



Photos by Katherine Lacaze

Students returned for full-time in-person instruction at Pacific Ridge Elementary School on Tuesday, Sept. 7.

Back to school: ‘We are going to protect the sanctity and opportunity for these kids’

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However, the rule makes allowances for when people are actively eating or drinking, sleeping, playing a musical instrument that requires using the mouth, or engaging in a sport during physical education class or an extracurricular program where wearing a mask could be a strangulation hazard.

“We are full steam ahead for all of our fall sports,” Seaside Middle and High School Principal Jeff Roberts said. At both schools, that includes cross-country, volleyball and football. The high school also starts its soccer season.

Currently, student-athletes aren’t required to wear face coverings during sporting events. However, all spectators and personnel attending indoor athletic events are required to wear masks, regardless of vaccination status. Roberts stressed the importance of adhering to these rules to enable the athletic programs to continue operating.

“We are going to protect the sanctity and opportunity for these kids,” he said.

The schools are also using district-developed protocols for entry and screening, cleaning and disinfecting, and visitors and volunteers. Students will be spaced 3 feet apart to the extent possible, and contact tracing procedures are in place with assistance from the local health authority. All classrooms are equipped with functioning air purifying systems.

The common areas are cleaned and disinfected multiple times per day, while the individual classrooms are fully sanitized at the end of day.

“Those were the protocols we used for summer school throughout the month of August and it was really successful,” Penrod said.



LEFT: Molly Albright welcomes back students Landon and Cash Thompson to Pacific Ridge Elementary School. RIGHT: Staff member James Downes helps students get safely inside Pacific Ridge Elementary School during the first day of the 2021-22 school year.



OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY REPORTS CASES

The Oregon Health Authority, in a weekly outbreak report released last week, disclosed a virus case for a student at Seaside High School and a virus case for a student at Pacific Ridge Elementary School in late August. The weekly outbreak report said the high school case was reported Aug. 27 and the Pacific Ridge case was reported Aug. 28.

Superintendent Susan Penrod disputed the report. “Aug. 27 was the last day of our summer school program and Aug. 28 was a Saturday,” she said. “None of our summer school students had symptoms or tested positive.”

Seaside High School and Middle School Principal Jeff Roberts said “there have not been any reported positive cases at the high school of students that have been in school.”

At Pacific Ridge Elementary School, Principal Juliann Wozniak said “There have not been any reported positive cases at Pacific Ridge of students or staff that have been in school. School started for students on Tuesday, Sept. 7.”

Meanwhile, the criteria for quarantine have changed. Last year, if a student was exposed to a COVID case, they were required to quarantine. This year, if a student was exposed but they were wearing a mask and not within 3 feet of the person, they are only required to quarantine if they exhibit symptoms.

Mandatory staff vaccinations

In August, the state also expanded its COVID-19 vac-

ination requirement to include all teachers, educators, support staff and volunteers in K-12 schools. The Seaside School District asked certified staff to file a religious or medical exception by Sept. 3. Classified staff were given until Sept. 10.

According to the state mandate, districts must ensure there are extra safety measures to protect unvaccinated staff and those around them, Penrod said. For the Seaside, that includes having unvac-

inated staff members wear soft, folded N95 masks, maintain 6 feet of physical distance from colleagues and students, refrain from eating or drinking around other staff and students, and sign up for a weekly COVID testing program through the Oregon Health Authority.

As a whole, Penrod said, the district “has embraced vaccination.” About 90% of staff — including certified, classified and confidential employees and coaches — have received their vaccination.

“I feel like that 90% is going to go up,” she said.

Along with Penrod, the building administrators and school board members expressed a commitment to creating a robust academic experience for students, with an emphasis on in-person instruction.

“Now we can get everybody here, and that’s all we’re worried about,” board member Mark Truax said. “We’ve got too much catching up to do.”

Board member Brian Taylor agreed.

“Distance learning is not an option anymore,” he added. “We’ve got to keep these kids in school.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sou’Wester Garden Club to meet

The Sou’Wester Garden Club will hold a workshop from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Sept. 22 at the Bob Chisholm Community Center in Seaside.

The workshop, presented by Ann Pilger, will focus on how to make paper from recycled newspaper.

Finding strength through art

Dylan Milliren of Seaside created a group on Facebook called Artists Unite, dedicated to bring artists of all types together to bring hope to those captive in their homes, encouraging those on the front line to find a cure and ending the coronavirus pandemic, help encouraging to end the pandemic and lockdown, and inspire other artists to join the cause.

When the lockdown affected Oregon last March, he started drawing to bring hope and encourage to end the pandemic, for he’s a cartoonist by trade.

With the help of his life-long good friend, Sean Davies, the group started to grow.

“Staying healthy is crucial and staying home, masks and 6-feet are good ways to keep from being affected, but if we keep living like this, the coronavirus simply won’t go away forever, and cannot simply live like that forever. And art is just one of the cures to help all of that,” Milliren said. “For artists are soldiers as well, our creativity and imagination are our strengths and our projects are our weapons.”

To join the group, visit Artists Univte on Facebook.

Davis named to dean’s list

Wayne Davis of Seaside has been named to Southern New Hampshire University’s summer 2021 dean’s list. Eligibility for the dean’s list requires that a student accumulate an academic grade point average above 3.5 and earn 12 credits for the term.

Peckenharn-Hernandez joins CMH-OHSU health care staff

Thomas Peckenharn-Hernandez, PA-C, physician assistant, joins the CMH-OHSU Health Cardiology Clinic, where he began working this week.

Peckenharn-Hernandez earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of Oregon and a master’s degree in physician assistant studies from Oregon Health & Science University in Portland. He was a surgical assistant at the OHSU Veterans Affairs Medical Center prior to joining Columbia Memorial Hospital.

Peckenharn-Hernandez has been recognized for his work by OHSU, Salud America and the University of Oregon. His medical interests are cardiology and migrant farmworker health care access.

Peckenharn-Hernandez is a member of the Oregon Society of Physician Assistants, the American Academy of Physician Assistants and the American College of Cardiology.



Thomas Peckenharn-Hernandez

Orthopedic surgeon Sherman joins Columbia Memorial Hospital

Columbia Memorial Hospital announced Dr. Benjamin Sherman has joined the CMH-OHSU Health Orthopedic Clinic as an orthopedic surgeon.

Sherman earned his doctor of osteopathic medicine degree at Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, California. He completed an internship and residency at Riverside University Health System in Moreno Valley, California, as well as a fellowship in sports medicine and arthroscopic surgery at the Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine in Gulf Breeze, Florida, where he trained under world-renowned orthopedic surgeon James R. Andrews.

Sherman specializes in the treatment of complex knee, shoulder and elbow injuries. His clinical and research interests include sports-related injuries, ACL tears, meniscus/cartilage preservation, rotator cuff tears, shoulder instability/labral tears and minimally invasive surgical techniques.

When he isn’t working, Sherman enjoys hiking, exercising, reading, spending time outdoors with his family and traveling.



Benjamin Sherman

First day: More parents are dropping their kids off

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At the middle and high schools, sixth- and ninth-graders also jumped into the new school year on Sept. 7, with their peers joining the following day. As in years past, freshmen and transfer students participated in Link Day — Seaside’s unique take on orientation, led by teacher Jeff Corliss.

“It was great to have students back in person,” Principal Jeff Roberts said, adding “the first week of classes went very well, and it was apparent students and staff were excited to all be back in class.”

Like with other districts across the state, Seaside’s leadership team, along with staff at every facility, has put in ample work to make in-person learning possible, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Penrod said.

Unique to Seaside was the additional variable of having all students on the



Photos by Katherine Lacaze

Seaside High School students participate in the on-campus Link Day, designed to help ninth-graders and transfer students integrate into the student body.

hillside campus at one time for daily instruction.

One area where that challenge manifested was the slow-moving traffic during pickup and drop-off, as the school buildings utilize the

same access road. Also at play was the increased concern of families because of the pandemic.

“What we’re seeing, along with other districts, is a lot of parents at least

starting the year by driving their own students because they’re being cautious, and I totally understand that,” Penrod said. “More parents are dropping their kids off than ever before because



Seaside High School students returned to campus for the 2021-22 school year on Tuesday, Sept. 7.

they want to be extra careful, they want to have their own safety measures.”

She said she anticipates the issue will smooth out as more families become comfortable with bus transportation and start taking advantage of that option again.

There tends to be an adjustment period as parents and guardians get reacquainted at the start of the school year and grow accustomed to the drop-off process.

“Like with anything that is new, it takes a little bit

of time to get used to,” she said.

According to Roberts, there were also some logistical issues with moving into the new building and having all middle and high school students on-site simultaneously.

“We anticipated a number of those challenges but really needed to see how things worked with students onsite,” he said, adding they will make adjustments as necessary as the school year progresses. “All in all, it was a great week.”