

August 19, 2020

Dear Friends,

We are excited to have our students back next week, beginning Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. We have missed them, and we have been diligently preparing over the last 3 weeks for their return. All of the needed preparations will have been completed by end-of-day Monday, the 24<sup>th</sup>. We are grateful for your patience and support, and we appreciate the Board's unanimous vote in delaying the start of school. We will be better prepared on the 25<sup>th</sup>, to mitigate and minimize the risks associated with COVID-19.

On August 11, 2020, the Utah State Board of Education released a statement granting a waiver for up to six (6) days to districts who needed to delay the start of school to accommodate the needed preparation time. Iron County School District needed nine (9) days to sufficiently prepare for our reopening. Therefore, we will add three (3) school days to our calendar for the 20-21 school year: Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. All other calendar dates and events, including graduation, will remain the same, and school will be out for the summer before Memorial Day, May 31<sup>st</sup> as usual.

Finally, regarding face coverings. ICSD will continue consulting with our local health department, and state agencies as we move forward with our district reopening plan ([irondistrict.org/forms/Reopening](http://irondistrict.org/forms/Reopening)). As of today, we will begin school next Tuesday using that plan and the parameters set therein for face coverings, with masks being required because of the science behind their use that suggests they are more effective at mitigating exposure and risk than face shields, but shields will be permitted by both students and staff with stringent emphasis on social distancing and using the guidance outlined in the COVID-19 School Manual ([coronavirusutah.gov](http://coronavirusutah.gov)) for exceptions (e.g. medical reasons, speech/language services and instructional settings where the mouth must be seen). We will continue working with our local health department and state authorities, and will be adjusting our practices based on their direction.

We appreciate everyone's patience and support as we continue to work through our ever-changing education environment to ensure we are prepared to offer the most safe and viable education options for our students and employees.

All the best,

Shannon