



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

Board members consider school closure protocol

Proposal follows outline from Utah State Board of Education

The Board of Education is considering establishing protocol for actions that will be taken when an outbreak of COVID-19 occurs in a classroom or school within Davis School District.

The protocol under consideration would mirror the guidelines established by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE). The board gave initial approval for a 14-day quarantine and remote learning for classrooms with three or more positive COVID cases or schools with 15 or more positive COVID cases within 14 consecutive days. A final vote on the proposal is scheduled to take place during a meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 20.

Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen said public health departments have defined those specific numbers as an outbreak. The class or school would be closed for 14 consecutive calendar days, a deep cleaning would occur, and students would receive instruction virtually. One of the nuances, he said, would be if two or more of the positive cases were within the same family. In that situation, that family group would count as only one infection for closure considerations.

The protocol proposal includes the superintendent determining whether a classroom or school goes virtual for the 14-day period. The decision would be made in consultation with the Davis County Health Department. After verifying the numbers, Zurbuchen said notification would go out to parents about the need to go virtual. It is likely that notification would occur late in the day.

The first day of the classroom or school quarantine, Zurbuchen said, would be a prep day for teachers and staff.

Parents would be notified about three days before the return to regular class with a reminder of the timeline. At this time, the plan would be to return to the same sched-

ule as when the outbreak occurred. If students are attending four days of in-person class, they would return to four days of in-person class.

“Many people have talked about the possibility of well, ‘that’s short notice,’” Zurbuchen said. “You know, you find out today that my child’s not coming to school for 14 days But also we’ve identified through the USBE rule that the school is having a COVID outbreak. It is in a public health crisis mode and waiting doesn’t serve that public health crisis.”

In the event that one of the three COVID cases was the teacher, Zurbuchen said a substitute teacher would be provided and the Teaching and Learning Department would work with the sub to ensure that a continuity of learning occurs. Additionally, in a secondary school setting, if a teacher was in a classroom where an outbreak occurs, that teacher would possibly need to teach the other periods virtually with a substitute facilitating classroom management.

In response to a question from Board Member Cheryl Phipps, he further outlined what would happen with afterschool or extracurricular activities in the event of a school closure. In a junior high and elementary setting, those activities would discontinue for the 14 days. At the high school level, however, if the activity is sanctioned by the Utah High School Activities Association — primarily sports, choir, band, theater — it would continue. However, if the COVID cases included those participants, quarantine protocols would be followed.

Board members delayed final approval of the protocol in order to study it further.

“I think approaching it in a really consistent way before we have an outbreak is crucial to our community understanding it and just moving forward, really, appropriately,” Vice President Liz Mumford said.

Board OK’s overage for West Bountiful Elementary

The Board of Education approved an overage of \$185,000 for the rebuild of West Bountiful Elementary, bringing the Guaranteed Maximum Price to about \$21.8 million.

Business Administrator Craig Carter said the project included the demolition of the old building and a

new parking area. Structural fill costs and other unexpected expenses led to the overage.

In other business, the board approved:

- A ballot drop-off box at the South Weber Family Activity Center, which sits on school property.

- Sale of four home lots that were to be used for the Career and Technical Education construction classes. Carter said it was becoming increasingly difficult to find teachers to adequately instruct all aspects of the home build. In the future, students will pair up with existing developers.