FREEDOM *from A1*

by Brown and Biden to be forms of tyranny.

Others at the rally echoed similar positions on the mandates when asked, emphasizing a "pro-choice" position respecting the decision to get the COVID-19 vaccine (which some at the demonstration said they had received) while rejecting a requirement to do so.

"I am all about freedom of choice," said demonstrator Debbie Howell. "I don't care if you get the vaccine — just don't care if I choose not to get it. It's no different than people getting flu shots versus ones not getting flu shots. To me, it's all about living in a free society where we have the freedom to choose."

Many in the group made it clear they are skeptical of mainstream health authority assessments of COVID risk and vaccine and mask efficacy. As such, several opinions run contrary to these conventional assessments.

A teenager at the protest said her education had been interrupted because of mandates.

"I personally don't agree with the vaccine," she said, citing the adverse effects reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "And I know what happens with the side effects and I'm not willing to risk that for me."

While the CDC lists serious adverse events after the COVID vaccination including anaphylaxis, thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome, myocarditis and pericarditis and even death on its website, it emphasizes that these events are rare and that "COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective."

The teen went on to describe how mask-wearing causes her psychological distress due to a condition and she worries about vaccine mandates in public schools.

The combination of concerns has pressed her to opt for getting a GED rather than finish her senior year of high school, she said.

Vaccine mandates for students may be a premature concern in Oregon, however.

State laws and local policy establish vaccination requirements for school children and, though some school districts around the country have opted for mandates, the State of Oregon is not currently heading in that direction.

Earlier this month, the Los Angeles public school system became the largest district in the country to require vaccines for students 12 and older, with those who take part in sports and other extracurricular activities required to receive both of two shots by the end of October and all others by Dec. 19.

However, the Office of Governor Kate Brown, when asked by KATU News about the issue at the end of last month, stated that it is "not actively considering a vaccine requirement for students over the age of 12" despite calls from the Portland Association of Teachers to do so.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has on the other hand said such a mandate would be "a good idea."

Parents in the local demonstration group, however, did not state concerns about student vaccine mandates so much as being critical of student masking mandates.

In fact, some Thursday protesters at Cottage Grove's Main Street corner were motivated largely by a school board meeting last month.

On Aug. 30, the South Lane School District Board held a meeting detailing the district's Communicable Disease Management Plan, which included COVID-19-specifice guidelines for the 2021-22 school year.

The management plan covered topics such as COVID infection responses, sanitation and mask and vaccine requirements for staff.

As mask mandates included students, however, it was one of the more contentious issues for a handful of parents who staged a light protest outside the district office that day.

According to the management plan, masks are required on buses and inside school buildings for all people ages two and older when students are present, except when staff are alone in an enclosed workspace.

Students may also remove their masks when practicing or playing a competitive sport, performing or delivering a speech to an audience. Indoors, this rule applies to those ages two and up. Outdoors, it applies to those five and up.

Demonstrator Brandy Smith, who also protested outside the school district office last month, called foul on this rule.

"My son is five years old and I've seen him on the playground with the mask — all the kindergarteners, all the kids," she said, adding that she was concerned her son wouldn't be able to

see **FREEDOM** on A10

DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Protesters are largely critical of health authority guidelines and Democratic leadership.

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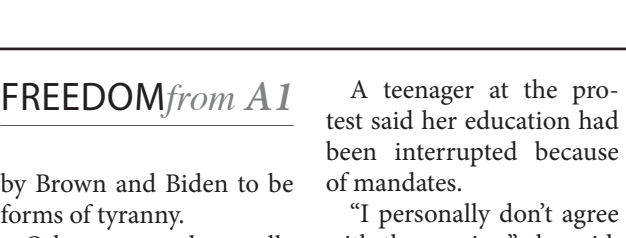

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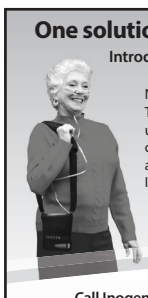

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SEPTEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

ACADEMY FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION (ACE) –

KEIRA FLOYD

The Academy for Character Education recognizes Dialectic 2 student Keira Floyd. Keira has been working really hard this year. She completed extra work, is always on task, and has learned to ask for a little more time to make sure she gets every note on her assignments. Keira is also super helpful with little errands and is a great friend. Congratulations Keria! We are very proud of you!

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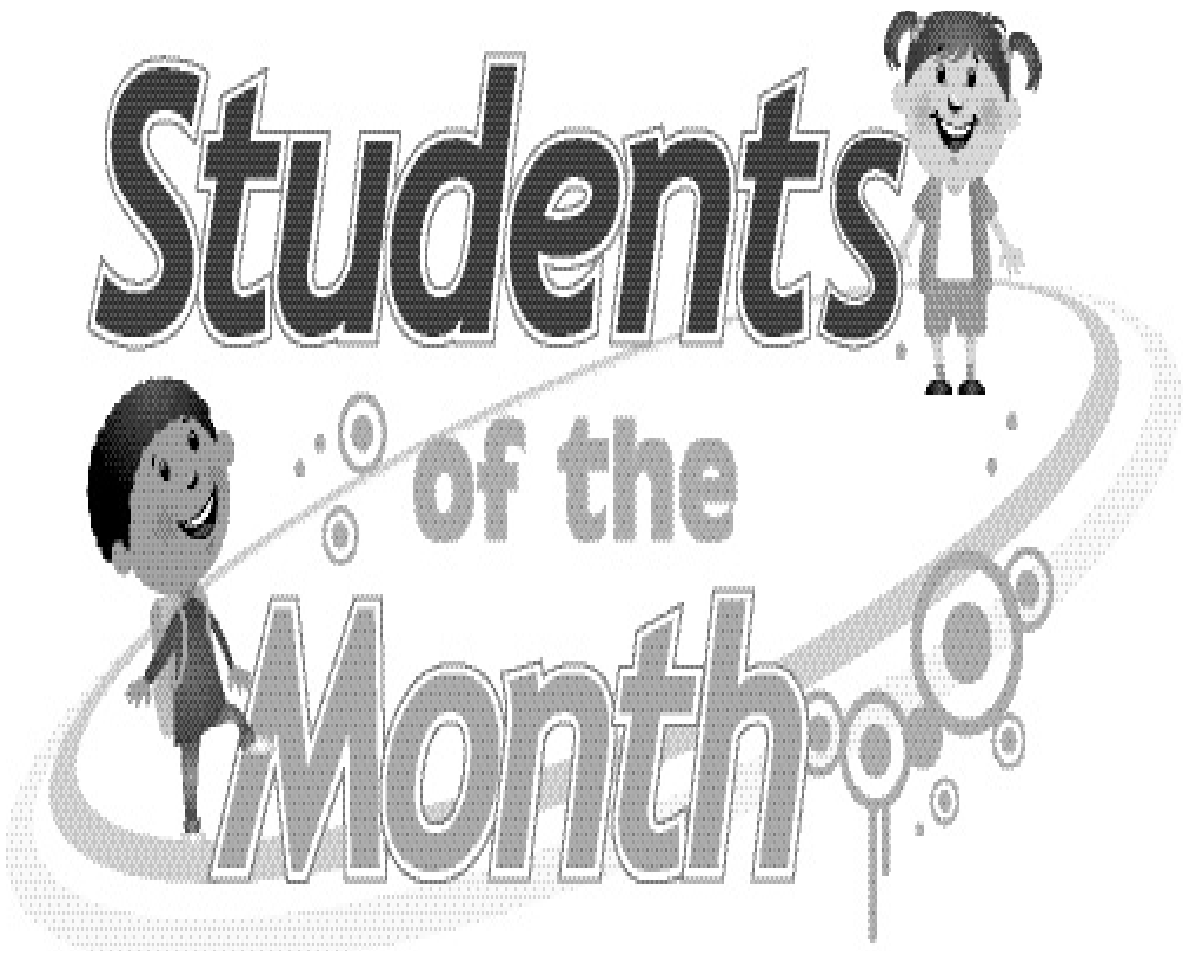

BOHEMIA ELEMENTARY

BAILEY POPE

Bailey Pope is a second grade student in Mrs. Beach's class. She is a wonderful classmate and a hard worker! She is great at following directions and staying on task! Bailey is a joy to have in class!

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JAYDEN MILLER

Jadeyn Miller is CGHS Student of the Month for October. She is a great help in the office and has been a wonderful asset to the Leadership class as well.

Congratulations Jadeyn!!

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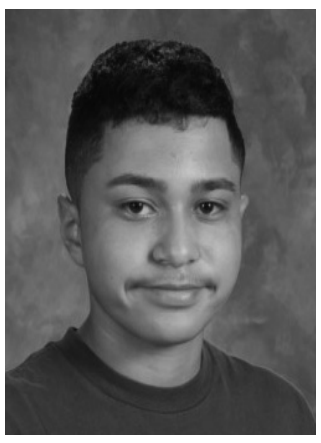

ISAC LEPE-ROMERO

Isac Lepe-Romero is Lincoln's September Student of the Month! Isac is a dream student to have in class. He is dependable, motivated, engaged, responsible, and has a great sense of humor. Isac consistently puts forth his best effort and models great behavior for others; throughout these last 2 crazy years of school he has worked diligently to stay on top of his classes, complete his work, and do his best. Most importantly, he has great character. He is always positive and is helping create an amazing environment at Lincoln Middle School. Congratulations, Isac!

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