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December 20, 2021

Dear Students and Families of the Philomath School District:

*'Twas the first day of winter break, and all through our schools,  
A few staff are stirring, using coffee for fuel.  
Lockers, coat hooks, and cubbies are empty,  
Each 'lost & found' box is overflowing aplenty...*

Adapted from "The Night Before Christmas", 12/23/1823.

While there is no snow to see this morning as I look out my window, it is clear that winter is here. No buses are running today and school parking lots are almost entirely empty. While some will be traveling during the break, others have plans to stay closer to home. Whatever your plans, I hope that these next two weeks are safe and enjoyable.

### **Thank You, Philomath!**

I am happy to report that no threats of violence were received in any of our schools last Friday. Thanks to our students, staff, and community for standing up against the Tik Tok Challenge, keeping our schools and community safe. Thanks, also, to the Philomath Police Department for their increased visibility.

### **Winter Celebrations:**

Thanks to each of our schools for hosting winter celebrations this month. For me, the holiday season does not begin until I hear the PES choir sing at the Philomath Christmas Tree Lighting. From this event, school celebrations continued through last week. After the required hiatus of last year, it was nice to be able to host in-person events this year.

### **COVID-19 Updates:**

As many of you have heard on the news, the forecasts predict a surge in COVID-19 cases following the first of the year. While our schools are making no immediate changes, we continue to watch local and state data.

Much like we wear layers to protect ourselves from the cold, it is important to layer our health and safety protections. Appropriately fitting face coverings and physical distancing will continue to be practiced in school. For those interested, vaccine clinics will be held in the Philomath High School Library on January 10<sup>th</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup>.

*... We love our students and staff a great deal,  
Seeing students in-person increases our zeal.  
We want to exclaim as we go home for the night,  
Happy Holidays to all, and to all rest and light.*

Adapted from "The Night Before Christmas", 12/23/1823.