



# YAKIMA HEALTH DISTRICT

Prevention Is Our Business

February 9, 2021

To: ESD 105 and Yakima County School Districts

## **Masking:**

Due to ongoing research by the Washington State Department of Health on the effectiveness of gaiters, and the fact that they are listed under “special considerations” rather than approved by the CDC, the Yakima Health District does not support or recommend the use of these in schools K- 12 currently. Current recommended masks by YHD are cloth masks, surgical masks or a face shield with drape if approved by the health officer.

## **Band and Choir and Other Activities**

Due to an increase risk of COVID spread with band, choir, and sports activities indoors, YHD is recommending holding these activities outdoors. However, the State Department of Health has put out [guidelines](#) to help reduce the risk of transmission. We do not want to jeopardize the steps that we have taken for in-person learning in the high schools. When the decision was made to recommend in-person learning for high schools, it was determined that it is important to do it in stages. One of the stages would be to bring activities such as band, choir, and sports back in increments. The Yakima Health District is recommending allowing band, choir and other activities listed in the guidelines, to start outdoors for three weeks, giving an opportunity to see if there are any significant increases in transmission in the high schools. All guidelines by DOH must be followed. After three weeks, if there are no significant increases of transmission in the school, the recommendation is to allow these activities indoors, strictly following the State DOH guidelines. Any schools that are currently and are successfully engaging with in-person learning for at least three weeks, may immediately begin indoor band, choir and other activities, strictly following the State DOH guidelines. These are recommendations for Superintendents and/or School Boards to consider and the final decisions on how to move forward is up to the Superintendents and/or School Boards.

Currently, indoor sports such as volleyball have been occurring successfully, and may continue under the State DOH guidelines, as long as there is no significant increase in transmission.

Larry Jecha, MD, MPH  
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