

# Ashbrook Compass



Dear Families,

Ashbrook Independent School is up for renewal of our Accreditation Certification. We are currently accredited by Cognia (formerly known as AdvancEd) but our 5-year certification expires during the 2020-2021 school year. Last year, we assembled a team of Ashbrook educators to begin the preparation for our accreditation year. Our Student Engagement Team met monthly to plan, develop materials, analyze data, and summarize findings in order to create a new 5-year School Improvement Plan.

The following was used to determine our priorities for improvement as a school community:

- Surveys (students, parents, staff)
- IOWA assessments
- Future thinking trends and letters from students
- Attendance and behavior records
- Historical school data
- Classroom observations

On January 25th and 26th, Cognia will be visiting Ashbrook (virtually) to review all of the materials, documents, data, and future plans, and they will interview all stakeholder groups in order to determine our accreditation renewal qualifications.

Thank you to our dedicated SER Team members who worked closely with Ms. Wonderly and myself over the last year: Vickie Wheatley, Kim Phillips, Melissa Anderson, Charlene Ulrich, Marsha Washburn, Kayla Weber, Erik Olson, Paul Hunt, and Kelly Tynon.

We look forward to sharing the story of Ashbrook Independent School with the Cognia team during their 2-day visit!

Rachel Sechler  
Interim Head of School

CHALLENGE – NURTURE – CARE - 2021

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## **Next Week:**

**Jan 25** -- Grades K-3 return to in-person learning

**Jan 25** -- Grades 4-8 Pick-up Day (12 noon - 4 pm)

**Jan 29** -- Middle School 'A Week' schedule

**Jan 29** -- LS Virtual Concert

## **Upcoming Dates:**

**Feb 3** -- PTO meeting via Zoom

**Feb 5** -- Middle School 'B Week' schedule

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## **K-3 return to In-Person Learning**

The Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Health Authority, and Benton County Health Department have updated us on their guidance for returning students to the building safely. Ashbrook will continue to follow the advisory metrics.

Under the guidance, we are able to return grades K-3 back to in-person learning with county case rates below 350 per 100,000. We feel confident with our protocols to make this happen as safely as possible.

Every week since September, schools across Oregon who have been open to limited in-person learning (including AIS) have been submitting data to ODE about case rates in the school. The data has shown that the risk of spread in a school is very low if schools follow the Ready Schools Safe Learners guidance.

Ashbrook's small size has many benefits, especially during this pandemic, however, due to our small size we are unable to provide a full comprehensive online program while simultaneously teaching students in-person. With that said, we remain committed to doing our best to meet the needs of our families during this time.

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## **Programs Update**

We are temporarily suspending the school lunch program.

Click [HERE](#) for the updated After School Program form.

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## Staffing Update

### School Secretary

Ms. Michelle Cordova has been offered a position with the local school district that presented a career opportunity she could not pass up. We are excited for Ms. Cordova in her new journey and we will miss her warm spirit in the office! We are thankful Ms. Carol is willing to continue as the School Secretary while we determine the best next steps for this position. Here is a note from Ms. Cordova:

*Dearest Ashbrook Community,*

*I wanted to send a note to let you know that I will be leaving my position as School Secretary. I have accepted a position with the Corvallis School District as the Assistant to the Human Resources Director. My last day at Ashbrook is January 26.*

*I also wanted to say thank you for all of your kindness and support during my time at Ashbrook. I've enjoyed my time at this beautiful school. Due to the dynamics of 2020 I was not able to get to know many of you or meet many of the students but I am grateful for the connections I have made.*

*I wish you all well in the New Year, and I wish Ashbrook Independent School much success and blessings with all the wonderful changes ahead.*

*Best, Michelle*

### Assistant Preschool Teacher/After School Program Lead Teacher

Ms. Jerri Jessop will soon be continuing her education program in Elementary Education which includes a practicum teaching experience component in order to achieve her teaching license. Ms. Jerri will be starting her practicum teaching here at Ashbrook in collaboration with Ms. Ulrich in the 2nd grade classroom. This will be a full time commitment for Ms. Jerri for the duration of the school year. We are thrilled for Ms. Jerri as she continues on her career path and we feel thankful she will be completing this step here with us at AIS, but we will miss her warmth and care in the Beginning School classes. We thank her for her devotion and teaching!

We have just completed the hiring process for the Preschool Assistant Teacher position and we are excited to announce that Ms. Lauren White will be joining our team soon! Ms. Lauren brings over 5 years of experience in preschool and childcare settings, most recently from The Robin's Nest center in Corvallis. Ms. Lauren is passionate about fostering imaginative play, character building, and she especially enjoys integrating nature and outdoor learning into each day. Ms. Lauren will also serve as the Beginning School After School Program Lead Teacher for our preschool and pre-k students.

Please join me in welcoming Ms. Lauren to our school community! Thank you to Mrs. Wheatley, Ms. Wall, and Ms. Jerri for serving on the interview committee for this position.

If you have any questions about either of these staffing changes, please feel free to reach out.

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## Digital Theatre Plus access

Ashbrook students can enjoy Digital Theatre Plus, the world's leading educational platform for the performing arts, at home! Digital Theatre+ offers unlimited student access to over 1000+ full-length productions and educational resources.

Visit [digitaltheatreplus.com](https://digitaltheatreplus.com) and use the Ashbrook username and password. This access filters out mature content. If you would prefer to access all of the content, please contact Ms. Kimberly.

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## The 2019-20 Yearbook Supplements Have Arrived (Finally)

They will be in the 4th-8th grade bags to be picked up this Monday. Preschool through 3rd grade supplements will be in their sibling's bag or given out in class. Extra copies of the 19-20 yearbook are available for purchase if you did not reserve one last year.

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## Explorers Fund Update

We are excited to announce that we have raised **72% of the \$60,000** we need to qualify for matching funds from the Board of Trustees and an anonymous donor!

There is still time to donate, of course, and if you prefer, you can set up a monthly donation to spread out the payments. Click [HERE](#) to be taken directly to the Explorers Fund page on the Ashbrook website where you can donate via credit card or EFT/ACH. (There is a small payment processing fee regardless of how you donate online, but you can avoid those fees by mailing a check directly to the school marked ATTN. Explorers Fund.) Ashbrook Independent School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and gifts may be tax deductible.

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## End-of-Year Contribution Statements

If you donated to Ashbrook in 2020 and need an end-of-year contribution statement for tax purposes, please contact Ms. Tynon. She can generate a statement and email it to you within the day.

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## Current COVID Metrics

At this time, Benton County is in the orange category with 320 cases per 100,000 for the 1/3/20 - 1/16/21 time frame. ODE and OHA advise that elementary schools can prioritize careful phasing in of on-site or hybrid learning with county case rates less than 350 over a 2-week period, and schools are not advised to reduce in-person learning or return to distance learning based on metrics as long as the school can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment.

Metrics are released every Monday. For a complete guide to the current metrics, please visit [www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Documents/Following%20the%20Metrics%20Visual.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Documents/Following%20the%20Metrics%20Visual.pdf)

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## Beyond Ashbrook

**Jackson Street Youth Services** is in need of mentors for youth who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, or LGBTQIA+. JSYS gives vulnerable youth in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties a safe place to live and resources that get them on the road to a better life. Responsible adults make a one-year mentoring commitment to spend at least 4 hours per month providing one-on-one guidance and support. Training is provided. Visit <https://www.jacksonstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/Mentoring-Prgm-Interest-Form-52020.pdf> to express interest.