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ORIGINS

FORMER YMCA, RESTORED BUNGALOW WIN HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

Historic blueprints of the former YMCA in Astoria were used to help guide a restoration project • A2

CORONAVIRUS

Brown gets pushback on vaccination requirement

Policy raises issues of privacy and personal choice

By GARY WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown is getting blowback from political opponents who are leveraging the actions of her allies in Washington state and California in an attempt to derail a new state policy requiring Oregon residents to show proof of vaccination against the coronavirus at some venues and businesses.

While Brown has framed the issue as one of public health, opponents say it's about privacy and personal choice.

State House Republicans called on Brown to reverse plans for what they describe as a "vaccine passport" — a term popular among conservatives to describe the COVID-19 inoculation certificates approved by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, R-Canby, and the rest of the caucus invoked recent decisions by two Brown allies: Washington Gov. Jay Inslee and California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Inslee and Newsom administration officials have said they will not require residents of their states to produce proof of inoculation in circumstances where entry to a venue or building requires the person be vaccinated against COVID-19.

The House Republican letter said Oregon should be in step with its neighbors, as it has been on many — though not all — COVID-19 policies.

"Oregon's response to COVID-19 should not be an outlier on the West Coast," the Republicans wrote. "We are reaching the end of the pandemic and should be lifting mandates, not adding new ones. It is time to place our trust in Oregonians



R.J. Marx/The Astorian

People waited in line to receive the vaccine against the coronavirus in Seaside in April.

'OREGON'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SHOULD NOT BE AN OUTLIER ON THE WEST COAST. WE ARE REACHING THE END OF THE PANDEMIC AND SHOULD BE LIFTING MANDATES, NOT ADDING NEW ONES. IT IS TIME TO PLACE OUR TRUST IN OREGONIANS AGAIN. THEY HAVE EARNED IT.'

House Republican letter

again. They have earned it."

Brown has said showing certification is a small inconvenience to ensure that someone who might spread a disease that has killed over 590,000 Americans doesn't get close to people they might infect.

The salvo from House Republicans, including Rep. Suzanne Weber, R-Tillamook, was part of

a barrage fired at Brown's plans over the past week.

Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer and Clatsop County Commissioner Courtney Bangs were among local critics of the policy.

Balensifer said he has heard of service industry workers leaving their jobs because they are

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Dorms for workers proposed in Seaside

Housing pitched at former middle school

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — With many businesses struggling to hire staff and workers unable to find affordable housing, business owners David Posalski and Andrew Mercer want to turn a portion of the former Broadway Middle School into dorms.

"Very simply, we want to use the north end of the building to build dorm or hostel-style living space," Posalski, a city councilor and owner of Tsunami Sandwich Co., told the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board at Tuesday's meeting.

"Space could conceivably house 50 to 60 workers for the summer months with living area, kitchen/dining space, bathroom and shower facilities and recreational facilities."

At a business leaders forum this month, business owners said workers have been priced out of local housing options or are unable to find temporary housing during the summer. Staffing, they said, is their greatest need.

The business owners put together a plan and estimated budget of about \$100,000 to \$125,000 to retrofit the former middle school to be able to accommodate workers over the summer. The space would be fully funded by businesses and would provide

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Schools shed some mask rules for vaccinated staff

A slow transition toward normalcy

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Astorian

More North Coast teachers and school district staff who are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus are allowed to go maskless in certain situations.

The change in masking policies at several school districts comes on the heels of updated guidelines from the state.

At a special meeting Thursday, the Knappa School District board signed a new memorandum of understanding with the Knappa Education Association that allows

vaccinated employees to forgo masks when they are in a workspace alone or when they are around other vaccinated staff when students are not present. They still must stay socially distanced and the school will check their vaccination status.

The Astoria School District also updated its policy, allowing vaccinated staff to go maskless when students are not present or mingle, maskless, with unvaccinated — masked — coworkers.

Thursday was the first day of the updated policy. Not everyone was ready. "The change is weird," said Craig Hoppes, the Astoria superintendent.

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Civics education 'a call to arms'

Bill would make civics a graduation requirement

By PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Civics could soon be a high school graduation requirement across Oregon.

Senate Bill 513, which would add a semester of civics education to the cred-

its necessary for a diploma starting in the 2025-26 school year, is before Gov. Kate Brown for review.

"It is a bill that begins the process of holding our schools accountable for teaching the next generation of Oregonians how to operate the most complex, complicated and often confounding form of self-governance in human history," said state Rep. Paul Evans, D-Monmouth, the chief House sponsor.

"This is a call to arms for all good people to come to the aid of our union."

Evans is a speech communication instructor at Chemeketa Community



Pamplin Media Group

A bill before Gov. Kate Brown would make civics a high school graduation requirement starting in the 2025-26 school year.

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