



## NEWS RELEASE

2/26/21

Contact: Tim Robinson, Lead Media Relations Specialist  
206-465-5404 c  
[tirobinson@seattleschools.org](mailto:tirobinson@seattleschools.org)  
[SPS Newsroom](#)

### Update on SPS Return to In-person Instruction

**SEATTLE** – Seattle Public Schools students in the following categories will be able to return to in-person learning beginning the week of March 8, 2021.

This includes students enrolled in special education intensive service pathways:

- Focus
- Moderate/Intensive
- Social Emotional Learning
- Distinct
- Medically Fragile
- Bridges
- Developmental preschool

Also included are all students enrolled in an SPS preschool or Head Start.

Families will continue to have the option of remaining in a full remote instructional model, which the district will continue providing.

The SPS Board of Directors adopted a [resolution](#) on Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021, that directs the district to take specific steps to resume in-person instruction beginning the week of March 8, 2021.

The resolution includes language approved and adopted by the board on [Dec. 17, 2020](#), and additional directives, including establishing as essential the work of providing in-person instruction for students receiving special education services in intensive service pathways as “expeditiously as possible” for up to five days a week.

SPS sent a letter to those educators and staff who provide instruction and other services to students receiving special education services in intensive service pathways, and preschool and Head Start educators, letting them know that they are deemed “essential” and that they should plan to begin working in buildings and to arrive for training on March 8. Students will begin returning in a phased-in approach on March 11.

“Throughout the pandemic, the School Board and staff have committed to providing a high-quality education, no matter the circumstances or learning environment,” said SPS Board President Chandra Hampson. “We are thankful for our incredible educators who have worked tirelessly to provide strong instruction in this new remote environment. While remote education has presented challenges for many of our students, students requiring intensive special education services and our youngest learners have been disproportionately impacted by remote learning.”

Said Superintendent Denise Juneau: “Working with our partner union, SEA, will continue, but because we haven’t reached an agreement yet, we have to begin to take the steps to bring educators back for our students. I applaud the board’s courageous action to designate as essential these instructional services for some of our special education students and our youngest learners in preschool and Head Start.”

At this point, all other grade levels remain to be bargained between SPS and the Seattle Education Association.

SPS has prepared school buildings for the return of in-person instruction, with all necessary safety equipment, ventilation upgrades, social distancing, transportation, and meal services, etc.

When students return, it will be in a cohort, or small group, model. Classes will be 15 students or less. Each cohort will remain together throughout the day and will use designated entrances, exits, and classrooms.

SPS is now confirming which students will be returning (based on student-family choice) and the necessary staffing to accommodate the returning students.

###

For more information about **Seattle Public Schools**: [SPS webpage](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#)