



1620 Applegate Street  
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December 14, 2021

Dear Students and Families of the Philomath School District:

As many of you are aware, there are changes to COVID-19 guidelines, as designated by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). The three changes specifically listed below include quarantine timelines, outdoor face covering requirements and the “Test-to-Stay” program. We believe that these changes will provide positive progress in our COVID protocols.

### Outdoor Face Covering Requirements:

- Temporary Rule – OAR 333-019-1015 (K-12 Schools):  
Removes outdoor face covering requirement for K-12 settings.
  - Schools **may** continue to require students and staff to wear face coverings during outdoor activities (local decision).
  - Thoughtful consideration of how students interact during recess and other outdoor activities will be important to ensuring that outdoor exposure quarantines do not increase.
- At least **through January**, face coverings will be **optional** for students during recess and/or outdoor breaks, **when physical distance can be maintained**.
- When **lining up to enter school** each day, at least through January, students will continue to be **required** to wear an appropriate face covering.
- Temporary Rule – OAR 333-019-1025 (**General Population**; Non-School Settings)
  - Maintain use of face coverings in indoor settings.
  - Removes requirement for everyone, age five (5) and older to wear face coverings in outdoor settings where people from separate households gather.

### Quarantine Protocol Changes:

- The Benton County Health Department, which holds decision-making authority for our county, has **reduced quarantine to seven (7) days**, with a negative COVID-19 test result within 48 hours before ending quarantine.
- Longer quarantine periods may be applied based on individual circumstances.
- Close contacts should continue to monitor themselves for symptoms through fourteen (14) days following exposure.
- Fully-vaccinated persons with an exposure are not required to quarantine if symptom-free following exposure.

### “Test-to-Stay” Program:

- “Test-to-Stay” allows **unvaccinated** students and staff to continue attending school during their quarantine period as safely as possible, while lessening the burden of full quarantine, if they:
  - **Remain symptom-free** during the fourteen (14) days post-exposure **AND**
  - **Test negative**, by PCR or antigen test, immediately following exposure **and** again at five (5) to seven (7) days post-exposure.

Negative Test and No Symptoms	Positive Test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May continue in-person learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required to quarantine at home.</li> <li>• May return to school following isolation period.</li> </ul>

- Participating individuals are expected to maintain quarantine outside classroom settings.
- Individuals participating in “Test-to-Stay” **may continue** with school-related extracurricular activities during this time however **must wear** an appropriate face covering **at all times** during these extracurricular activities until quarantine period is complete.
- Only **school-based exposures** are eligible for “Test-to-Stay”. Community, in-home, and/or interscholastic athletics and activities exposures must observe required quarantine period. Since masking is optional in these settings, the risk of transmission is greater.
- **Active parental consent for testing** students must be obtained prior to testing.
- Testing is **optional and offered at no cost** to participants.
- **Vaccinated** individuals who are **symptom-free do not** have to quarantine or test.

For more information on “Test-to-Stay, go to [Test-to-Stay Protocol](#). The general parent consent form is located at [General Consent](#). For students over the age of fifteen (15), the following [Minor Consent](#) can be completed by the student.

The Philomath School District will continue to review protocols to determine possible adjustments. Please contact Nurse Laura Bryant ([laura.bryant@philomath.k12.or.us](mailto:laura.bryant@philomath.k12.or.us)) or me ([susan.halliday@philomath.k12.or.us](mailto:susan.halliday@philomath.k12.or.us)) if you have questions.

Our continued goal is to keep students attending in-person learning for as much time as possible during the school year. Decisions are made with this goal constantly in mind.

Always learning together-

Susan