

February 17, 2021

Boise School District Board of Directors,

On behalf of St. Luke's & Saint Alphonsus & Central District Health, we would like to express our appreciation for the continued efforts the Boise School District is making to help protect educators and students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our teams appreciate the complexity of decisions you face as district leaders. It is clear you all have a strong desire to protect the health and safety of our community's children, to do your part to help slow the spread of COVID-19, and to ensure that kids, teachers, and staff can return to school as safely as possible.

Good progress has been made recently in the fight against COVID-19. Cases in our state are declining, hospital capacity is stable, and a growing number of Idahoans are being vaccinated against the virus. On the other hand, there are still reasons to be cautious. As we shared with you during your February 8 monthly meeting, the recommendation from our perspective is to continue in a hybrid model until we know more about the new more infectious COVID variants. However, we also understand that there is broader interest in options that bring students back to school completely in-person in March.

With this in mind, and in alignment with our shared desire to promote safety and prevent further spread of the virus, we are sharing the following guidance for your information and consideration. We recommend that the most important aspects of your safety plan continue and include strict quarantining for significant exposures when indicated, universal masking, physical distancing to the extent possible, and diligent focus on environmental cleanliness. We know that these measures work in protecting against COVID-19 transmission. If you make the decision to return to school 5 days per week, please ensure these practices are in place and followed. We also ask that you continue to monitor transmission levels within the schools and the community so operational plans can be adjusted if conditions lead to higher risks for students, staff, and families.

Thank you for all you are doing in service of youth in our community. Please know that we are all here to provide support and answer your questions as we continue to navigate these challenging times together.

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