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Governor Kate Brown Announces Healthy Schools Reopening Council

June 10, 2020

Council will advise equitable and safe return to school for Oregon students

Portland, OR—Governor Kate Brown today announced that she will be convening a Healthy Schools Reopening Council to advise her and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) during the Ready Schools, Safe Learners (https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Pages/Planning-for-the-2020-21-School-Year.aspx) K-12 schools reopening process. The council will ensure all community voices––especially those representing school employees and Oregon's Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other communities of color––have a forum to give feedback as school districts develop their plans for a safe return to school for Oregon's students.

"It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted students from Oregon's historically-underserved communities," said Governor Brown. "We must do better. Through the work of the Healthy Schools Reopening Council, we will ensure that Oregon's students return to school safely, with equitable access to the tools they need to learn, grow, and achieve."

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"This disease impacts us all. With this council, we will gather input from teachers, educators, support staff, parents, caregivers, administrators, and health care experts, from urban and rural school districts, to ensure that the Ready Schools, Safe Learners process is equitable and inclusive of all community perspectives."

The council, which will meet over the next several months as districts develop their plans, and periodically during the school year, will be charged with:
• Giving feedback on equitable policies and practices for a safe return to school
• Informing additional guidance from ODE developed over the summer to help school districts implement their back-to-school plans
• Receiving updates on school district plans and implementation
• Reviewing COVID-19 status reports and evaluating outbreak management during the school year

The council will include elected officials, education community representatives, health representatives, and members of the public, with a focus on ensuring that a wide and diverse range of community voices are represented.

A full roster of council members will be available prior to the council's first meeting in June.

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