




**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 4, 2021

TO: The Honorable Catherine Payne
Chairperson, Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto 
Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Presentation on Department of Education Strategies for Safe Reopening of Elementary and Secondary Schools to More In-Person Learning for Fourth Quarter of 2020-2021 School Year**

BACKGROUND

Since the onset of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) has implemented strategies to mitigate the spread of the virus including the closure of school facilities. Department schools have not been fully reopened since March 13, 2020, the end of the third quarter of the 2019-2020 school year. Students have lost up to 174 in-person instructional days due to health and safety mitigation efforts.

During the current school year, schools have been gradually returning students to campus for in-person instruction. Schools have implemented instructional models that best meet the needs of their students and school community while adhering to the health and safety guidelines of state health leaders and addressing the concerns of employees. This has been a challenge for school leaders who have had to manage competing demands regarding student learning and the welfare of staff.

Recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) research has revealed that attending school where recommended mitigation strategies are implemented might not place students in a higher risk environment than exists in the community. Having students in a monitored school setting might increase adherence to mask compliance and cohorting can help minimize exposures for students and employees. In-person instruction for students has numerous health and societal benefits, especially for vulnerable students and families.¹

During the fourth quarter of the current school year, the Department plans to work towards maximizing the return of students to school campuses for in-person instruction.

¹ COVID-19 Cases and Transmission in 17 K–12 Schools — Wood County, Wisconsin, August 31–November 29, 2020 | MMWR (cdc.gov)

PRESENTATION

The attached presentation outlines the Department's strategies to increase in-person instruction in elementary and secondary schools for the fourth quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. The strategies considered are aligned with CDC and Hawaii State Department of Health guidance for reopening schools.

CMK:cm

Attachment

c: Phyllis Unebasami, Deputy Superintendent
Assistant Superintendents
Complex Area Superintendents
Principals



OFFICE OF THE
Superintendent

**Agenda Item V. A. Presentation on
Department of Education Strategies for Safe
Reopening of Elementary and Secondary
Schools to More In-Person Learning for
Fourth Quarter of 2020-2021 School Year**

**General Business Meeting
March 4, 2021**

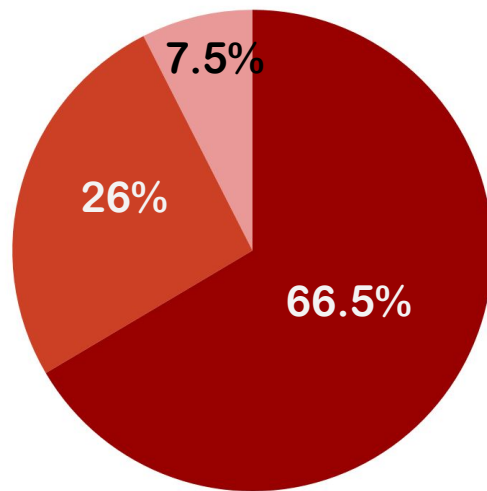
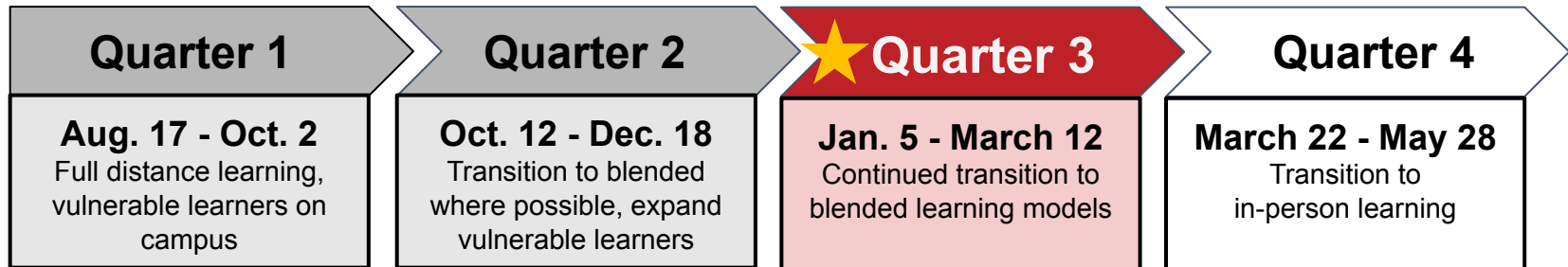
Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent





Reopening of Schools

Where we are now

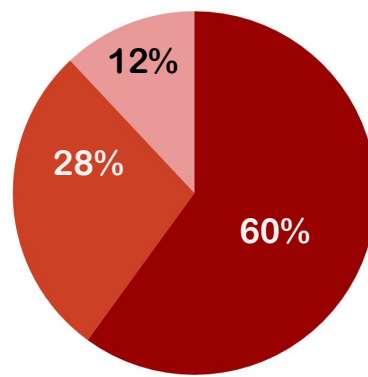


Total

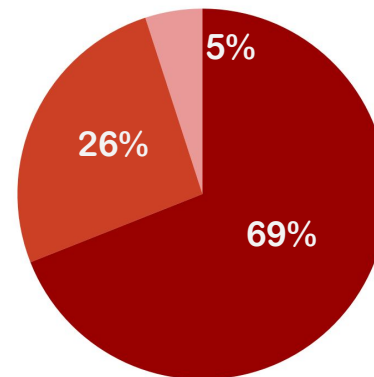
Students in full in-person learning

Students only online by parent choice

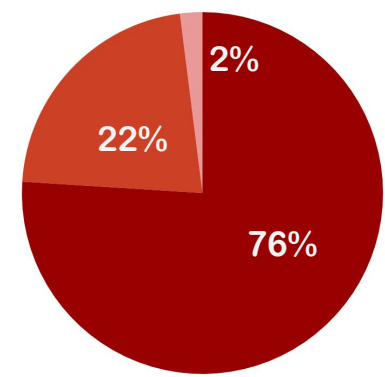
Students in blended learning (some dedicated face-to-face instruction)



Elementary



Middle



High

As reported for Quarter 2 of SY 2020-21



Reopening of Schools

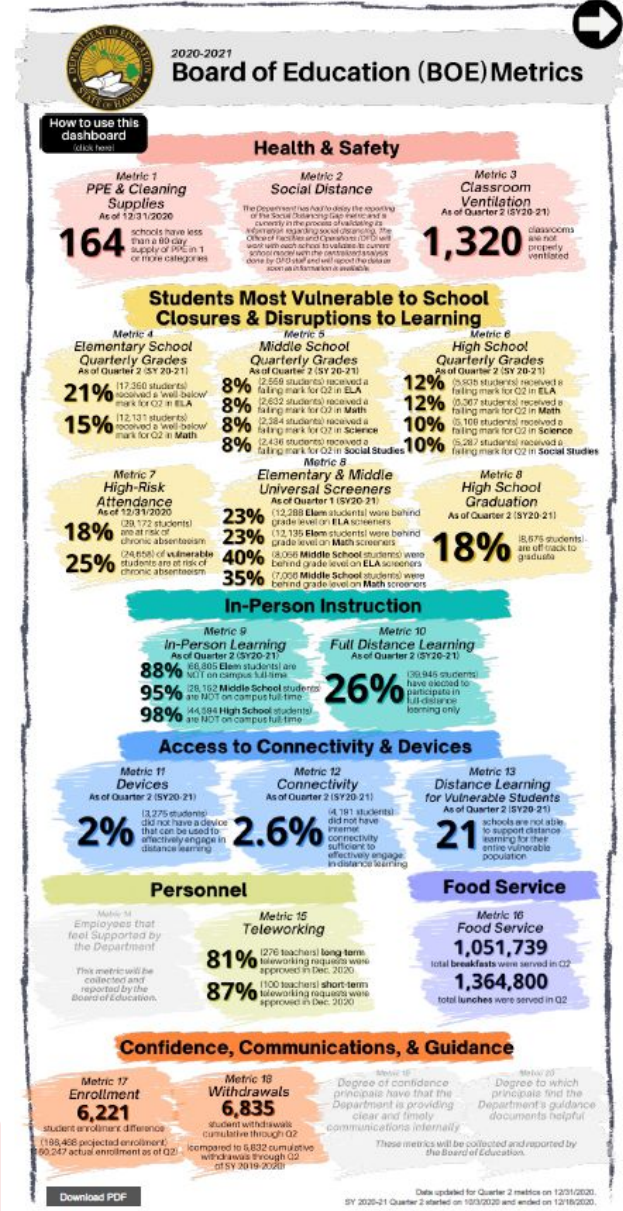
Using data to drive decision-making

Board of Education Vital Sign Metrics are used to monitor progress as students return to campus

- **Health & Safety:** As of Q2, 93 schools had at least a 60-day supply of PPE and cleaning supplies in ALL six categories.
- **In-Person Instruction:** As of Q2, nearly 12,000 students statewide receiving full in-person learning.
- **Academic Performance:** As of Q2, 21% of elementary (8% of middle and 12% of high school students) received 1 or more failing marks in English Language Arts.

As of Q2, 15% of **elementary** (8% of middle and 12% of high school students) received 1 or more failing marks in mathematics.

Access the dashboard online at
bit.ly/RTLmetrics





Guidance from CDC, U.S. DOE, DOH

Strategies for safely reopening K-12 schools

Several layers of safeguards should be implemented to reduce the spread of disease in the school setting. For optimal protection, a combination of the following mitigation strategies should be emphasized:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks
- Physical distancing (to the greatest extent possible)
- Hand-washing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including ventilation improvements
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with state Department of Health
- Staying home when not feeling well





Mitigating Community Spread

Monitoring our school communities for the spread of COVID-19

Assess level of risk in school communities

Risk of introduction of case to school is dependent on level of community transmission

Schools may provide in-person instruction (either full or hybrid) through strict adherence to mitigation strategies. Decisions should be guided by school-specific factors:

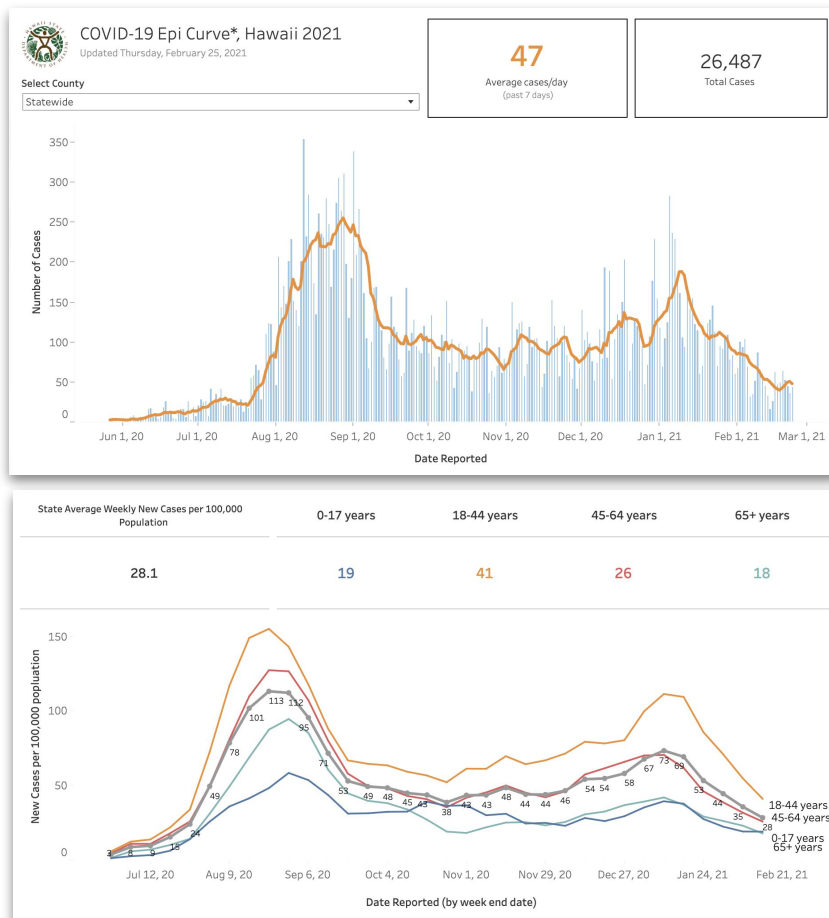
Mitigation strategies implemented

Local needs

Stakeholder input

No. cases among students and staff

School experience with safely reopening



Source: Hawaii State Department of Health, Hawaii COVID-19 Data



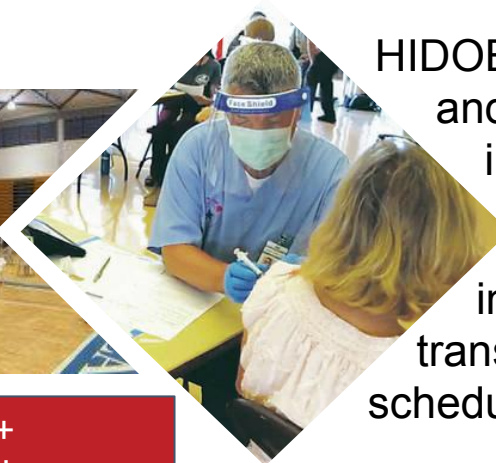
Vaccination Planning

Reducing the impact of COVID-19 on school operations

Public school system prioritized as
“frontline essential workers”



Hilo's Edith Kanakaole Stadium vaccination POD



HIDOE facilitated collection
and verification for
individuals wanting access

19,000+ have expressed
interest; names have been
transmitted to DOH for
scheduling

Prioritized:

Employees age 75+
Medical professionals
School-based employees in daily
contact with students and public

Frontline essential worker at the
complex and state level

School-based PODs bring vaccination to
school communities (Waianae, Keaau HS)



DOH-sponsored Points of Dispensing (POD)
allow for mass vaccination

Neighbor island DOE points of contact work closely
with county DOH to increase access in their regions



Maintaining Healthy Operations

Managing school operations as students return to campus

- Keep abreast of federal, state, and county guidelines.
- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible.
- Establish a communication plan for individuals to report potential exposure to COVID-19 and notifying staff, families, and the public of COVID-19 cases.
- Train staff on all safety protocols.
- Ensure continuity of mental health services for students and employees, such as offering remote counseling.



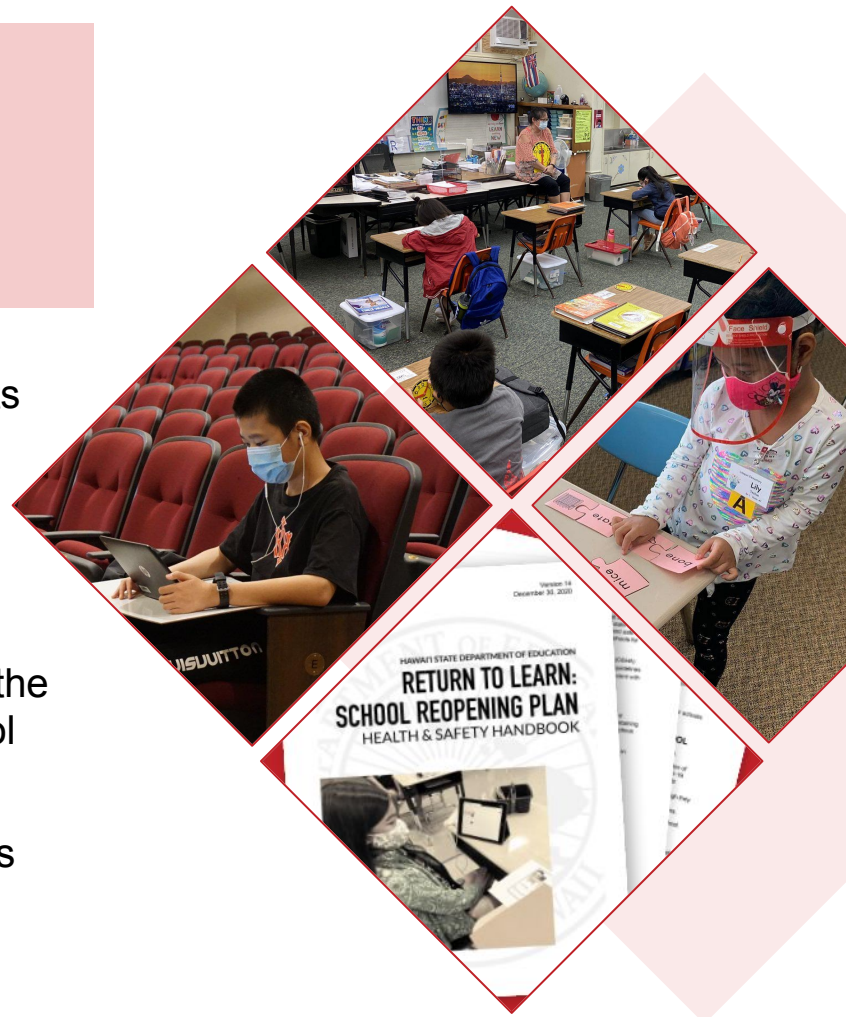


Goals for Quarter 4

The safe return of students to school campuses

Facilitating the return of students to campus . . .

- Renews hope for community.
- Demonstrates responsiveness to the needs of our families as they return to work.
- Prioritizes elementary student learning and developmental needs.
- **Elementary schools**
 - The goal is for all elementary school students to return to campus daily.
- **Secondary schools**
 - All schools will work toward returning more students to campus daily.
- Schools will layer mitigation strategies to provide the greatest level of protection for students and school employees.
- Schools will monitor and prepare for periodic shifts to remote learning when needed.
- HIDOE and DOH will continue to meet to review data and evaluate strategies.





Engagement

Advocating for the safe return of students to in-person learning

HIDOE will continue to engage in conversations with stakeholders as we transition to more in-person learning.

- HIDOE State and Complex Area Leadership
 - Supporting schools as they increase in-person learning
- Principals
 - Planning to maximize the return of students to campus
- School employees
 - Identifying supports needed as students return to campus
- Parents and families
 - Communicating who will be returning to in-person learning and ensuring daily on-time attendance
- Unions
 - Collaborating with HGEA, HSTA, and UPW to facilitate the safe return of students to school campuses





MAHALO!



HawaiiPublicSchools.org

