

Dear Staff and Families,

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has released new guidelines for schools across the state.

Here is a summary of some of the major changes. We are still waiting for an updated flowchart from our local health jurisdiction and may see more details at that time. We ask for your continued patience and we promise to share information with you as quickly as possible.

- **The new guidance goes into effect March 12, 2022.**
- **Many of the state-required COVID prevention measures that have been in place will become optional instead of required. This includes things like general masking and physical distancing.**
 - **La Center School District will not be requiring students or staff to wear masks in class or on school buses after March 11, however anyone who still wants to wear a mask may do so.** We must all be respectful of differences in individual choice when it comes to people continuing to use a mask.
- **People who have COVID symptoms must continue to stay home and away from others and get tested. This is required regardless of vaccination status.**
 - People who test positive should continue to stay away from others for at least 5 days. People with symptoms may return to school on day 6, if symptoms have improved and their fever is resolved without medication, *AND*
 - The DOH has strongly recommended a mask to be worn if someone is returning to school on days 6-10 *OR* the person can return if they test negative with an antigen test. Tests are available for in school or at home testing.
 - A person who does not want to get tested or wear a mask must continue to isolate for 10 full days.
- **La Center Schools will still offer testing on all campuses.** Positive tests (including home tests) will still be reported to the health department.
- We understand that these changes will be met with anxiety by some and excitement by others. Please be respectful to one another as each individual decides what prevention and safety measures are right for their personal or family circumstances. Compassion will be critical as we safely modify mitigation measures that were put in place over the past two years. If you have questions, please connect with your building principal, district nurses, or myself. We will share more information with you as we receive it and will update our school district practices to align with the new guidance.

Sincerely,

Peter Rosenkranz
Superintendent