



Philomath School District 17J

Benton County School District No. 17J, 1620 Applegate Street Philomath OR 97370 (541) 929-3169

Philomath School District 17J

Board of Directors

Superintendent's Report

March 15, 2021

Tragedy Response:

- Would like to acknowledge the tremendous loss that our district and community suffered this past week with the deaths of CA and Merry Rath. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family, especially to their children, Andi Pruett and Tony Rath.
- Would like to acknowledge my great appreciation for and strength of our staff members for supporting our students and one another during this time.
- Many thanks to the following groups for providing additional support to our schools:
 - Benton County Mental Health
 - Corvallis School District
 - LBL
 - Living Faith Community Church
 - Philomath Pastoral Community
 - Philomath Police Department

Clemens Community Pool:

- Hooray! Clemens Community Pool finally opened for business today!
- An online application is being used to ask patrons to reserve spaces for lap swimming and water aerobics.
- The pool is currently staffed for public use, however seeking additional lifeguards for school hours.
- Daniel Mikula, our Pool Director, is working on the creation of a **Learn to Swim** program, hoping for lessons within the next few months. Mr. Mikula is also working with Philomath Middle School teacher, Malori Ambrose-Warren, on the creation of a virtual water safety opportunity.
- Putting on his coaching hat, Mr. Mikula is working with other swim coaches to determine how best to proceed with the high school swim season. Swimming poses challenges due to limited space for social distancing and the inability for athletes to wear PPE.
- What a bummer! The pool and equipment are continuing to show their age. One current issue of note includes leaking skimmer boxes. Without replacement, this could become a major issue. Repair would incur a large cost as it involves concrete cutting, fabrication, and installation. A few companies have been contacted to estimate costs of repair.

RSSL Updates:

- New updates to the **Ready Schools, Safe Learners** guidance were released to school districts at 2:00pm this afternoon. District staff will be spending time reviewing changes and possible impacts to our schools.
 - Key changes referenced include the following:
 - Update to re-entry metrics table.
 - Clarifies need to continue providing CDL.
 - Revises cohorting requirements and recommendations.
 - Adjusts entry screening requirements.

- Benton County Metrics:

Time Period	Case Count	Cases per 100,000	Test Positivity
02/28/2021 – 03/13/2021	101	107.0	2.9%
02/21/2021 – 03/06/2021	132	139.9	2.3%
02/14/2021 – 02/27/2021	171	181.2	2.9%
02/07/2021 – 02/20/2021	210	226.6	3.3%
01/31/2013 – 02/13/2021	268	284.0	4.3%

- Athletics participation at Philomath High School have moved to the ‘High’ county risk level.
- Current teams participating in competition include:
 - Cross Country
 - Soccer
 - Football
 - Volleyball

Grants:

- Congratulations to Philomath Elementary School on receipt of a \$750.00 grant from the Figaro’s Pizza HELP (Helping Education with Love and Pizza) program. Funds will be used to purchase school supplies for students.

COVID-19 Testing in Oregon’s K-12 Schools:

- Continuing to work with District Nurse, Lori Haslam, on implementation considerations.
- In order to opt into outdoor contact sports, Philomath must “offer on-site responsive testing for symptomatic individuals and those with known exposures to individuals with COVID-19.”
- Any school level testing would operate under the same criteria.
- Testing requires active consent of parent/ guardian or adult student.
 - I give permission for school staff to test this student(s) for COVID-19 if new symptoms develop at school.
 - I give permission for school staff to test my student(s) if they are exposed to COVID-19 within their school cohort and testing is recommended by the local public health authority.
 - I do not give permission for school staff to test my student(s) under any circumstances.

Lessons Learned in CDL (Comprehensive Distance Learning):

- Learning in a CDL model is more difficult for most students. Absent structures of in-person contact can make this instructional model difficult.
- Some students have thrived in this instructional model, allowing for learning and homework completion at more of a self-paced schedule. For some, removing social pressures of schooling is an advantage to this instructional model.
- Zoom meetings have become a part of our school rhythm. These gatherings will not go away!
- Learning Management Systems—Canvas, Google Classroom, and SeeSaw—should be maintained into the future. These tools have provided a new vision of student support during absences.
- Student learning loss continues to be evaluated at all grade levels.
- For most students, synchronous learning opportunities provide the highest level of success. When synchronous learning is done in-person, feedback loops and attention can be provided much more rapidly than online.
- Traditionally struggling and/or underserved students, fall behind at a much more alarming rate thereby widening both the achievement and opportunity gap.
- When appropriate health protocols are followed in schools, the rate of transmission of COVID-19 in schools, especially for our younger learners, is significantly lower.
- Limited In-Person (LIPI) small instructional groups have been successfully operating in each of our schools since November.
- Too much time online can be detrimental to both learning and health of our students. (Have reports of eye strain, onslaught of headaches, and other related concerns from Philomath parents).
- When considering additional opportunities for students, the majority of parents do not desire additional time online for students.
- Staff, students, and families are reporting an increased incidence of depression and anxiety among students.
- Students and families have reported an increase in student experimentation with alcohol and other drugs.

Student Success Act:

- Not later than March 29, 2021, we will begin assessing priorities for funding in the 2021-2023 biennium.

City of Philomath:

- The City of Philomath is asking for some partnership considerations.
 - Consider approval of easements on school property to existing water lines to allow the City of Philomath to maintain.
 - Consider approval of connection between Cedar and 16th Streets, using district-owned property located behind Philomath Elementary School.
- The District will be requesting a meeting with Chris Workman, Public Works Director, to discuss considerations as well as to walk property areas in question.