



NEWS RELEASE

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[SPS Newsroom](#)

Plan to Resume In-person Instruction Delayed

SPS and educators' union continue bargaining

SEATTLE – Seattle Public Schools has announced the need to delay by at least a week the previously-communicated start date to begin in-person instruction for preschool, kindergarten, first grade and students enrolled in special education intensive service pathways.

The initial start date for the phased-in return to in-person instruction was March 1, 2021. That date has now been changed to March 8, 2021.

The reason for the change is because the district has not yet reached an agreement with the Seattle Education Association on new working conditions necessitated by in-person instruction.

SPS is continuing to bargain with SEA, the labor union representing SPS teachers, classified staff, and instructional assistants.

The SPS Board of Directors will hold a special board work session on Thursday, [Feb. 25, 4-5:30 p.m.](#), to discuss next steps for the plan.

During the session, the board will also take action on the OSPI-required Washington Schools 2020-21 Reopening Progress Report Template.

The meeting will be [broadcast on television](#) or can be viewed on the [SPS TV YouTube channel](#). To listen by phone, dial 206-800-4125 and use Conference ID 931 417 102#. Meeting agendas are posted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

Key points of the district's work in bargaining with SEA:

- District staff is committed to continuing negotiations in good faith.
- SPS has requested mediation support from the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) to help facilitate a timely resolution.
- PERC is impartial and will help SPS and SEA explore solutions that lead to a mutual agreement.

- At this time, SEA has declined mediation services.

The most current bargaining update, which outlines the district's proposal to SEA, including a racial equity analysis, is found on the [Bargaining Webpage](#).

As soon as new information becomes available, SPS will communicate directly with families, staff, students, and the broader community.

BACKGROUND

On [Dec. 17, 2020](#), the SPS school board directed staff to begin implementing plans for a phased increase of in-person instruction for students enrolled in special education intensive service pathways beginning second semester and no later than March 1, 2021; and for preschool, kindergarten, and first grade students on March 1, 2021.

For several months, district staff has been preparing buildings for the resumption of in-person instruction.

Buildings are ready with personal protective equipment (PPE); health and safety protocols are in place; plans for student transportation and meals are in place.

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