

Rainier School District #13

28168 Old Rainier Road | Rainier, OR 97048

Tel: (503) 556-3777 | Fax: (503) 556-3778

February 24, 2022

Dear Rainier Families, Students, and Staff,

Moments ago, Oregon Health Authority announced that the mask requirement for indoor public spaces and schools will be lifted on March 19. This is an exciting day for our community! This decision has used a collaborative approach, including the Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Health Authority, and Superintendents from across the state. The Rainier School District was represented in these meetings and strongly advocated for local control, while continuing many safety practices.

On February 10, we sent a letter explaining some of the challenges with the mask mandate ending. Those challenges included transportation, vaccination mandates for employees, testing programs, vaccination rates, and contact tracing/quarantines. While most of these have been addressed, we are awaiting final guidance on transportation and the requirement for schools to contact trace and quarantine potential exposures. My hope is that in the coming days, the need to have designated staff complete contact tracing and quarantining of students and staff will also be eliminated.

We will send out official notification of protocols in two weeks and an announcement of an upcoming special event. The purpose of this letter is to ensure all are aware of the recent change. As it stands now, I will be presenting our plans to the school board on March 14, 2022. Preliminarily, the plan will include the district's elimination of a mask requirement, and a change to masking being optional and strongly encouraged. There will be many in our schools who continue to wear a mask as a personal choice for many reasons.

The Rainier School District, as it enters this new and exciting chapter will not tolerate condemnation, shame, or judgement for those who continue to mask at school/work. This is a personal choice and one that we greatly support!

As we continue to plan over the coming weeks, please continue to practice kindness, compassion, and understanding. We will continue to follow the current mandates until it is officially lifted and will require the participation of all as we provide this wonderful community with additional updates in March.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank the Rainier School District students, parents, school board members, staff, and community for your patience, flexibility, and understanding over the past three years. In fact, the lifting of the mandate comes almost EXACTLY three years after the pandemic began.

Your partner in Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Hattrick", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Joseph Hattrick, Ed.D.
Superintendent