

Dear school partners,

While it is true that no two years are alike, we are all likely to agree that 2020 was the most unique year most of us have ever experienced. For those who have lost friends, family, or acquaintances to COVID-19, our sympathy and condolences go to you and all those that have been impacted by the disease. As the year comes to a close, it is easy to focus on the many bad things we may have experienced and forget that there were any positives. Evidence suggests that [gratitude works wonders to improve your mental health](#). So during this time of year, we hope you are able to take time to practice self-care and gratitude. We are grateful to have been able to help keep you informed this year as we battled this pandemic. We send best wishes for a happy and successful 2021!

This week's Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Childcare Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Key indicators of COVID-19 activity
2. *NEW* Schools and Childcare Task Force office hours
3. REMINDER: Please share your COVID Coordinators' contact info with PHSKC

1. Key indicators of COVID-19 activity

The following chart includes King County data aligned with key indicators of COVID-19 activity outlined in the document titled [Tools to Prepare for Provision of In-Person Learning among K-12 Students at Public and Private Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) released by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). The following are data as of **December 30, 2020**. These data are available and regularly updated on the PHSKC [COVID-19 data dashboard webpage](#).

Current King County COVID-19 Activity Level:		MODERATE
Education Modality:	Phase in in-person learning. Prioritize Elementary (pre-K - 5) if they are not already receiving in-person learning, and Middle School. If schools can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment, add more high school students when case rates are below about 200/100K/14 days.	
Extracurricular:	Extra-curricular activities must follow K-12, applicable Safe Start protocols and Governor's proclamations on COVID-19.	
Transition:	Across all COVID-19 Activity Levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When trends in cases and hospitalizations are flat or decreasing, and the school can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment, expand access to in-person learning• When trends are increasing, pause expansion of additional in-person learning and maintain access to in-person learning for those who have it. Schools are not required to reduce in-person learning or revert to remote learning based on metrics if the school can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment.• Consider other health and education risks and benefits to children and their families At any COVID-19 level, transition temporarily to	

	full distance learning for 14 days when school meets criteria in DOH’s K-12 Health and Safety Guidance (p 16) or on recommendation of the local health officer.
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Activity Level Key:	Low	Moderate	High
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Indicator	Target/Range		Current Status
Cases/100K/14 days ¹	High	>350 cases/100K/14 days	269 cases/100K/14 days
	Moderate	50-350 cases/100K/14 days	
	Low	<50 cases/100K/14 days	
Trend in cases and hospitalizations ²			Cases: Increasing Hospitalizations: Flat/decreasing
Test positivity ³	High	>10%	8.9% ³
	Moderate	5-10%	
	Low	<5%	

¹Total number of cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents.

²Total number of cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents **AND** Rate hospitalization per 100,000 residents in the past 14 days compared to the prior 14 days.

³Percent of COVID-19 tests with positive results over the past 14 days—**WA State Department of Health has resumed reporting on negative laboratory results. There remains a large backlog of negative lab results that have not been processed (about 100,000 negative lab results). The count of people tested and all test results is underestimated as WA DOH processes this backlog. As a result, the test positivity reported on this dashboard are overestimated, especially in the most recent week.**

2. *NEW* Schools and Childcare Task Force office hours

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force will begin offering “office hours” for [School and District COVID Coordinators](#). Office hours will be held every Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm starting January 14th. Attendees are expected to review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#) and the associated [training videos](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page) **BEFORE** attending office hours.

Come with your specific COVID-19 questions related to your K-12 school (e.g., environmental health, clarification of King County guidance). If you have questions prior to office hours, please submit them to schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov with the subject line “Office Hours.” We will do our best to answer them during the following Thursday office hours session.

Webinar link coming in next week’s sector email!

3. Seattle utility discount program

Please share with your Seattle-based networks! The City of Seattle can help people who are struggling to pay their electricity and utilities bills. Eligible households can enroll in the City of Seattle’s Utility Discount Program (UDP), which offers a 60% discount on Seattle City Light bills and a 50% discount on Seattle Public Utilities bills. To be eligible, pre-tax household income must be at or below 70% of the state’s median income.

How to apply:

- Complete the [online enrollment form](#)
 - The form is in English. For language support, call 206-684-0268 to speak to a representative.
- Applications will be reviewed and processed. If an application meets the eligibility requirements, the household will be enrolled. (The response email or letter may be in English.)
- The discount may take up to **two** billing cycles to appear on bills.
- **Customers approved for receiving the discount will need to renew their application with income documentation six months after their approval date.**

For questions about UDP enrollment or for assistance, call or e-mail UDP@Seattle.gov. Interpreters available by request. There may be a slight wait time to connect to an interpreter.

Additional information, including more detailed eligibility requirements, is available at www.seattle.gov/UDP

Throughout the pandemic, Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities will keep services on for customers, even if they are behind on paying their bills. Customers can set up a deferred payment plan by calling 206-684-3000 or by [sending an email through this website at any time](#).

4. REMINDER: Please share your COVID Coordinators' contact info with PHSKC

To ensure that we are reaching staff critical to your schools' COVID response efforts, [please respond to this survey](#) to provide their names and contact information. This will be helpful in our ongoing efforts to keep you and your staff informed and updated during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also facilitate easier follow-up and collaboration when cases are reported in your buildings. Thank you for taking the time to respond!

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force