

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Thursday, March 25, 2021.

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After a mini surge of seven new COVID-19 cases in a week's time, the number has held at 344 for two days now. Thirty eight people are now awaiting test results.

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The Port Townsend School District will offer full time, five-days-a-week classes at Salish Coast Elementary School beginning on April 12, two weeks from this coming Monday. Students from kindergarten to second grade will participate. The school day will run from 8:15am to 2:50pm, with early release every Wednesday at 12:50pm. All K-2 students will remain with the same classroom teacher, and all current K-2 distance only learners will continue in distance learning.

The district is now analyzing a number of different options for grades 3-12, with the goal of returning students for additional in-person learning whenever possible to safely do so. Last week the CDC updated guidance for schools, and we are still awaiting an announcement from the Washington State Department of Health about how the new guidance will be adopted in our state. We will keep families updated with more information when we have it. Any other changes that we are able to make to our learning model schedules would take place no sooner than April 12.

In a press release, the district thanked the school community for its continued support, stating "we know that each of our families has a vested interest in having schools fully reopened. Over the course of this calendar year, we have also learned that each family will make choices based on what is right for their child or children. We know that there isn't one plan that meets all needs or family situations. But we are dedicated to continuing to work towards getting more in-person learning time for each student given the current case data in our county."

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Vaccination continues at a rapid pace. Jefferson Healthcare is inoculating 300 to 375 people daily, while Jefferson County has begun a series of mass vaccination events scheduled to operate every weekend as long as the supply holds out.

The Seattle Times reported that Jefferson County leads the state with its percentage of people fully vaccinated. That figure is now 26 percent, attributable partially to county's median age and the directive to vaccinate older people first. According to the Peninsula Daily News, the supply to Jefferson and Clallam Counties could slow down in the next few weeks to allow other counties to catch up. On the other hand, the availability of new vaccines will eventually counteract that slowdown.

To schedule an appointment at Jefferson Healthcare for a vaccination go to <https://jeffersonhealthcare.org/> and click on the top yellow banner. A scheduling link for the weekend events is available on the county website. But there is one important step required before scheduling, to clear your eligibility at <https://form.findyourphaseswa.org/210118771253954>. Those who do not have access to a computer call 360-344-9791 for help with Phase finder and to make an vaccination appointment.

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Camping is coming back to Jefferson County facilities a week from today, April 1, with the opening of the Lake Leland, Quilcene and Oak Bay Campgrounds. There's an element of the Wild West here, as reservations are not accepted and the campgrounds are claimed on a first come, first served basis. For more information visit <https://countyrec.com/info/default.aspx>. Those who crave a more stable adventure can reserve campsites at Forts Worden, Townsend or Flagler, through the state parks website (<https://www.parks.wa.gov/>).

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org).

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.