Idaho State Board of Education

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BOARD APPROVES REVISED RE-ENTRY CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Idaho State Board of Education today approved revisions to its re-entry criteria for schools to resume normal operations.

The revised criteria are designed to align with Governor Brad Little's Idaho's Rebounds Plan launched last week and is designed to reopen the state over four stages culminating in late June.

"With the update that Governor Little announced last week, we needed to make sure the Board's re-entry criteria for public schools is aligned with the Idaho Rebounds plan," Board President Debbie Critchfield said. "Our hope is that we can now focus our energies on what re-opening looks like in the fall and I would go so far as to say that is what our local school districts should be thinking about as well."

Idaho State Board of Education Minimum Re-entry Criteria: (Revised 5/4/20)

1. No statewide stay-home orders are in place and schools have a physical distancing plan in place that has been approved by the local health district (the term "restrictions" references mandatory requirements while "guidance" is suggested behaviors).

a. Exceptions to the soft closure may continue to be considered by local education agencies for staff and student needs, on a case by case basis, as determined at the local level (e.g. small groups of students that can be distanced in a way that meets the physical distancing criteria for the purpose of proctoring exams or working one-on-one with special education students, as long as the school district or charter school has sufficient capacity to maintain hygiene and sanitation). These exceptions may continue at the local school board's discretion even if the local school board does not choose to return to in-person instruction for all students prior to the start of their 2020-2021 academic school year.

2. The statewide reopening criteria have been met as defined at rebound.idaho.gov. School districts and charter schools located in communities that have experienced no community spread may consider returning to in-person instruction within the physical distancing guidelines and approval by the local public health district.

3. Approval by the local public health district, after review of school district and charter school cleaning, disinfection, and physical distancing protocols. The processes for determining local health district approval will be identified at the local level through coordination between the LEA and the local health district.

4. Re-entry plan approved by the local board of trustees identifying minimum school protocols (see list below).

Required Minimum School Protocols

a. Cleaning and disinfection protocols.
b. Identify and plan for vulnerable staff and students with a special emphasis on people over age 60 and those who are medically vulnerable.
c. Identify and plan for staff duties which require close contact.
d. Absenteeism plan for staff and students whose parents do not feel comfortable returning their student to school and for students who show symptoms of the coronavirus.
e. Communications plan for informing parents and staff of the school district and charter school response plans, protocols, and policies to manage the impact of the coronavirus.

f. Verify point of contact for each school district and charter school for effective communication and collaboration with the local public health officials.
g. Reopening plans are reviewed in consultation with local public health officials.

5. Any school planning to reopen must have a plan in place for immediate closures should a student, faculty or staff member be diagnosed with COVID-19. This closure plan must be approved by the local public health district.

These re-entry criteria are subject to change in order to adapt to changing circumstances. Additional criteria will be developed for a fall start of the school year, based on conditions at the time. These criteria apply to any instruction prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

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