

July 15, 2020

Dear DPS Community,

As we continue to plan for the upcoming school year, I want to share an update with you on our ongoing work. Our DPS leadership team has been responding to the changing realities of COVID with proactive, health-based plans for education since March. We have heard many questions and concerns about returning to school, and truly appreciate the feedback we continue to receive.

COVID in Colorado and across the nation

As we have emphasized throughout the past several months, we remain ready to adjust our plans based on changing health conditions and risk factors within our community. We are making contingency plans should the rates of COVID infection increase to a point where health officials recommend that in-person attendance is not feasible. Like many states around the country, we have seen an increase of COVID-19 cases in Colorado. Fortunately, our increases have [not been as high as other states](#) such as California, Arizona, and Florida.

As many of you have seen, this increase in community spread has led several school districts, including Los Angeles and San Diego, to decide to start next school year with fully remote learning. In consultation with our health partners, we believe that the current rate of spread in our community does allow us to continue forward with a plan for in-person learning, but please know that we are monitoring the ever-changing environment daily.

Building a responsive plan with safety in mind

We are striving to make our plans as responsive to changing health conditions as possible. For example, we are considering a “staggered start” schedule, in which schools would all begin virtually and phase in in-person attendance gradually.

We have also developed plans with health officials to safely run a hybrid or fully in-person model as health data allows. And of course, every family will still have the opportunity to choose a fully virtual program.

Delaying start of school to mitigate heat concerns, allow for teacher preparation

We are also considering pushing back the day school starts for students by one week to Aug. 24. This delay would increase the amount of time teachers have to prepare for a highly unusual school year -- and decrease the number of hot August days that our students and staff will be in classrooms.

We expect to be able to share more details with you about these decisions on Monday, July 20.

These conversations are ongoing, and we are grateful for the many partners who are making this possible. We will continue to update you on details. In the meantime, we encourage you to review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our return to school webpage, and email us your questions and feedback at CoronavirusInfo@dpsk12.org.

Warm regards,

Susana