

Crook County School District

where students dream, learn, & succeed



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Safe Harbor Extension an Early Christmas Present for Crook County Students

Crook County School District to reopen classrooms for all K-12 students Monday, January 4th

Rising COVID-19 cases in Crook County appeared to dash all hopes of students returning to classrooms after Winter Break. That changed today after the Oregon Department of Education announced the extension of the Safe Harbor designation.

"We are thrilled with this decision, and thankful the ODE has recognized that our schools have been a safe place for students and staff. Parents have already reached out this week pleading with us to reopen, so this is truly an early Christmas gift to our families," said Superintendent Dr. Sara Johnson.

The Safe Harbor extension allows Crook County School District to continue with in-person and hybrid models on Monday, January 4th. K-5 students will return to the classroom full time, while middle and high school students will continue with the Blue/Gold rotating schedule. The Hybrid Learning Campus at Pioneer will also stay with their existing hybrid schedule.

The school district is still required to collaborate with the Crook County Health Department when determining if staying open is safe for students and staff. So far this year, no cases of COVID-19 have originated or spread inside the schools because of the district's safety measures, such as wearing masks. ODE and the Oregon Health Authority said in a press release today that school districts already open have not experienced transmission of the virus, and that was part of the reason for the extension.

"Crook County has left no stone unturned in the search to keep our schools open. We know that quality education is just as much about socialization as it is instruction. We also know that, for reasons not entirely understood, schools do not seem to be superspreaders of COVID. The action to extend 'Safe Harbor' is sound policy, sound instructional strategy and sound science. I am proud of staff's advocacy for kids and community," explained School Board Chair, Scott Cooper.

The school district continues to receive calls from community members interested in becoming substitute teachers. As of this week, about 45 people have reached out about the process. This should increase the local substitute pool and help prevent a future closure of schools due to a staffing shortage.

"Crook County citizens are a resilient and committed group of people, and their support of our local school district is simply amazing. The community spirit and can-do attitude here is incredible, and I'm thankful for the support of our teachers, staff, and school board as well," said Dr. Johnson.

Crook County School District values flexibility and choice. If families are concerned about having their children return to school after Winter Break, there are two online options available.

Grizzly Mountain HomeLink

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About Crook County School District

Crook County School District is a thriving, rural, growing district in Central Oregon, serving more than 3,000 students from all across Crook County. It is an organization with integrity, a model for educational success, and a recognized leader for excellence in helping students dream, learn, and succeed.

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