



Uintah School District
COVID-19 Contingency Plan
January 19, 2022

Overview and Rationale:

On Jan. 13, Gov. Spencer Cox, Utah Senate President Stuart Adams, Utah House Speaker Brad Wilson and State Superintendent of School Syndee Dickson sent a letter to all district superintendents announcing the suspension of the state-mandated test-to-stay program for all Utah schools.

The test-to-stay program, as outlined in Utah law, established the threshold for schoolwide COVID testing based on the number or percentage of positive student cases in relation to individual school populations. Utah leaders suspended the program due a statewide surge in COVID cases and a lack of testing supplies. They also provided district school boards with conditional and temporary authority to move their schools to remote learning for up to four days, if those schools met the test-to-stay threshold.

In a COVID-19 briefing on Jan. 14, Gov. Cox discouraged testing for most Utahns, except in certain high-risk cases. The governor stated that the virus is so prevalent in Utah right now that anybody who has symptoms should assume they are positive, and said that almost anybody who has spent any time in public settings over the past two weeks should assume they have been exposed.

These combined actions have made it virtually impossible for the district or its schools to accurately track positive student cases. If students and their families are not being tested based on the latest direction from the governor, most cases will likely go unreported and self-reported cases will be based purely on speculation.

In response to this change of direction at the state level, Uintah School District is implementing the following contingency plan in order to keep our schools safe and open for in-person learning.

Monitoring: The district will no longer track, monitor, or report positive COVID-19 student cases. Instead, the district's focus will shift to internally monitoring each school's capacity to safely provide in-person learning for students. This will include daily monitoring of the attendance rates of instructional staff, transportation staff, and food services staff. Furthermore, the district will monitor the number of substitutes assigned, the number of unfilled substitute positions, and the percentage of substitutes accepting positions each day relative to the total number of available substitutes in each pool.

Action: Each school has a unique capacity to adequately supervise students, which is necessary to keep students safe at school. Factors impacting a school's capacity to supervise students include, but are not limited to, the size and layout of the school, the number of sections

taught in each subject or grade-level, the experience of staff, and the configuration of staff. When a school cannot maintain the staffing ratios necessary to keep students well supervised and safe at school, the principal will confer with the superintendent. The superintendent will use whatever human and fiscal resources might be available to help keep the school open for in-person learning. If school and district resources are insufficient to meet the goal of keeping students safe and in school for in-person learning, the superintendent will confer with the Uintah School Board Executive Committee to determine whether the Uintah School Board should convene to consider moving the school to virtual learning.

In emergency situations, the superintendent in consultation with the Board Executive Committee may move a school to virtual learning for up to two days before convening the Board for official action. The Board may move a school to virtual learning for up to 4 days. (See figure 1.1 for a visual representation of this process.)

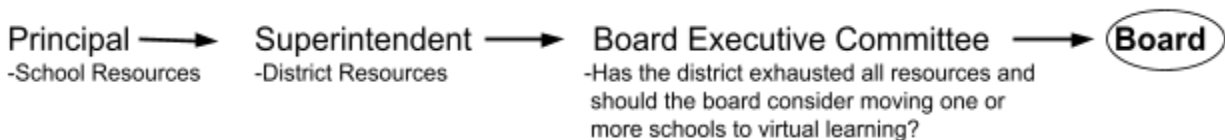


Figure 1.1: Process leading to a move to virtual learning

The following is a list of essential actions necessary to keep our schools open. These actions, along with all available data, will be reviewed in 6 weeks and this plan will be amended as needed.

1. The district will suspend Friday in-person learning for the next 6 Fridays, beginning on Friday, Jan. 21. Students will attend Friday classes online. This will provide teachers with more time to plan for and respond to the large number of students who are absent and learning online at this time. (EXCEPTION: Students in special education Life Skills classrooms will continue with their current Friday in-person schedule.)
2. The district will implement an incentive program to increase the number of substitutes who accept assignments.
3. Most professional development (PD) meetings will be canceled or postponed to reduce the strain on our substitute pools. PD requests will be limited throughout the remainder of this school year.
4. Contingency staffing plans for Transportation and Foods will be submitted to the Superintendent and/or reviewed by Friday, Jan. 21.

5. The district will review all upcoming large-group employee gatherings to determine whether they should be postponed or canceled. Gatherings that are authorized will be required to include specific risk-mitigation protocols.

The district recognizes the COVID-19 health risks associated with the school environment for both students and staff. We also understand the importance of in-person learning for the growth, development, and emotional wellbeing of our students. We continue to acknowledge the importance of individual choice when it comes to vaccinations and the wearing of masks and we encourage our employees, students, and their families to consider the implications of these choices as they relate to the district's goal of keeping our schools open for in-person learning.