



# ICRS

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION REGIONAL SCHOOL

November 17, 2020

Good afternoon ICRS community,

Many of you have reached out to me regarding Governor Inslee's press conference on Sunday, November 15. He provided updated guidance for the current stage of the COVID-19 pandemic and our state's attempt to combat the virus. I want to take this opportunity to talk about his press conference and to make clear the school's stance. We plan to continue operating in our current hybrid mode based on the reasons outlined below.

Governor Inslee stated the following about the current educational models being used in our state:

Today's announcement does not change our guidance for childcare or for K-12 education. That guidance and recommendation will remain in place for now. We know childcare is critical and we know how critical education is...**so far, the experience for schools in Washington and across the nation show that health and safety measures, when rigorously enforced, can limit COVID transmission in the school environment.** At this time, we are not asking districts currently offering in-person instruction to close.

These are encouraging words from the governor. The Archdiocese of Seattle schools have had similar success. Of the 19,500 students enrolled in the 67 schools, there have only been 11 positive COVID cases. That is a positivity rate of 0.06%. As of today, the Archdiocese has had **NO** outbreaks and the positive cases (11) that have been reported have not originated from school buildings nor have they spread through school communities. Our mitigation strategies are working! The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. With our commitment to mask wearing, social distancing, frequent handwashing, building sanitation, morning screenings, and limiting access to essential staff on campus, we are doing our part to ensure that every child and teacher is in a safe place. Parents are also part of our success story when they keep their sick children home to recuperate fully. Working together, we can continue in-person instruction.

Governor Inslee and the Archdiocese are not the only ones optimistic about the low numbers we are seeing in educational environments, our own Skagit County Health Officer, Howard Leibrand, had this to say last week about current research, **"Recent research shows opening schools are not resulting in large spread of the virus, especially at the elementary level,"** he said. **"I think it's a safe place for kids to be,"** he said, **"assuming the public health guidelines are being followed."**

The Governor's recent announcement, COVID statistics within Archdiocesan schools, including our own zero cases, along with data we have received from the CDC and studies from across the country, give us the confidence to continue operating within our current academic model. Unless we are forced to do so by the state or county authority, we have no plans to revert to fully remote learning. My staff and I continue to work to improve our hybrid model and explore additional ways to support the students and families of ICRS.

Peace and Joy,



Principal Rodriguez

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