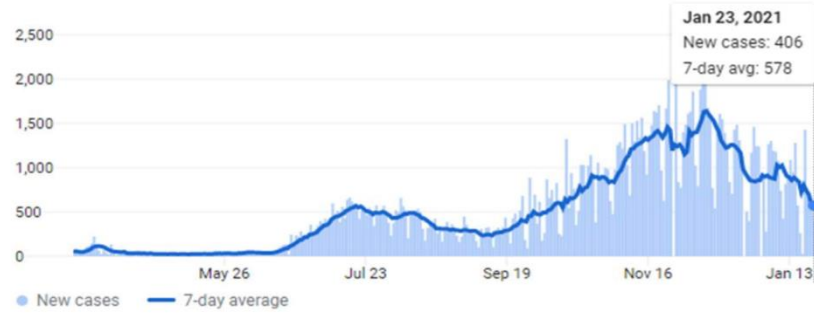


Jan 23, 2021
New cases: 761
7-day avg: 741

Each day shows new cases reported since the previous day · Updated less than 18 hours ago · Source: [The New York Times](#) · [About this data](#)

Daily change

New cases United States Idaho All time



Jan 23, 2021
New cases: 406
7-day avg: 578

Each day shows new cases reported since the previous day · Updated less than 18 hours ago · Source: [The New York Times](#) · [About this data](#)