



September 3, 2021

Dear Chimacum Families,

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! We are truly delighted you are joining us for a great year of learning and thriving for our students and families. The staff are just finishing up a week of getting ready for the new school year with intention, innovation, wellness, and engaging all of our students from the time they get on the school bus until the time they get off the school bus!

I want to give you a brief update on safely reopening our schools to in-person learning. I know that the regular changes and uncertainty are challenging for all, and many of us are anxious about school. We will be opening safely for our students and staff, and collectively taking measures to ensure that we can safely and sustainably operate our schools in-person.

In addition to the guidelines [you have already seen](#), here are some reminders and updates.

[Masks are required](#) indoors at all times by our students. Students can be unmasked outdoors and for eating lunch.

Volunteers and visitors are not allowed in buildings at the start of school. We are working on protocols and protections that prioritizes volunteers and partners.

Public access to facilities is limited at this time. Student pickup and drop off will be outdoors.

Rapid Testing- We are deploying the use of rapid testing for symptomatic students and staff. In addition, our athletes are being tested regularly, including game days. Unvaccinated staff will be tested twice weekly until they are considered fully vaccinated beginning no later than mid to late September. We will be entering all test data in a central statewide system for tracking Covid test results so that the state can more easily do contact-tracing, and monitor outbreaks and positivity rates. It is required for unvaccinated staff to have the testing to continue working.

Schools will remain open- We are counting on Covid mitigation measures to prevent outbreaks in our schools. This includes managing lunch periods and not having assemblies, and ensuring we are following the [protocols](#) we have been given.

We will use rapid testing and contact tracing to keep classrooms running and schools open regardless of the overall numbers of hospitalizations or cases in our county. There is not a

student or staff case number threshold for closing a classroom. If we can determine that the virus is contained we will keep classrooms open. A whole school closure is possible if an outbreak spreads to other classes despite testing, quarantine, and tracing measures. Dr. Berry, the county health officer, will be making this call if it were to happen, and we would transition to remote learning. We are counting on our families to agree to student rapid testing so we do not have to rely on long term quarantine and we can more easily determine the extent of any spread.

Vaccinations-

District employees are required to be fully vaccinated by October 18. [Here is a summary](#) of that mandate.

It is the position of the Chimacum School District, Jefferson County Health Department, the Washington State Department of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control that the best measure to protect students, staff, and families from contracting the Covid 19 virus is to become vaccinated for Covid 19. While other mitigation measures will help with disease spread, Covid vaccines have been proven to reduce infection rates, and reduce the harmful effects of the disease including hospitalizations and deaths. We encourage all eligible people to get the Covid 19 vaccine.

I wish you a restful and joyful Labor Day weekend. It is a great time to reflect on and acknowledge all of our school district employees, as well as all workers' contributions to our community well-being!

Warmly,

Scott