

Dear Overlake Community,

As I write this update we are wrapping up our fourth week of school and I continue to be amazed at the resiliency of our students and faculty as they learn to adapt to teaching and learning in our distance-learning model, *Overlake Online*.

The start of this school year has not been one that any of us really hoped for, but I am thankful for the tremendous lift our faculty have made to put together a robust and full academic program that continues to challenge our students every day. I am also thankful for your ongoing support that you provide to students at home.

As you may know, the Health & Safety team, along with administrators and trustees have given a deadline of the end of this September to reassess Overlake's status in regard to moving from an online school to a hybrid school. My goal with this note is to provide insight into our decision making and what guides us in our decisions.

In assessing the current virus conditions, we are paying close attention to three metrics that both King and Snohomish counties are evaluating. These are specifically the number of cases of the virus per 100,000 people, the Re or reproductive number which measures the virus' ability to spread, and the percentage of positive tests of all tests being done. We chose to use this data in King and Snohomish counties as a majority of employees and students live in these two counties. If you are interested you can find the King County data [here](#) and the Snohomish County data [here](#).

In working with our Health Director and in consulting with our epidemiologist these metrics provide a good barometer on how active the virus is. Using these metrics, we have zeroed in on having the number of COVID-19 cases be between 30 – 35 per 100,000, that the R factor should be below 1 and the percentage of positive cases be less than 5%. Once we are in this range, we need to ensure that we remain in these ranges for a minimum of two-weeks.

At this point we are not in these ranges so we cannot move to a hybrid teaching and learning model for at least several more weeks. Moving too quickly to such a method of instruction would create significant risk for our students, faculty, staff, and families.

I know for some of you this is not the news you wanted to hear, but it is the reality of ensuring that the school continues to keep the health and well-being of our community in the forefront of all we do. I also realize that there is no prize for being the first school to reopen for hybrid instruction.

If you have questions or would like to hear more from me or Sam Hillyer, our Health Director, feel free to join us at a Town Hall on **Monday, September 28 at 7pm**. Here's the link to the virtual meeting: <https://bit.ly/TownHall-Sept28th> (Please note this is a different date than advertised in Overlake News as we learned the first Presidential debate is being held on Tuesday.)

Warmly,
Matt