

Knappa school staffer reports virus case

The Astorian

Two staff members with Knappa's Hilda Lahti Elementary School were in quarantine after one person tested positive for the coronavirus, according to a letter sent to the community

this week.

Both people had contact with another person outside of school who ended up testing positive for the virus. Both staff members are back at work now, according to Superintendent Bill Fritz.

In a letter to the community, Fritz

wrote that "to date, we have not seen any evidence of COVID transmission at the school site at any time during the school year."

The school district has been able to operate with all students in classrooms for multiple hours a day.



Katie Frankowicz/The Astorian

Oregon has eased mask requirements outdoors.

Masks: 'Businesses have choices and individuals have choices'

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The health authority still urges unvaccinated people and those most at risk for the virus to continue wearing masks in crowded areas and large gatherings and maintain physical distance as much as possible.

Everyone is required to continue wearing masks and physically distancing on public transportation and in schools, hospitals, clinics, homeless shelters, correctional facilities and long-term care facilities.

Businesses and other places that choose to lift mask and physical distancing requirements must seek proof of vaccination, whether it be the original paper cards received after vaccination, a photocopy or photo.

Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state's top epidemiologist,

said businesses can continue requiring employees and customers to wear masks or adopt the new guidance.

"For businesses that think this is too much of an administrative burden or they don't want to be responsible for checking vaccination records, they don't have to review those records," Sidelinger said during a press conference Tuesday afternoon. "They can continue to serve their customers and have their employees wear masks in these settings.

"For a business that wants to choose to serve their customers in a different way by allowing them to remove their mask if they're fully vaccinated or have their staff be able to remove their mask if they're fully vaccinated, they need to institute a system where individuals can share their vaccination sta-

tus, share their card, which can be reviewed, so that they can be served without a mask or physical distancing.

"Again, businesses have choices and individuals have choices on how to protect themselves and those around them."

David Reid, the executive director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce, said most public-facing businesses the chamber has talked with plan to continue requiring customers to wear masks for the time being.

"No one has expressed a desire to request proof of vaccination, especially those who are working with short staffs," Reid said in an email. "Although this development is good news and a step in the right direction, it's still confusing for businesses and the public.

"We highly encourage

consumers to continue to watch for and comply with whatever precautions a business feels they need to employ regardless of their vaccination status. Kindness and patience are still in order."

The state plans to lift most virus restrictions once 70% of Oregonians 16 and older receive their first vaccine doses. Counties where 65% of people 16 and older have received at least one dose will have the option of moving to lower risk beginning Friday.

Margo Lalich, Clatsop County's interim public health director, said she anticipates the county will reach the threshold by the end of the month.

As of Monday, 56.8% of people 16 and older in the county had received at least one dose, according to the health authority.

College board: 'It's been a learning experience and it's been positive'

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Meyer said she is looking ahead to the college's graduation ceremony, as well as a board retreat, where the new board will hold a planning session and set its goals and vision for the coming year.

"I don't have any specific arrows to shoot," she said. "That's not the way I think a policy board should work." Trudy Van Dusen Citovic, the co-owner of Van Dusen Beverages and the daughter of former Astoria Mayor Willis Van Dusen, led Robert Duhmig, the college board chairman and the interim director for the Oregon Office of Rural Health, 55% to 32% for Zone 2, Position 3.

"During the campaign, I learned a lot from conversations with students, faculty, administrators and community members," Van Dusen Citovic said. "My intention now is to improve accountability and transparency at the board level so all constituents can work together to ensure a bright future for Clatsop Community College."

Van Dusen Citovic thanked voters for electing her. She also thanked her opponent, who was appointed in 2014 and first elected in 2015.

"I did not have the opportunity to meet him in person due to the pandemic, but I hope to do so one day soon," she said.

Suzanne Iverson, a retired former college employee, held a slim, 50% to 49% lead over David Zunkel, a retired physician appointed to the board in 2019, in Zone 3, Position 6.

Iverson was not ready to declare victory. "I'm just going to sit and wait," she said.

It is her first experience

running for elected office.

"It's been a learning experience and it's been positive," Iverson said. "My hope is that if I'm elected, I can get in there and roll up my sleeves and go to work. Hopefully, the college will prosper. That's my goal.

"That's the only reason I ran — because I really care about the place and feel it's vital to the community."

Tim Lyman, a college board member, had organized a slate of candidates that included Iverson and Preston. Van Dusen Citovic said she was asked to run by others in the community. They rallied around shared concerns over a drop in enrollment during the pandemic and ongoing frustrations with the college's management software that they believe contributed to the enrollment decline.

They claimed the college board has not done enough to address these issues or community concerns.

The incumbents, however, argued that after the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the college needs experienced board members to help chart a path forward. While the enrollment dip is worrying, they do not see it as an emergency. They believe college leadership is taking the right steps to encourage students to return.

Chris Breitmeyer, the college president, called the 37% dip in enrollment "significant," but he and other college leaders are confident a number of students involved with college programs through organizations like Tongue Point Job Corps Center and the U.S. Coast Guard will begin to return as pandemic-related restrictions lift.

The college is upping its outreach efforts as well, he has told board members.



The park district's purchase of the former Broadway Middle School was a campaign issue.

Park district: Board has to help manage through the pandemic

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Hinton, a contractor first elected to the board in 2001, led Duhachek, a former U.S. Navy aircraft maintenance officer and private sector project manager and logistics engineer who owns Wheel Fun Rentals, 53% to 47% for Position 3.

"I'm grateful for apparent victory!" Hinton said in an email. "Our board hitched their wagon to a star! The opposition didn't see it coming!"

Marshall Hamer, the director of global human resources for Mercy Corps, led Evans, who retired after management roles at Fred Meyer Jewelers, 60% to 40% for Position 4.

"Having grown up in Seaside, and experiencing Sunset parks and recreation for the last 40 years, I feel so privileged to have been on the Board of Directors at this critical juncture in our community's history," Marshall Hamer said in an email. "No matter the outcome of the election, I feel good within myself that I stayed true to myself and those residents who I represent. There is nothing more important at this point in our community's his-

tory than to be positive and uplifting, and to find a way to increase programming and options at the district for all of our residents."

Parker, the head secretary at Seaside High School, led Morrison, who retired after management roles at trucking companies, 55% to 44% for Position 5.

Looking ahead, the board has to help manage through the coronavirus pandemic, new programs, a \$3 million budget to adopt by the end of June and a Sunset Recreation Center strategic plan. The park district anticipates an opportunity to expand services and revenue by 27% in the next fiscal year.

Potential partners going forward include the city and the school district. The park district is in lease negotiations with the Northwest Regional Education Service District for a portion of the building.

"I'm excited to continue working with our board and helping our community grow," Archibald said in a statement. "All five of these board members have a heart for service and genuinely care about improving the quality of life for patrons in our district. We also encourage community engagement as we develop our plan for the Sunset Recreation Center."

Bubble tea: 'Just one of the many things I can do'

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ubiquitous shops she used to visit with friends in Portland. She wondered why her parents hadn't started one in Astoria.

"I told them, 'Hey, you guys should open one,'" she said. "And my mom said, 'Why not you?'"

Chang recently opened Milky-Cha, a bubble tea shop in a former mortgage office on Commercial Street. The shop, open

every day, offers several flavors of teas — green, black, jasmine and others — milks and other drinks topped with fresh fruit and other condiments. The drinks are often filled with dark, chewy tapioca pearls made in Taiwan and known as boba. The shop also specializes in bubble waffles, a dessert from Hong Kong.

It takes Chang about an hour to make more pearls for her teas. But only days after opening, she said she's

already running short.

Oliver Yoon, the vice president of sales and global marketing for the supplier Boba Direct, told National Public Radio last month that there have been too many shipments from Asia to the U.S. and not enough production capacity for the pearls. The shortages are compounded by a lack of dockworkers and truck drivers in the U.S. to get products from port to retailers.

Running a bubble tea shop isn't necessarily the end game for Chang, who said she wants to go back to school and get a master's degree in business. Her parents have assured her the shop will continue regardless of her next move in life.

"I don't know if anybody's really sure what they're doing," Chang said. "I never knew what I wanted to be growing up. This is just one of the many things I can do."

Bond: Would improve safety and security

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The school district also plans to use bond money to construct a gym at Hilda Lahti, as well as improve safety and security for students and staff and address repair and maintenance issues with the district's roofs, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, electrical systems, plumbing and weather sealing.

Improved access to mental health services is also listed.

The school board had considered several options for the bond, including a \$12 million version. Surveys showed community support for the lower option



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The Knappa School District is looking at a bond for school improvements.

over the \$14 million bond proposal, according to infor-

mation presented at a board meeting in April.

But the committee tasked with developing the bond proposal later recommended the school district pursue the \$14 million bond with a 25-year term.

The committee felt the community would support the bond and it would give the school district "the best options for students' health and safety," Superintendent Bill Fritz told the board at a work session in May.

The school board approved the bond resolution at a meeting Monday night.

Over the past few years, voters have approved bond financing for improvements at schools in Astoria, Warrenton and Seaside.