

School Plans Disrupted by COVID-19

Classroom sizes factor in plans for distancing

Oregon may have a harder time keeping students 6 feet apart than other states in the new school year under plans to keep students and school staff safe during the public health crises brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. This is because, according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Oregon has one of the largest average class sizes.

With COVID-19 already disrupting the last school year, almost every family is wondering how this next school year is going to go.

The virus is still preventing many from returning to work, but when it comes to children the conversation is a little more serious.

Many are worried that with such tight spaces, lots of schools won't have the option of following social distancing guidelines.

With that in mind, figures show Oregon is No. 5 in the states with the most crowded classrooms with an average of 25.6 students per class. Utah had



High School students work on advanced placement physics in this archive photo from AP. COVID-19 is disrupting plans for the new school year, and Oregon may have a harder time keep students 6 feet apart than other states because it has one of the largest average class sizes.

the most students per classroom at 26.6 students, Washington had 24 students for each class coming in at No. 8. The states with the lowest average class count were Vermont, North Dakota and Maine at 17.

While these numbers are averages, they do not necessarily represent every teacher or district's story. For high school teachers, class sizes can differ dramatically between periods. Others who teach music, gym, art, and other non-core classes typically have larger than average class sizes.

Similarly, these numbers are spread out across the state—some schools will have lower numbers, while others have larger roll lists. In addition, newly built schools typically have larger classrooms, while older schools were built with class sizes of the past in mind.

Ultimately, while this data provides a good big picture look, it doesn't speak to the unique challenges each school and district will face in returning to class.

Under state guidelines for playing it safe, Oregon school district may choose to continue remote learning in the fall or a combination of both classroom and out of classroom learning.

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Like you, the CareOregon team misses seeing the people we know and care about, including our members.



careoregon.org/connect-to-care

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we want to make sure you're still **getting the care you need**. Providers and clinics are working hard to keep you connected to physical, dental and mental health care and substance use treatment.

Call your primary care clinic to discuss your options (you'll find the number on your Health Share Member ID card). They'll tell you what services are available, how you can see your provider and the best way to get care.

Clinics are providing options including:

- ▶ **Clean and safe in-person appointments**
- ▶ **Phone and video appointments.** If you have an appointment online, make sure you:
 - Use a phone or computer with a camera.
 - Get your phone, tablet or computer ready a few minutes before your appointment.
 - Find a quiet, private space so you can talk freely. (Use a headset or headphones, if possible!)
 - Remember that video uses a lot of cell phone data, if you're not on Wi-Fi.

Get connected



If you need help with benefits or other resources — like transportation options, equipment or other items to help keep you healthy, or interpretation — here are some ways you can connect:

- Customer Service: **800-224-4840**
- Member portal: careoregon.org/portal
- CareOregon website: careoregon.org