



Gaston Public Schools

District 511JT – 300 Park St. Gaston, OR 97119

www.gastonk12.org

November 30, 2021

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christine Riley
Clinton Nelson
Karenga Ross
Jeremy Morgan
TJ Johnson

DISTRICT OFFICE

503.985.0210
Summer Catino
Superintendent
scatino@gastonk12.org

ELEMENTARY

503.985.7240
Laura Christensen
Principal
christensenl@gastonk12.org

JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

503.985.7516
Jesse Johnson
Principal
johnsonj@gastonk12.org

Dear Gaston Students, Staff, and Families,

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) have announced updates to COVID protocols for K-12 schools related to exposure quarantines and outdoor masking. Gaston School District will be following this updated guidance going forward.

Test to Stay: OHA's test to stay protocol allows unvaccinated students and staff to continue to participate in in-person instruction in Oregon's K-12 schools during their quarantine period. The risk of transmission is minimized in school settings because the required testing is combined with several layers of mitigation including universal masking, physical distancing, cohorting, and ventilation.

- **Test to stay is available only for unvaccinated asymptomatic individuals who were exposed in indoor and outdoor school settings where universal masking is fully in place.** Indoor and outdoor exposures are reviewed for proximity and duration of exposure.
- Individuals are to be tested twice during the 7 days following exposure. First, as soon as the exposure has been identified, with a second test occurring between days 5-7 following the exposure. Onsite testing is available for onsite exposures, the school will coordinate scheduling.
- Students and staff participating in test to stay **may participate in school-related extracurricular activities** during their 7-day quarantine period, but **must wear a face covering at all times** during these activities.
- Test to stay is a form of modified quarantine, which allows individuals to attend school during their 7-day quarantine period. However, individuals participating in test to stay are expected to maintain quarantine outside of classroom settings.

If you would like your child to participate in the Test to Stay program, please ensure they have testing [consent](#) on file.

Return on Day 8: For **unvaccinated staff and students who have off-site and/or household exposures**, OHA is implementing a shortened quarantine. These changes to quarantine length are possible because schools are implementing multiple health and safety protocols. For unvaccinated close contacts who attend or work in the school setting, the following guidelines state:

- The person should quarantine for seven (7) days.
- The person should [seek testing](#) between five and seven (5–7) days following their last exposure. Onsite testing is available; the school will coordinate scheduling.
- If the close contact has a **negative result** on a test collected between days five and seven (5–7) by antigen or PCR test they **may return to normal activities on day eight (8)**.
- Close contacts should continue to monitor themselves for symptoms through the 14 days after their last exposure.
- Please note: household exposures are subject to longer quarantine times due to the extended exposure.



Gaston Public Schools

District 511JT – 300 Park St. Gaston, OR 97119

www.gastonk12.org

Outdoor Mask Wearing: Effective Monday, Nov. 29, masks are **optional outdoors** for both students and staff; this includes recess and other times where students might be outdoors for a break or class. Students should still maintain appropriate physical distance from one another, and should wash or sanitize their hands upon reentering the building.

Previous Guidance: All other COVID protocols remain in place including the indoor masking mandate. Vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they are fully vaccinated and remain symptom free following the actual COVID-19 exposure.

Please contact info@gastonk12.org if you have questions or need clarification on any of the new guidance. **We appreciate your continued efforts in following the guidelines to protect our community and to keep students in school.**

Sincerely,

Summer Catino, Superintendent
Gaston School District