

August 20, 2022

Dear Yoncalla School District Community,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year!

I hope that you were able to enjoy the summer months, have some family fun, and are now looking forward to transitioning to a new school year. As a reminder, **our first day of school is Monday, August 29th**.

YSD has had a very busy summer in preparation for the launch of the new school year. We have hired several new staff, including the addition of a counselor and a full time behavioral specialist. We will be continuing with our multi-tiered systems of support for working with improving behavioral challenges and training our staff to better work with parents and students while staying true to our Positive Behavior Intervention Systems that we have in place districtwide.

While working in conjunction with the Yoncalla School Board, we have been able to identify several District areas of focus for this upcoming school year. They include:

1. Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging
2. Mental Health – Social Emotional Learning (SEL); Positive Behavior, Intervention, and Supports (Conscious Discipline)
3. Continue with staff curriculum training
4. Math (academic area of focus)

As you know, we have had a busy summer with multiple summer camps offered to all grade levels. These camps were very successful and we were pleased to have the opportunity to expand our programming to include more CTE camps for our students. This change is a direct reflection of the feedback that we received from parent surveys over the past two years. Our programming will continue to focus on educational opportunities centered around learning for students that can be used as a life skill.

Also over the summer, the district has been working hard to make both schools the centerpiece of the community. We have done this by investing a company to plant flowers to make both buildings more inviting. I have received many compliments on how the grounds and buildings look. Yes, there is still more to go, but I am proud of the job that our custodial, grounds and maintenance have done to help get things cleaned up.

With the beginning of the new school year comes new requirements from the Oregon Department of Education. As always, we will follow all mandates delivered by ODE. That

being said, as of this communication, we will be at a masks optional position to start the year. Please be aware that depending on the transmission levels in the county, this could change from week to week. Last school year we were able to use social distancing, hand washing, and constant cleaning of surfaces to stay open. I am hoping that it will be similar this year, however, if for some reason we have an outbreak, we will be ready to go to distance learning or the wearing of masks. The goal is to keep the doors open throughout the year with minimal interruptions.

Another controversial mandate delivered by ODE is the Menstrual Dignity Act. This act requires all public entities within the state of Oregon to have period products available to students no matter what the age or gender. What this means for Yoncalla is that we are required to place these products in both the boys and girls' bathrooms at both buildings. While I think we can all agree that the intention of the bill is admirable, the implementation has been rough at best. We are discussing training opportunities for our staff around this act and will be putting a plan together that will address educating students in the buildings. I would encourage all to contact your local state representative if you have concerns about this Act. This is not a local decision!!

Representative Cedric Hayden
Republican - District 7 - Roseburg

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As we prepare our schools to receive your students, we again want to emphasize the importance of student attendance and participation. In order to maximize academic success and support social-emotional growth, we need students in school as long as they are healthy. The school/home partnership has always been important, but, now more than ever it seems, this partnership is critical to our student's well-being. Please join us in that positive partnership to best serve your children and support them to have a wonderful educational experience!

I look forward to a great school year and as always, thank you for your support!

Respectfully,

Brian Berry, Superintendent