

OUR VIEW

# Courage in the face of COVID challenges

The COVID impact spotlight has rested — rightfully — on the thousands of dedicated men and women in the state’s medical system who have remained on the front lines of the pandemic for nearly two years.

Their commitment has been a mostly silent one. They’ve gone to work, completed their work, and grappled with the impact of watching people become very sick or die from the COVID-19 virus.

Their courage in the face of unprecedented upheaval should not be forgotten, but there is another group — teachers and educators across the region — who have, in some ways, escaped notice of the challenges they’ve faced and overcome since the pandemic kicked off.

Our teachers, coaches and administrator have been in the spotlight as well, but usually for a very different reason. At specific times during the pandemic, the people we trust to educate our youth somehow ended up in the middle of a political debate regarding masks and the very severity of COVID-19 itself. For reasons that remain mysterious, teachers, coaches and administrators were tossed into the maelstrom of debate about COVID-19, often becoming the targets for decisions made at the state level they had no control over.

Our educators — through no fault of their own — also were forced to completely adjust the way they teach when schools were closed across the state because of COVID-19.

These men and women at local and regional schools faced an array of serious — and often disappointing — challenges with little room to maneuver.

The truth is teachers and administrators should never have become focal points of local angst about vaccines or whether COVID-19 is serious or even real.

Their job was a straightforward one — teach our youth to the best of their ability.

When the COVID-19 mandates were handed down by Gov. Kate Brown, an entire way of teaching — etched into our collective consciousness for decades — evaporated overnight. That created huge challenges for teachers and administrators.

Our educators — just like our medical professionals — were not and are not searching for praise. They just want to do their jobs. Yet, it is fitting and right to point out their contributions and sacrifices during the past 18 or so months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We must not forget that our teachers and educators are part of our communities and deserve support during these challenging times.



YOUR VIEWS

## Why we withdrew our children from GRA

I am writing to tell our experience and concerns with the local private school Grande Ronde Academy. We enrolled our children in August. The first week our family got COVID. My husband became dependent on oxygen and we lost his father all within two weeks.

Our 8-year-old son missed two weeks because his class was quarantined. He was home when his papa passed and was there as they worked on him. His teacher showed him no grace. She never reached out to us to discuss the trauma our son experienced and when approached she wouldn't talk to us. She demanded every last assignment to be done right away. We were not mentally or emotionally capable of doing that and had been advised by counselors to not push him due to his ADHD, anxiety and trauma.

When asked why she didn't reach out she replied, "I don't know you, why should I?"

I am a teacher and understand the benefits of verbal learning, so we did my son's work verbally. She then accused me of cheating and sent him to the office.

Principal Johnson went out of his way to help us but lacked support and respect from the board.

The president of the board seemed to hear my concerns but no action was taken. No apology was received. At the public board meeting they discussed how new people corrupt their school.

Since we are new and our son has a true fear of his teacher, we chose to no longer "corrupt" their school.

**Elise Stevens  
Union**

## Resolving pandemic is a work in progress

Thanks for all of the comments about the COVID-19 pandemic. The more information we receive about a problem, the higher the likelihood of finding an effective solution. Of course, each bit of data must

be evaluated for credibility to be useful. Resolving this pandemic is obviously a work in progress.

Rejecting treatment modalities for not being 100% effective is a bit like looking for health insurance and deciding coverage up to \$5,000,000 would be necessary to cover any potential disaster. Therefore, if the only available policy is for just \$200,000, it would not be worth the time, effort or expense to have.

In addition to finding the shortcomings of certain treatments, we should each formulate what could be helpful in solving this problem and try to implement those ideas. In addition to the unbelievable death toll and disruption of lives, our medical system is being overwhelmed, making it difficult or impossible not only to treat those with COVID but to provide help for other serious illnesses and injuries.

May all of mankind soon have relief from this pandemic.

**Dr. Richard Haddock  
La Grande**

## CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

### U.S. PRESIDENT

**Joe Biden**  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Comments: 202-456-1111

### U.S. SENATORS

**Ron Wyden**  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-5244  
La Grande office: 541-962-7691

**Jeff Merkley**  
313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-3753  
Pendleton office: 541-278-1129

### U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

**Cliff Bentz**  
2185 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-6730  
Medford office: 541-776-4646

### GOVERNOR

**Kate Brown**  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court St.  
Salem, OR 97301-4047  
503-378-4582

### REPRESENTATIVES

**Bobby Levy, District 58**  
900 Court St. NE, H-376  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1458  
Rep.BobbyLevy@state.or.us

**Greg Smith, District 57**  
900 Court St. NE, H-482  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1457  
Rep.GregSmith@state.or.us

### SENATOR

**Bill Hansell, District 29**  
900 Court St. NE, S-415  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1729  
Sen.BillHansell@state.or.us

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Phone: 541-963-3161

Toll free (Oregon): 1-800-781-3214

Email: news@lagrandeobserver.com

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STAFF

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