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August 24, 2020

Grays Harbor School Leadership,

During the period August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 23<sup>rd</sup> ninety cases of COVID-19 were reported in Grays Harbor County. Our current 14-day case rate (from August 5<sup>th</sup> through August 18<sup>th</sup>) is 83.6. Most recent data is still pending; however, with the increase of cases that we have had in the past week, our case rate will be around 5 times the State's goal (25cases/100,000 population over 14 days). Grays Harbor County's current case rate is well into the **high COVID-19 activity level** (over 75 cases /100,000 population over 14 days) as outlined in Washington Department of Health's *Decision Tree for the Provision of in Person Learning among Public and Private K-12 Students during COVID-19 (Decision Tree)*.

The guidance listed in Washington Department of Health's *Decision Tree* with regard to educational modality and extracurricular activities suggests that K-12 schools should prepare to implement the educational and extracurricular modalities associated with the 'high COVID-19 activity level' for an extended period of time. Schools should consider implementing the educational and extracurricular modalities associated with a lower level of activity (as defined in the *Decision Tree* document) **only after Grays Harbor County's case rate shows a downward epidemiological trend for four consecutive weeks.**

The Grays Harbor Public Health's team, which includes our epidemiology team, the School Liaison Officer, and myself, will continue to provide information about local COVID-19 activity trends as it relates to the *Decision Tree* document. For case data, Grays Harbor Public Health will continue to update the local COVID-19 data webpage (<http://www.healthygh.org/directory/covid19/casecount>). I encourage school leadership to utilize the Washington State COVID-19 risk assessment dashboard (<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-risk-assessment-dashboard>) to monitor Grays Harbor case rates and other key metrics as outlined in the *Decision Tree* document.

I understand the difficult decisions schools, families and individuals are facing in these unprecedented times. As a community, each one of us can take action to reduce the spread of disease by staying home when ill, washing hands with soap and water often, keeping a physical distance of 6 feet from people outside their household, and wearing a face covering at all times in public spaces if able. If we all follow these practices, we can disrupt the current community spread of COVID-19, at which time schools may be able to increase in-person activities.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Bausher  
Grays Harbor County Health Officer