



Bass Lake Joint Union
Elementary School District
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School Year 2021-2022 Reopening Communications

Dear Bass Lake Joint Union Elementary School District Families and Communities,

The start of the 2021-2022 school year is upon us. On Thursday, August 12, our campuses will open to students once again for in-person learning. Our school principals, teachers, and staff have devoted countless hours in preparation for our students' safe return to school. Before we do, however, we want to acknowledge what was the most challenging school year ever that was last year. We have come so far since this time last year. So much has been learned about COVID-19 up to this point, which has led to many changes and adjustments to the health and safety guidance ordered for K-12 schools by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

The goal of the CDPH guidance "is to make sure all California students get access to safe and full in-person instruction." The safe and full in-person instruction depends on a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- Vaccination of all eligible people (ages 12 and older) to reduce COVID-19 rates in the community
- Wearing face coverings while indoors at school by all students and adults
- Face coverings are optional for everyone for all outdoor activities in K-12 schools

According to the CDPH, research has shown that in-person classes can safely happen without spacing requirements (social distancing) as long as other prevention strategies, such as wearing face coverings, are in effect. Wearing a face covering for indoor activities has shown to be one of the most effective and simplest strategies to reduce and prevent COVID-19 from spreading in schools. In short, wearing face coverings for indoor activities allows our children to get back into classrooms for in-person learning with their teachers. Individuals may still be exempted from face covering requirements in accordance with CDPH face mask guidance. Such individuals exempted from wearing a face mask due to a medical condition must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, so long as their condition permits it. We acknowledge that wearing a face covering while indoors at school is not considered ideal by some, but we must establish and maintain health and safety protocols and procedures to keep our classroom doors open for in-person instruction. None of us wants to experience widespread school closures again like we did last year.

Among the changes for this year include students and staff no longer need to be in learning cohorts. Students and staff are free to interact with everyone in the school community. Students are free to enjoy breakfast, lunch, and recess times with students from all classrooms, not just their own. Our goal is to allow students and staff to experience a school year that is as close to "normal" as possible.

Independent Study

As per California law, schools and districts may provide just two forms of academic instruction for the 2021-2022 school year, in-person attendance and independent study. As per AB 130, parents have the option to enroll their child(ren) in either in-person instruction or independent study. The Bass Lake Independent Study School (BLISS) program is the

District's independent study option. Parents may request a student-parent-educator conference prior to enrollment to discuss information regarding details of the program, synchronous and asynchronous instructional times, and procedures for enrolling, disenrolling, and re-enrolling in BLISS. Independent study is a voluntary program. A parent or guardian may enroll their child(ren) in independent study as a voluntary choice. If that program proves not to be effective for their child(ren), they may request to disenroll from independent study and be assigned to a classroom seat for in-person instruction within five (5) instructional days of the request being made.

Students engaging in an independent study program must continually demonstrate "satisfactory educational progress", as determined by the following criteria:

- The student's achievement and engagement levels in the independent study program, as measured by assessments, attendance, participation, etc.
- The student's completion of assignments, assessments, and other assigned activities
- The student's learning of required concepts and skills, as determined by the teacher
- Maintaining satisfactory progression toward successful completion of the course of study, as determined by the teacher

A re-engagement plan will be implemented to support students who fail to meet the above criteria. The goal is to provide adequate support to the student so that successful re-engagement leads to course completion. If after the re-engagement plan is implemented but proves to be unsuccessful, the student may be transitioned back to the in-person classroom program. Such action will not occur prior to parent contact. A parent may request a parent conference prior to such action.

Parents interested in enrolling their child(ren) in BLISS may contact your school office for more information.

Campus Visitors/Parent Volunteers

Below is the current 2021-2022 policy for school visitors/Parent Volunteers at our District's school sites, at least as long as pandemic conditions do not worsen to the point where we will need to restrict access entirely again:

Visitor Policy

1. District schools will review and adhere to their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.
2. District schools will restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly when moderate-to-high COVID-19 transmission rates are present.
3. Visitors and/or parent volunteers for indoor activities must provide proof of being fully vaccinated and adhere to CDPH guidance and District health & safety protocols. Access to campuses for outdoor activities or events may be restricted to unvaccinated individuals depending on the current COVID-19 transmission rates.
4. District schools will not limit access for direct service providers, but will ensure compliance with school visitor policies, CDPH guidance, and District health & safety protocols.
5. District schools will continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick. Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, are to stay home and seek testing and care.

Assembly Bill 104

AB 104 was signed into law earlier this summer. This new law allows parents/guardians of students who were in grades K-11 during the 2020-2021 school year to request for their child to be retained in the grade attended during last school year if the student received deficient grades as defined in AB 104 (D, F, or No Pass) in at least half of their classes. Any parent interested in this option may contact your school principal.

Other items of interest

A tremendous amount of planning has taken place in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year. The District has made a number of changes and/or additions to provide an incredible learning experience for each and every student. Among those things we are looking most forward to:

- Increased investment in the social-emotional behavioral and mental health program, with an individual Tier 3 Behavioral and Social-Emotional Health & Safety Coordinator/Interventionist assigned to each school site and increased hours for the Tier 2 Behavioral and Social-Emotional Health & Safety Paraeducators.
- Physical Education instructor at each school site to focus on the physical health and wellness of our students. Social-emotional behavioral and mental health cannot be adequately addressed without the inclusion of physical health and wellness, too.
- Full-time reading intervention teachers at both Wasuma and OCI to address the needs of our middle school students who need additional support in this area. Additional investment in the reading labs in grades K-5 as well at OES and Wasuma.
- Increased investment in language development programs for the District's English language learner students, especially at OES and OCI.
- Continued emphasis on COVID mitigation strategies, including vaccinations, face coverings in indoor settings, ventilation (airflow in school facilities), handwashing, and cleaning and sanitizing practices.

In conclusion, we are ready to kick off the school year with a continued emphasis on safety. So much has been learned about COVID-19 over the past year and a half. Based on this information, adjustments were made to CDPH guidance to allow in-person instruction without restrictions that require social distancing measures. Though we must all wear face coverings while indoors, we are getting back to some semblance of normal. If we experience a COVID case in our schools, close contacts of that individual will not need to quarantine away from school so long as they remain asymptomatic and receive two negative COVID tests over the next ten days. Please do your part to keep our schools open and stay home when sick. Parents, please keep your child(ren) home if they are symptomatic and/or sick. Together, we can provide an amazing school experience for our community's children during the 2021-2022 school year!

Best wishes for an outstanding year,



Randall M. Seals
Superintendent