

Changes in Guidance from OSPI

We have had a whirl wind of new information in the last 48 hours. Here is what we know in the short term: any changes need to be **bargained**. Our current LOU covers us until we have a new LOU. See current LOU: [Letter of Understanding COVID Closure Work Expectations](#)

We got notice last night that OSPI was reversing course on its distance learning stance. The Department of Education came out with new guidance for districts (March 21, 2020). The Department of Education Office for Civil Rights encouraged districts to provide distance learning while they are closed due to COVID-19 concerns. Please see the links below. OSPI then reached out to districts yesterday (March 23, 2020) to offer guidance for long-term closures and distance learning (see the link below). This is a substantial shift in thinking from our state and federal leadership. However, the mandate is clear- each district will need to begin thinking of how to create long distance learning plans that are equitable and allows for student learning. You may have seen the *Seattle Times* article, but please read the March 23 OSPI update and the DOE-OCR Fact Sheet (links below).

LWEA's guiding interests are ensuring staff and student safety, bargaining reasonable workloads, providing high quality instruction, and elevating educator voice in this discussion. Here is where we are right now:

- We will be meeting with LWSD leadership today and through the coming days to ensure our interests can be met while complying with these new state mandates.
- We know that a well thought out plan and process is the best way to set ourselves up for success. LWEA wants to ensure staff and student supports are in place for any changes that come our way.
- We are continuing to reach out to WEA and our surrounding districts for further information.
- We will be reaching out in the coming days to hear from members about how we can adapt to this latest change.
- We will continue to share more information as soon as we are able. We will work to ensure that information is accurate and does not create more confusion.

Again, any changes need to be **bargained**. Our current LOU covers us until we have a new agreement. I understand all the new changes can feel like whiplash, but we will weather this storm together.

DOE- OCR Fact Sheet: [DOE-OCR Fact Sheet](#)

OSPI Update March 23, 2020: [OSPI Update March 23, 2020](#)