

Dear Members,

We remain engaged with the District in our ongoing COVID-related bargaining efforts. Currently we are close to finalizing an LOU for K-5 special services instruction, and we are starting our negotiations for grades 2-5 in-person instruction.

We are working dual purposes right now: to make certain that member interests are represented at the bargaining table while also making sure that concerns about the implementation of our finalized agreements, like the [K-1 LOU](#), are addressed effectively. On both accounts, we have heard from members and building reps seeking input or help. We have entered a phase of significant change to the work conditions for K-1 teachers, and these changes will continue to ripple through our elementary grade bands as more students are brought in-person. Our LOUs communicate a great deal of information that must be understood in conjunction with existing CBA language. Success hinges on our members accessing resources like FAQs to support their understanding and asking questions of building principals, site supervisors, and building reps to develop a shared understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities for the remainder of the school year.

Most crucially, LWEA and the District must continue to work collaboratively on how to return students safely and how to educate all students successfully in this crisis, regardless of the instructional model. We value our partnership with the District, which has yielded good results for our educators and their students. The District has never objected to our request to bargain updated LOU language or to address member concerns. They have remained committed to an interest-based bargaining process that emphasizes cooperative problem-solving, instead of falling prey to autocratic displays of power that delay productive discussion of important issues. **We support the efforts of other Associations to be recognized as valued decision-making partners in their districts.**

### **Safety Resources**

To support an understanding of necessary changes to work conditions, we are sharing a [safety checklist](#) that helps teachers prepare their classrooms for in-person instruction. The document contains two safety checklists: one for the classroom and one for the building. Our goal is to help members understand their role in engaging safety in their classroom and in the building. These checklists are packed with information and should be digested in small bites.

### **Vaccination of School Employees**

WEA continues to ask Governor Inslee to prioritize educators who are already working in-person and those who returning soon for immediate vaccination. As is typical, educators are being asked to help cure what ails the community with an insufficient remedy. Elected leaders need to listen to the concerns of educators who are frightened and angry at the prospect of returning to schools without vaccination, who feel maligned for demanding that safety be made a top priority, and who are frustrated by leaders who say that the work of educators is extraordinarily valuable but also demonstrate that educators are not worthy of prioritization.

Currently, school employees are eligible during [Phase 1 Tiers B2-B4](#), which can begin as soon as 50% of those eligible in current phases are vaccinated. You can use the DOH [Phase Finder](#) tool to learn when you can get the vaccine. OSPI has announced their [Get Ready](#) plan to coordinate the vaccination of all school employees as soon as they are eligible and doses are available. Locally, Dr. Holmen has shared that the District has been working with Kaiser and Evergreen to vaccinate people who work in our schools and qualify under Phase 1A and Phase 1B Tier 1.

It is our hope that when school employees are eligible for vaccination under DOH plans, our District will do all that it can to provide staff with quick access to vaccine options. While we wait for shots, and even once we receive them, everyone must implement health and safety practices like masking, distancing, and hand washing with care and precision. These safety measures will help protect us even after we are vaccinated but our students are not.

In Solidarity,

Howard and Katie