



Hello Lowell Families,

You keep hearing terms related to Covid-19 such as metrics, case count, test positivity, and presumptive positives. Unfortunately not everyone knows what this means to us and to our schools. What is important to know is that cases of Covid-19 in Lane County are on the rise. This is unfortunate for so many reasons, one of which is that this number determines our ability to continue to meet and learn in person. While everyone has their own personal theories, concerns and opinions, we at Lowell School District, are doing all that we can to stop the spread and follow guidelines so that we can continue to welcome eager learners in our buildings.

At some point, the decision to remain open to any students whether in person or with limited in person instruction, will be taken out of our hands. We are doing all that we can at this time, however, the numbers reported by Lane County Public Health and the Oregon Health Authority are concerning. Governor Brown has divided the counties in Oregon into four categories. The highest, or in other words, worst category is Extreme Risk (Red) and that is where Lane County currently is due to the continued rise in, and number of Covid-19 cases. If we continue with this designation, the special circumstances, or K-3 exception, that allows us to keep our doors open to Kindergarten through 3rd grade, will sunset in the coming month and we will have to switch to distance learning.

We are doing two things currently: First, we are hoping for the best and that includes lower Covid-19 numbers and continued in person instruction. Second, we are also planning for the worst, which would mean we are continuing to see high Covid-19 numbers and must transition to distance learning. This planning includes preparing technology, working with staff, and modifying schedules and educational plans as to facilitate a change if it becomes necessary.

Because the Covid-19 case numbers are considered for a two week period, at this time, we don't know what Lane County's numbers and risk designation will be when we return from our Christmas break. Therefore, between now and then, we will be closely monitoring the numbers, our risk level and what changes we may be required to make. Our commitment to you, our Lowell Families, is to continue our communication and to inform you of any decisions that are made as soon as they are made. Our ultimate goal is to educate children. Ideally, we want their smiling faces and beautiful minds in our classrooms so we are doing everything in our power to make that happen.

We don't know what will happen in the future. We are planning and preparing for what may come and continuing to enjoy each day working with your children. Please do your part in controlling the spread of Covid-19.

Stay well, healthy, and kind!