



Yamhill Carlton School District

120 N Larch Place

Yamhill, OR 97148

August 10,2021

Hello YCSD students, parents and staff members,

As you are all aware, on July 29th, Governor Brown directed the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to create a rule requiring face coverings in all indoor school settings, both public and private, for all individuals two years and older, including all students, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors. On August 3rd, the rule was released by the ODE.

While many aspects of Covid-19 mitigation strategies still rest in the hands of each individual district, the rule requires that masks will be mandated in all private and public Oregon schools while students are indoors, during school hours. Masks are not required for outdoor activities. The OHA will review infection data every month to determine the need to continue the mandatory mask mandate. We strongly feel decisions on Covid-19 mitigation efforts should be made at the local level, with input from our local public health authority.

We have been advised by the ODE and the Oregon School Boards Association that failure to comply with the mandate may result in severe penalties. These penalties may include fines in the amount of \$500 per day per incident, imposed on the school district. This could mean \$500 for every individual, per day, if the district does not follow the mandate. In addition, employees who hold a professional license, which includes teachers, counselors, and administration, may be referred to the Oregon Teachers Standards and Practices Commission for sanctions against their license for failure to comply with the mandate. Lastly, failure to comply with the mandate could result in district and personal liability should an individual be adversely affected by the virus and the district was not following the mandate. In light of the potential penalties to the district and our employees, we will follow the mandate but will continue to fight for local decision making.

Since the Governor's order was announced, we have been communicating with other rural districts and decision makers in our state to express our frustration and concerns with a move away from local decision making. Yamhill Carlton School District will continue to advocate for our students, families, and the return to local decision making and ensure the voice of Yamhill Carlton School District is heard.

With all of that being said, we are excited that students will be in-person, full time, 5 days a week. In addition, this rule does not apply to athletics. The Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) released guidance last week that leaves Covid-19 mitigation protocols up to each district.

The best way for our families and community members to be heard on this issue is to contact our local legislators, the Governor's Office, and Oregon Health Authority to share your thoughts on returning control of all mitigation efforts to individual school districts, without delay.

Below is a list of contacts for our local and state officials:

Senator Boquist
503-986-1712
Sen.BrianBoquist@oregonlegislature.gov

Representative Noble
503-986-1424
Rep.RonNoble@oregonlegislature.gov

Governor Brown
503-378-4582
<https://www.oregon.gov/gov/pages/share-your-opinion.aspx>

OHA Director, Patrick Allen
503-945-6777
OHA.ExternalRelations@dhsaha.state.or.us

Clint Raever
Superintendent, Yamhill Carlton School District