

Sector Email 2.25.21

Subject header: Updates on COVID-19 from Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC)

Schools

Dear school partners,

Cases continue to drop each week – which is great news! What we are doing is working – so let's keep it up! This week's e-mail is full of resources to share with your school communities so we can support the downward trend in new infections – including websites in multiple languages and new tools to understand how COVID-19 spreads.

Reminder: please review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#), [related resources](#), and [training videos](#).

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 Modeling Report from the Department of Health and Institute for Disease Modeling
3. Vaccine Updates
 - a. Updates to the PhaseFinder tool
 - b. Updates to King County Vaccination Websites
 - c. Prepare your communities and staff for when they are eligible for vaccines
4. Masks Protect You and Me: Updated Posters on Mask Use
5. BLIND COVID Telephone Line
6. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
7. Events
 - a. King County COVID-19 Speaker's Bureau Events
 - b. UW Medicine hosts Community Conversations: Straight Talk about COVID 19 Vaccines
 - c. WELLBEINGS
8. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours
9. PHSKC support and assistance to schools survey

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 **February 25, 2021**. These data are available and regularly updated on the PHSKC [COVID-19 data dashboard webpage \(links to specific data points are included in the following chart\)](#).

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. 	

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	99 cases/100K/14 days
	Moderate	50-350 cases/100K/14 days	
	Low	<50 cases/100K/14 days	
Trend in cases and hospitalizations ²			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases: Decreasing • Hospitalizations: Decreasing
Test positivity ³	High	>10%	3.7% 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—**Test positivity is reported with a 3-week lag, due to reporting delays**

2. Schools Modeling Report from the Department of Health and Institute for Disease Modeling

Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and the Institute for Disease Modeling (IDM) released a [new report](#) exploring how to minimize COVID-19 infections in schools, and minimize the spread of the virus within school buildings and the larger community. This report, “Stepping Back to School” uses a computer model of COVID-19 to explore how the virus is introduced into schools, how it spreads once there, and the impact on the broader community. The report provides additional information about effective ways to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 as schools return to in-person instruction. [Read the full report here.](#)

3. Vaccine updates

Schools play a critical role in sharing out trusted messaging about vaccine eligibility, availability, and access. We rely on you to help us get out the following information to your communities and colleagues.

a. Updates to Department of Health’s “Phase Finder” tool

The Department of Health (DOH) has updated its [“Phase Finder” tool](#), which helps people determine if they are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Phase Finder Phase Finder is now available in an additional 10 languages. These languages include English, Spanish, Russian, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese, Hindi, Tagalog and Korean. The tool will be available in another 20 languages within a week. Translated Phase Finder tools are [available at this link](#). DOH has also made the tool available in a paper version to support individuals who do not have access to the internet. Paper versions of the tool are available on the [partner resources page](#).

b. Updates to King County Vaccination Websites

The Public Health [Getting Vaccinated](#) page now has links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. The [Vaccine FAQ](#) page answers many common questions about COVID vaccine, and includes links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

c. Prepare your communities and staff for when they are eligible for vaccines

Encourage your staff and communities to sign up for [Phase Finder](#) system from the State DOH will notify individuals when they are eligible for vaccination.

Once school staff become eligible, they may experience delays in getting an appointment for vaccination due to the very high volume of inquiries. This will get easier as providers receive more doses and high-volume vaccine sites open. When school staff become eligible for vaccination in [Phases 1B2 or 1B4 of the State’s plan](#), they can access vaccine in one of the following ways:

- **Option 1: Call their doctor's office or health care provider** to see if they have available vaccination appointments.
- **Option 2:** Washington State's **Phase Finder online tool** can confirm their eligibility and provide them with a list of possible vaccination locations (including hospitals and

pharmacies). [FindYourPhaseWA.org](https://www.findyourphases.wa.gov/)

- **Option 3:** If they need language interpretation or can't use the online Phase Finder tool, call the Washington state's **COVID-19 Assistance Hotline**: Dial 1-800-525-0127 or 1-888-856-5816, then press #. Available Monday-Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and [observed state holidays](#) 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Phone support is also available from the Public Health COVID-19 Call Center at 206-477-3977, 8am-7pm, Monday-Friday. For language interpretation using any of the phone numbers listed above, callers should say their preferred language when they are connected.
- **Option 4:** Visit [Washington State Department of Health's list of vaccination locations in Washington](#) state, organized by county.
- **Option 5:** OSPI and Kaiser Permanente have partnered to announce, "Get Ready," a large-scale school vaccination plan to vaccinate Washington educators and school staff equitably and safely when they become eligible under the state's vaccination distribution plan. Kaiser Permanente will administer the vaccine through Kaiser Permanente owned and operated medical facilities around the state, including in King County. [Learn more here.](#)

4. **BLIND COVID Telephone Line**

A telephone line to assist blind and low vision individuals with access to testing and vaccine resources in Washington. Blind and low vision individuals can call **360-947-3330** to ask questions regarding access to resources related to COVID-19. No medical advice will be given, as the purpose of BLIND COVID access line is to provide access to information over the phone that may otherwise be difficult to locate through the web or other means. [BLINDCOVID.COM](https://www.blindcovid.com/) will have additional media and a podcast specifically focused at providing information related to navigating daily life throughout the pandemic.

5. **Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care**

6. The pandemic continues to rage on, harming not only our physical health, but also devastating jobs. Many people are finding themselves in sudden need to health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period for](#) free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – *Washington Healthplanfinder*. The enrollment period is open from **Feb. 15-May 15, 2021**. The enrollment period is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#). **Upcoming events**

a. **King County COVID-19 Speakers' Bureau trainings on the COVID-19 vaccine**

- i. Jueves, 25 del febrero a las 5:00 PM en español: El departamento de Salud Publica de Seattle y el Condado de King (PHSKC) y la Oficina de Asuntos de Inmigrantes y Refugiados de Seattle (OIRA) se han asociado para organizar una session de capacitación para compartir mas información sobre la vacuna COVID-19, de modo que usted pueda hablar con confianza con su comunidad sobre el proceso de vacunación y ayudar a contestar preguntas frecuentes sobre la vacuna. [Regístrese para el eventoquí](#) - Seleccione el formulario en español haciendo clic en el menú desplegable e cerca de la esquina superior derecha.

- b. UW Medicine hosts Community Conversations: Straight Talk about COVID 19 Vaccines**
To respond to vaccines questions and concerns, UW Medicine is holding several information sessions in multiple languages via Zoom. All these sessions will be led by UW Medicine clinicians. Spread the word, everyone is encouraged to attend. Bring prepared questions. Each session will start with general information and then move on to questions and answers.
- i. Spanish, 2/26 at 12 noon: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/92944381225>
 - ii. Somali 2/24 11am: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/91548909478>
 - iii. English + ASL 2/26 12:30pm: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/93185626031>
 - iv. Vietnamese 3/5 1pm: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/93871647608>
- c. WELL BEINGS** – February 25, 7pm PST a national campaign from public media, in collaboration with a coalition of partners including PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs and their student journalists, created to address the health needs in America. The campaign debuts with the Youth Mental Health Project — emphasizing the mental health and voices of youth to raise awareness, address stigma and encourage compassion. Experts, including teens with lived experience, will discuss mental health challenges related to current events, ways to overcome barriers and reduce stigma, coping mechanisms and resources for getting support. For more information, visit the [Eventbrite Registration](#)

7. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours are BACK!

PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force “office hours” resume this week – Thursday, February 25. Office hours are held each Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm. Please come with your specific COVID-19 questions related to your K-12 school (e.g., environmental health, clarification of King County guidance) – and please join us to share promising approaches that your school is using to implement COVID-19 protocols as well! 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.

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.

[Join here](#) using password **COVID19**

8. PHSKC support and assistance to schools survey

Please help us evaluate our work and continue to improve!

A project out of the University of Washington School of Nursing seeks to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of PHSKC’s COVID-19 response support for schools through a confidential 10-minute survey and follow-up interviews. Participation is open to any King County school- or district-affiliated individual. Themes identified will be shared back to PHSKC. The [survey can be accessed via the link here](#) and is open until Feb. 28th, 2021.

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force

Childcare

Dear childcare partners,

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1. Vaccine updates
 - a. Updates to Phase Finder Tool
 - b. Updates to King County Vaccination Websites
 - c. Prepare your communities and staff for when they are eligible to be vaccinated
2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
3. BLIND COVID
4. Upcoming Events
 - a. How to apply for a PPP Loan Webinar
 - b. King County COVID-19 Speaker's Bureau Events
 - c. UW Medicine hosts Community Conversations: Straight Talk about COVID 19 Vaccines
 - d. WELLBEINGS

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4. Upcoming events

- a. **[Child Care Providers: How to Apply for the Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\) - A Workshop to Access Forgivable Loans to Sustain Your Business!](#)** -February 25, 7-8:30 PM PST: Join this webinar to learn about eligibility guidelines, get advice on how to ensure the PPP application goes smoothly; hear from a peer child care provider who benefitted from a PPP loan; and have the opportunity to get questions answered from lenders and technical assistance providers. [Click here to register.](#)

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