



# Yakima Health District

## Media Release

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### **Yakima Health District Recommends Following Washington State Department of Health guidelines**

**YAKIMA, WA-** On March 25, 2021, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) updated recommendations for students in grades K-12. The updates were made after the Centers for Disease Control updated their recommendations based off new research. These updates recommended school officials begin spacing students three feet apart rather than six feet apart as previously recommended, provided that these areas do not have high community transmission. In areas with high community transmission, students may still be spaced 3 feet apart if they follow the co-horting model. The DOH guidance specifically states:

“In areas with high community transmission, CDC and DOH recommend that middle and high school students use co-horting (grouping students) and at least three feet of distance between students or at least six feet of physical distance between students if co-horting is not possible. CDC defines high community transmission as COVID-19 case rate of greater than 200 cases per 100,000 population over 14 days or test positivity is greater than 10%. Community case rates and test positivity are available by county on the Governor’s Risk Assessment Dashboard and DOH Data Dashboard.”

On March 28, 2021, the Yakima Health District (YHD) sent a communication to Yakima County Superintendents that stated that YHD agreed with the DOH guidance. During the March 31, 2021 Board of Health meeting, the Board of Health discussed a need for additional clarity on the recommendations. For this reason, the Board of Health approved a motion which stated:

“The Yakima County Board of Health recommends that Yakima County schools start making plans to return to school full time using current Department of Health guidelines and using cohort models when metrics require to accomplish this when we don’t meet case rates or test positivity rates.”

The motion approved by the Board of Health does not change any information and recommendations that were already sent by the Yakima Health District. The motion was passed to provide additional clarity.

### **Additional information**

**[Washington State Department of Health – K-12 School Guidance](#)**

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