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March 14, 2022

Dear Students and Families of the Philomath School District:

Here we are, already in the middle of March! It is unbelievable how quickly the year is going. Lots of changes took place over this past weekend. Daylight Saving Time is the first—one that always catches me off guard. The second is the lifting of the Oregon indoor mask requirement, both in the community settings across Oregon and in Philomath school and district facilities.

Face Coverings – “Yes” or “No” is Respected:

Each of our schools have promoted spaces of respect for all students and staff. We believe in working together to support one another regardless of individual mask wearing decisions. This means that both decisions to wear a mask or not to wear a mask are OK. We have shared the following with our staff:

- Continue to be aware of and practice hand hygiene and physical distancing, to the degree possible.
- Respect works both ways...
 - Some may still choose to wear a face covering. They are welcome to do so without ridicule.
 - Some will choose not to wear a face covering. They are welcome to do so without ridicule.
- A family may choose to have their student(s) continue to wear a face covering. Listen to and respect the decision supported by your family.

We will continue to work with the Benton County Health Department, utilizing available guidance. Should COVID cases spike to a high level, we will utilize the guidance we have followed since the beginning of the pandemic.

Free COVID Test Kits:

In a collaborative effort of the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), the Philomath School District will receive free iHealth antigen self-tests. According to OHA, these tests “represent one strategy to increase access to testing resources in our school communities.”

During this week, we will be making these test kits available to students and families. Please click on this link to access [At-Home COVID Test Kit](#) information.

For our elementary students at Blodgett Elementary, Clemens Primary, and Philomath Elementary schools, test kits will be placed in the backpack of each individual student. If you do not wish to receive a kit, please contact your school office.

For our secondary students at Philomath Middle School, Philomath High School, and all student at the Philomath Academy, test kits will be available for pick-up in each school office.

Spring Vacation:

This is our last week of school prior to spring vacation. Students and staff will not have school during the week of **March 21-25, 2022**. Students will also not have school this **Friday, March 18th** as teachers will be working on grading, assessment, and/ or planning. School offices will be closing at noon on Friday, March 18th, and will re-open on Monday morning, March 28th.

Summer Learning:

For those of you already thinking beyond the end of the traditional school year, we will be planning for summer learning opportunities over the next few months. Stay tuned for additional information.

Upcoming Dates to Remember:

The remainder of the school year will continue to move fast. As a result, I would like to share some upcoming dates with you.

- March 28, 2022 (Monday) Start of Trimester #3 @ Philomath High School
- April 14-15, 2022 (Th-F) No School for Students (Spring Conferences, Staff Grading)
- April 18, 2022 (Monday) Start of Quarter #4 @ Philomath Middle School
- May 13, 2022 (Friday) No School for Students (Staff Work Day)
- May 27, 2022 (Friday) Inclement Weather Make-Up Day
- May 30, 2022 (Monday) Memorial Day Holiday
- June 10, 2022 (Friday) Philomath Academy Graduation
- June 11, 2022 (Saturday) Philomath High School Graduation
- June 16, 2022 (Thursday) Last Day of School for All Students

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Philomath School District. I wish each of you a safe, wonderful spring vacation.

Always learning together-

Susan