

Covid safety measures at 509-J

Like students of the other districts of the state, students of the Jefferson County 509-J district return to school with mask requirements. The same applies to teachers and staff inside any school buildings.

The district here clarifies the rules that apply, as this week the 2021-22 school begins. Masks are required at all times during regular school hours and on school buses, except for the following:

Eating or drinking. When an individual is alone in a private room or workspace. When practicing or playing sports.

Performing while playing music, or when delivering a speech or engaged in theater.

Mask exceptions: Accommodations, such as a face shield are available, but limited to legitimate medical reasons or because of a known and documented disability.

Important note: 504 or Individual Education plans are meant for students with documented disabilities. They may not be used by parents to avoid the mask mandate.

Enforcement: If a student does not consistently and correctly wear a face covering, school staff will reteach the expectation with grace and patience.

“We will continually provide instruction and positive reinforcement to help all students adapt to this change in our school facilities,” the district safety plans states.

“The district will not be punitive; however, if a student continuously refuses to wear a face covering in school, they will be provided with the district online learning option.”

Vaccine mandate for k-12 staff: In August, Gov. Brown announced that all teachers, educators, support staff, and volunteers in k-12 schools will be required to be fully vaccinated by October 18.

It is the understanding of 509-J district officials that there will be no option for weekly covid testing in lieu of vaccination. As with other state employees and healthcare workers, religious and medical- and disability-related exceptions will apply.

The district anticipates further details and rules from the Oregon Health Authority.

From the Superintendent

Dear 509-J Families,
I am honored and excited to begin my first year as Superintendent of Jefferson County School District. Even as we face increasing and ongoing challenges of Covid-19, I'm hopeful about the upcoming school year.
We are eager to return to school

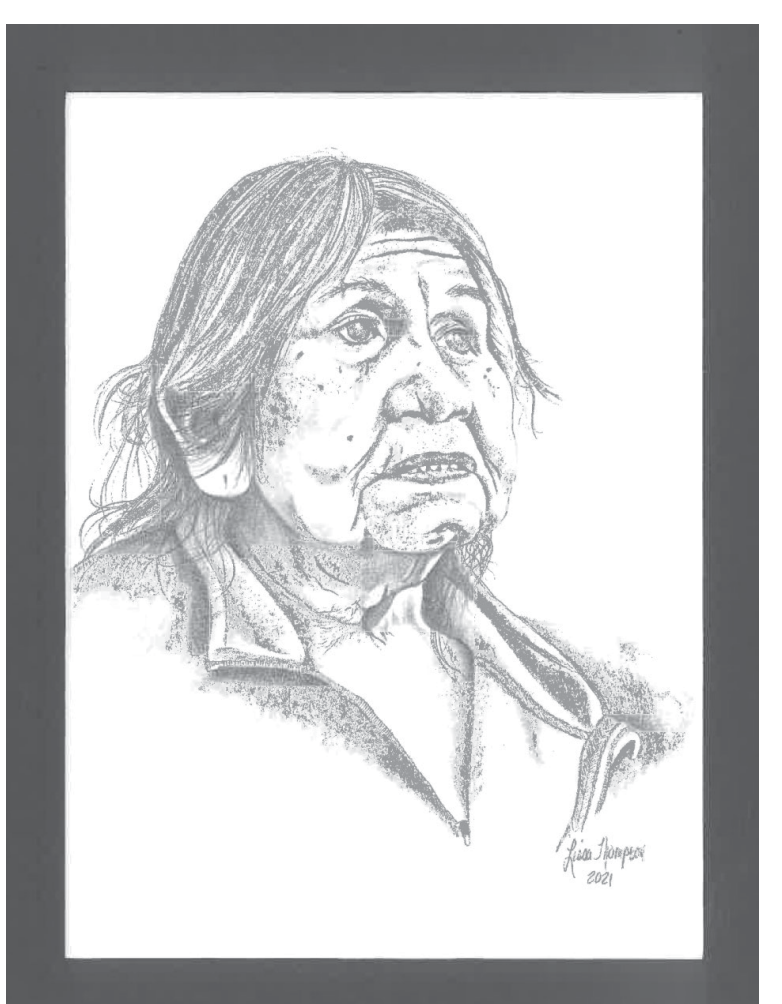
this fall, and are excited about opportunities for students to flourish academically, socially, and in ways that highlight each student's strengths and assets. To do that well, we have an incredible team of teachers, staff members and leaders who are eager to welcome each student to their learning in the coming days.

We are excited about the ability to implement best practices we learned during the last year in classrooms. Some of those are connected to the ability to provide each student with a computer as a learning tool. We also are pleased to note that our online learning option, CASA (509J Online), has been improved to offer a more personalized learning experience for students who found that online learning was a good match for them. However, we are perhaps even more excited to be able to open the doors this fall for full school days in our schools. Starting a school year...nothing beats that! From Warm Springs to Metolius to Big Muddy to Madras...509J is ready for a new year!

Guiding the decisions we will make this year and beyond are the following principles or themes:

Students flourish here. We care for each other. Better every day.

Dr. Jay Mathisen, Superintendent.



Dear Tribal Elders,

I read an article some time ago about how many of your Elders you have lost to covid. I was so saddened by that news.

The photos that were included in the paper just struck me, and I was taken by the 'history' in one face.

I'm an artist and just wanted to capture that 'history' and beauty!

Please accept this portrait as my tribute to her.

Best wishes, **Lissa Thompson**

Around Indian Country

Vaccine mandate at Umatilla Tribes

Tribal employees of four Umatilla tribal entities have until September 30 to get fully vaccinated.

This is an approach that is becoming increasingly common, as the Food and Drug Administration recently gave full approval of the Pfizer vaccination. Previously the vaccine was approved conditionally, as an emergency measure.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Tribal Council for now has not chosen to mandate vaccination for tribal employees, leaving the decisions to the employees themselves, with encouragement from Council and IHS, the branch supervisors, department heads and enterprises managers.

At Umatilla the approach is different. Though that tribe has held mass vaccination clinics and given a \$50,000 grand prize for a fully vaccinated employee, an estimated 35 employees working at those entities are not vaccinated.

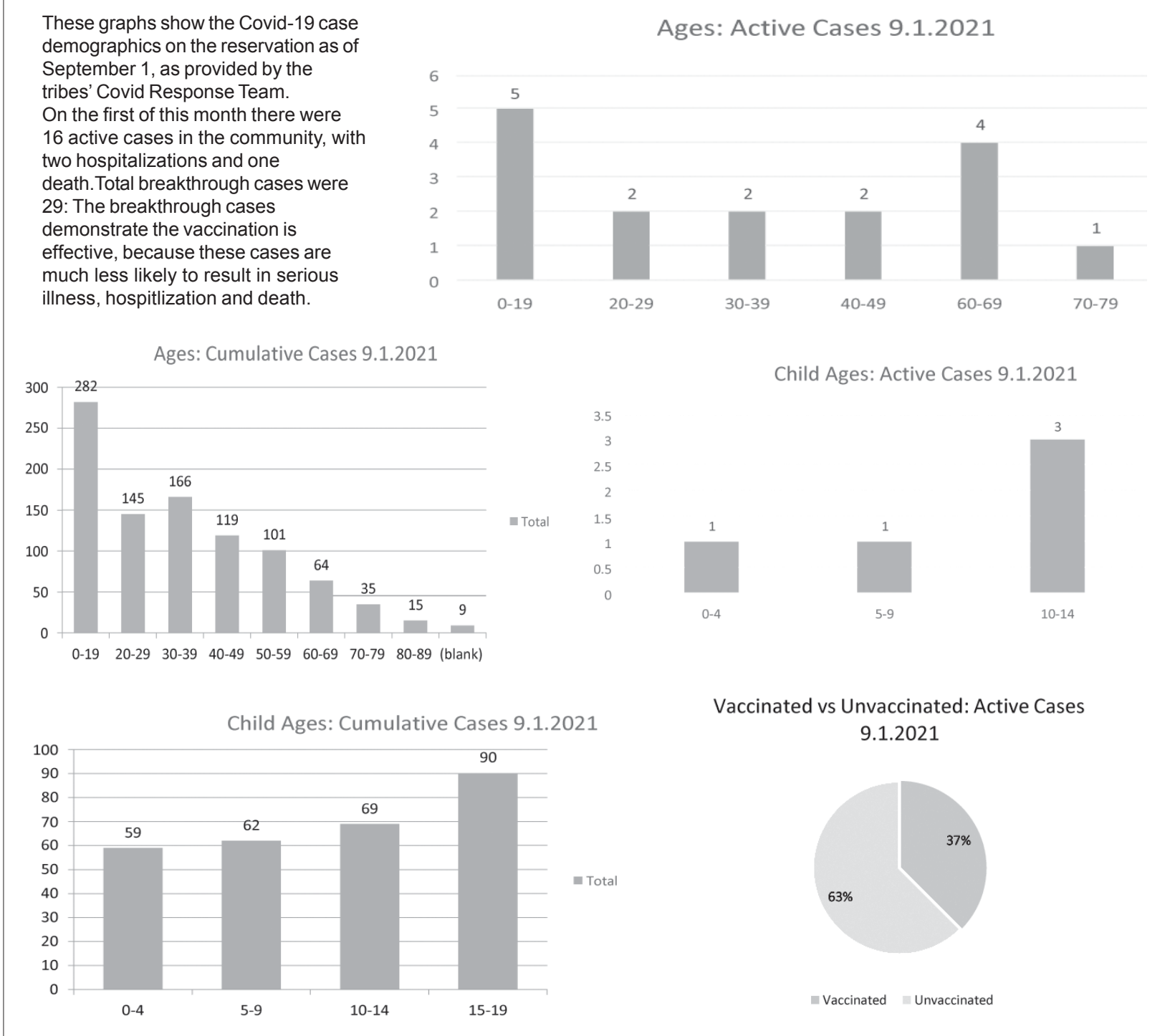
The recent Umatilla directive came from their interim executive director, Teara Farrow Ferman.

The mandate applies to four tribal entities: the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center, the Umatilla Education Department, the Umatilla Tribal Fire Department, and the Umatilla's Covid-19 screeners.

The Board of Trustees sent out a public statement early this month regarding the matter:

“To lead by example, all Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation Board of Trustee members and officers are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. This order comes after careful consideration of our ability to carry out tribal government and health care services to the community, and the continued hardship on the CTUIR.

“Currently hospitals in the state of Oregon and the surrounding counties are reaching capacity,” the Board of Trustees continued in the



statement.
“Newly infected people suffering from symptoms of Covid-19 that require respiratory therapy are being transported to other states for Covid-19 emergency care. We are facing shortages in medical care capacities, equipment and protections.”
Yellowhawk is approaching 1,700 vaccinated individuals as the tribe braces for a surge in cases. It “will likely become worse after upcoming large local events,” the memo stated, probably alluding to the Pendleton Round-Up this month.

Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services is available by phone for any questions or needs you have about domestic violence, sexual assault, child and elder abuse. Call 541-553-2293. If you have an emergency situation, please call the Warm Springs Police Department dispatch at 541-553-1171 or 911.

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