



District COVID-19 Safety Team

Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

1. Currently 24% of 16 and 17 year-olds have at least one vaccination. We are seeing a plateau in the vaccination rate. Appointments are going unfilled and there is a lot of availability.
2. There are some barriers for students and families.
 - a. Every provider has a different system.
 - b. Registration is in English and digital literacy and access to online platforms
 - c. Consent system for minors is different based on who is providing vaccine.
 - d. Vaccine hesitancy.
3. Ferndale High school had 1000 appointments available on May 1st. They shared them across the county, and under 200 people signed up.
4. The Family Resource Center and Bellingham Schools Foundation are giving out yes cards on Saturday, May 8th at a walk-up vaccine clinic.
5. We are hoping to have high school on-site vaccines starting next week.

COVID_19 testing pilot in schools

1. The goal is to increase access to COVID testing for kids who are unlikely to access COVID testing to come back to school sooner.
2. Testing is happening at Shuksan on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Nyla and Matt are working to train more staff so we can try some in-school testing for students with symptoms.
3. Wrestling starts next week and requires rapid antigen testing before students can wrestle.
4. Jessica suggested that we try to build on the testing model to make vaccines available.

Mask wearing expectations for staff

1. Language from newsletter: We still must **wear masks at work and school** in accordance with [Labor and Industries](#) and [Washington Department of Health](#), BUT it this guidance does tell us that if we are on a break and outside for a walk with a co-worker it is ok to not wear a mask.
2. What this means in practice : encourage all staff to continue to wear masks in work buildings. Expect to wear them through the end of the school year.
3. Recommendation from team is to expect all employees to wear masks at work, especially inside. Request that even employees working alone in large spaces should wear masks in case people walk through the space. Example from schools is that doing otherwise allows for discretion that could be very uncomfortable—we are not ready to confirm with all employees that they are vaccinated.

Eating and drinking in the classroom

1. Should we open up water fountains again? No agreement about this--- concern that water fountains are gathering places.
2. What about letting kids eat/drink in the classroom? How do we support some common sense in the face of Covid risk?

3. Recommendation to ask each school to define “mask breaks” and rules around eating & drinking. Please clarify school rules around eating & drinking and explicitly allow & encourage water drinking.
4. Language from our website:

Middle and High School

Middle and high school student eating areas will be dependent on the school; in most cases, students will eat in the cafeteria with seating arranged to honor physical distancing. When possible, outdoor seating is also acceptable although students will need to keep a distance of at least six feet from each other. Students will need to practice good hygiene by washing hands before and after mealtime. Drinking fountains are closed throughout the building. We encourage students to bring a water bottle to school to support their needs. Students may step out of the classroom to take a drink and then return to the classroom. Quick snacks should be managed like a drink of water.

High school students will have grab and go breakfast/lunch combo meals available for them to take as they leave at the end of their in-person instruction day.

Facilities use for this summer

1. There should be alignment with what the City of Bellingham is doing with their facilities.
2. Recommendation from this group to open our facilities to community use/rental and learn to communicate and enforce COVID safety protocols.