

THE JEFFERSON JOURNAL

★☆☆ News from Jefferson Elementary School ★☆☆

Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that we are on the unceded lands of the Spokane Tribe. The Spokane people shared this place with other tribes through their relations, resources, history, trade, and ceremony. We thank the caretakers of this land, who lived, and continue to live here since Time Immemorial. This land holds the knowledge, culture, and spirit of "The People of the River."



PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Hello Jefferson families and community,

Over the past two years, our staff, our elementary scholars, and their families have needed to remain flexible and adapt to changes in safety guidance given to schools by public health experts as they learned more about COVID-19 and as variants caused challenges across all settings.

The newest change will see mask wearing in school buildings shift from being required for all who enter to being optional after this Friday, March 11.

While this will be a welcome change for many, there are also many who do not support it. And these differing opinions should be respected. I ask parents to have conversations with your children about respecting the choices of others. Teasing someone for wearing a mask, or not wearing a mask, will not be tolerated. Scholars should also avoid asking about another's vaccination status or reasons for wearing a mask or not wearing one.

We are at a crossroads in our country, where productive and respectful discourse about many topics have disintegrated into mean spirited attacks on one another. And our children are watching. This is an opportunity for us to help our children learn about differences in opinion.

I will include some answers to frequently asked questions that have been provided to schools by the state of Washington. These may help answer some of your questions, and assist you as you talk with your children about the change coming next Monday at school.

Why was this change made?

Data show rates of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are declining rapidly in our state, and public health models show that, by mid-March, cases and hospitalizations are predicted to drop to levels we haven't seen since last summer. Masks impact the learning environment, and with widespread access to vaccinations, our expansive school COVID-19 testing program, and rapidly declining cases and hospitalizations, it was time to rebalance the benefits and challenges of universal masking in schools.



CALENDAR

March 18
Early Release
1:45 pm

April 4-8
Spring Break

April 22
Early Release
1:45 pm

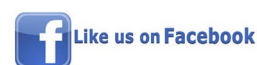
Thursdays Are T24 Spirit Days

Join your fellow Jefferson scholars and staff each week in celebrating going beyond high school graduation with T24! Every Thursday wear any T (technical school) 2 (community college) 4 (university) gear and let everyone know that you know the importance of learning plans beyond high school!



Like Us on Facebook

Family and community members are encouraged to like Jefferson on Facebook to keep up on the latest happenings and to see many more pictures of events than are unable to fit in an issue of The Jefferson Journal. This QR code can take you right there!



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MARCH 7, 2022

Principal's Corner Continued

Will schools continue testing students and staff who show symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes. This announcement has no impact on the COVID-19 testing program in our schools.

Does it make a difference if someone is vaccinated or not?

No. The statewide indoor mask requirements will be lifted for all students and staff on March 21, regardless of vaccination status. Masks may still be required for those who recently tested positive for COVID-19, were identified as a close contact for someone with COVID-19, or for other reasons identified by the Department of Health or a local health officer.

Will the vaccination requirement for school employees change?

The Governor has not announced any intention of changing the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for school employees.

What responsibilities does a school district have if there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a school?

School districts are required by state law to report cases and outbreaks to their local health officer (this requirement was in law long before COVID-19).

What if I want my student to continue wearing a mask?

Barring a local requirement for masks, students and staff will continue to have the option to wear masks at school, with the expectation that those decisions will be respected. Those decisions should not be used to make assumptions about their personal beliefs or their health status and should not be commented on. Districts should not tolerate bullying of any kind of students who continue wearing masks.

What is being done to protect students and staff who are at greater risk of COVID-19?

Public health experts continue to recommend full vaccination and masking for those who are at greater risk for serious COVID-related health issues. The most important mitigation strategy is to continue increasing the number of students and school employees who are fully vaccinated.

What would cause a local health officer to start requiring masks in schools again?

Local health officers have always had the authority in state law to require health and safety mitigation measures in schools when the situation warrants it, and that will not change. Health officers will continue to monitor community case counts and hospitalizations, and they may add new mitigation measures for schools if they deem it necessary.

If you have questions about these changes, you are invited to reach out to district officials through the Let's Talk portal here: [Report a Concern / Let's Talk!](#) (spokaneschools.org). I am also available to answer questions, along with our school nurse, Mykette McFarlane.

We are in this together, let's stay together.

Brent



Brent A. Perdue (he, his, him)

Principal brentp@spokaneschools.org

THE PTG SCOOP

1. The next PTG meeting is Wednesday, April 13th, at 7pm via Zoom with a possible in person option. Watch social media for the link!
2. 6th Grade Parents: We are still in need of volunteers for the memory book! And even if you can't help create it, please start looking through your child's baby pictures for some fun options, and watch for the photo permission form coming home!

CLASSES OF THE WEEK



Mrs. Antich's Kindergarten

Mrs. Janachek's 5th Grade

Leadership Club Spirit Day a Huge Success

Jefferson's most recent spirit day was Favorite Superhero, Book Character or Fictional Character Day. Scholars and staff dressed up in a wide range of outfits to celebrate a day of imagination! From Harry Potter to Junie B. Jones and from Spider Man to Wonder Woman all kinds of wonderful outfits were on display.



Kindergarten Registration is Now Open

Do you have a young scholar who will turn 5 before August 31st? If so, registration begins tomorrow. Families are encouraged to register online at [Enroll / Register \(spokaneschools.org\)](https://www.spokaneschools.org/enroll/register). After your online registration is complete, you will be contacted about visiting Jefferson to complete the process. You will need to bring the following with you to the school:

1. A [birth certificate](#) or other official verification of age (such as a passport or visa) is required for students who have not previously enrolled in school. Kindergarten students must be 5 on or before Aug. 31; first graders must be 6.
2. [Medically verified immunization records](#) for new students.
3. [Part B Health Record](#) filled out for new students.
4. Proof of residency. This can be a current utility bill.



African Culture Shared with 3rd Grade Class

Mrs. Sims' class had two very special guests visit recently in honor of Black History Month. Mark Finney and special guest Jackson.

Mark Finney, who is a Jefferson parent, works for an organization called Thrive International. Thrive International empowers immigrants and citizens to thrive together in a community, specifically empowering youth, women, and community leaders. Thrive International also creates affordable housing for immigrants.

One of their main goals is to focus on community education and foster cross-cultural awareness.

Mark and Jackson came to Mrs. Sims' class in honor of Black History Month and to also educate and foster cultural awareness. Both Mark and Jackson have traveled the world and spent much time supporting and learning about many cultures in our world.

What a gift to have them come share their knowledge about cultures and educate Mrs. Sims' class about some of the cultures in Africa.

Jefferson looks forward to having them return and share again with other Jefferson classrooms.



March Madness..... Dreambox style!

March Madness is here, and whether you are a Zag fan or not, March is always an exciting month. Here at Jefferson, scholars began a mathematics Dreambox March Madness challenge today that will last the rest of the month. Families are encouraged to cheer on their youngsters, and provide Dreambox time at home if needed, as they work to score for themselves and for their classroom team! Here is the gameplan:



1. If a scholar meets the goal of completing 5 Dreambox lessons a week for two weeks in March, they will win a basketball stress ball!
2. For every week each student meets their 5-lesson goal, they earn one point for their class. The two classes with the most points (averaged) at the end of each week will receive an extra recess and a [Smart Snack](#) treat from Mr. Perdue and Mrs. Gage.
3. The class with the highest percentage over the entire competition will win a mystery prize to be announced at the end!

The MADNESS begins today and ends on Friday, April 1st.