

SOUTH WASCO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

*PO Box 346
Maupin, OR 97037*

*Ryan Wraught, Superintendent
Mark Endsley, K-12 Principal
Aimee Hovis, Business Manager*

*www.swasco.net
Telephone: (541)395-2225
Telephone: (541) 395-2665
Fax: (541)395-2223*

3/4/2022

Dear Students, Parents and Staff,

On Monday, Governor Kate Brown held a press conference about the statewide indoor mask mandate and the school mask mandate. Oregon Department of Education had a follow up meeting later in the week to relay what this means for schools.

Here is what we have learned;

Mask Mandate Lifted March 12th

As I am sure you are aware the statewide mask mandate will be lifted effective March 12th. We also learned today that schools have the local decision making power to lift masks from school buses on March 12th as well.

In order to accommodate individual beliefs and concerns about mask wearing, the district will make all mask wearing in all district locations including buses, optional for students, parents and staff beginning March 12th.

Things to Understand about the Mask Optional Model:

Testing

- There will be no test-to-stay COVID testing in the district.
- The district will continue to use BiNox Now – Diagnostic Testing to confirm positive cases.

COVID Exposure

- Back to the previous definition for exposures to COVID
 - If a person has been within 6 feet, for 15 minutes within 24 hours of a person with a positive case of COVID, that person is considered to be a close contact.
 - Parents will be notified in the event that their child has been exposed to a positive COVID case.

Positive case of COVID

- Students and staff will need to stay home for 5 days and be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Quarantine

- OHA is advising that with the quick transmission rate of Omicron, additional quarantining past 5 days, is ineffective in stopping the spread of Omicron.
- The district will follow our own district policy on Communicable Diseases (JHCC, JHCC-AR, GBEB, GBEB-AR) as well as cooperate with our local health department for guidance.

At this stage in the pandemic people have either had COVID or are vaccinated for COVID. The belief is that most people have some immunities for the next 90 days; which has helped authorities loosen up on COVID mandates.

The district will continue to follow OHA, ODE and our local health department's guidance. We will continue to enhance ventilation/airflow in our classrooms, perform daily cleaning in our buildings along with encouraging handwashing and hand sanitizing to mitigate the spread of COVID in our schools.

It is very much feeling like we may be seeing the light at the end of this two-year long tunnel. I would like to thank you for your support of schools and school staff in these amazingly trying times. Here's hoping that the worst is behind us!

Thank you,

Ryan Wraught, Superintendent
South Wasco County School District #1