



Administrative Service Center

11303 Greendale
Sterling Heights, MI 48312
Phone: (586) 797-1000
Fax: (586) 797-1101
www.uticak12.org

Robert S. Monroe
Interim Superintendent

November 19, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The holidays this year will bring a much-needed rest and a sense of renewal that this season represents. Even as we look forward to this time, we recognize that the global pandemic will continue to challenge us with uncertainty and change.

One area where I would like to bring clarity and consistency is regarding the status of our learning plan. Given the current local environment related to COVID-19, students will continue to be in a remote learning environment through **Friday, January 15, 2021**. Our current plan is to transition students back to classrooms beginning **Tuesday, January 19, 2021** following Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Please know our goal remains an in-person environment for our students. There are no easy answers, and we respect that the pandemic can be the source of strong opposing views. It is important we continue to work in partnership with respect and a commitment to our students. To ensure transparency, I want to share the following points that inform our decision-making process:

Health and Safety

By viewing our [community dashboard](#), you will notice the increase in health and safety factors. These trends are anticipated to continue during the holiday season and beyond. While children and adolescents are found to be at a lower risk for COVID-19, we recognize the disease spreads quickly to individuals within the higher risk categories. In the case of UCS, this impacts many of our staff members who support and care for our students every day.

Stability and Continuity of Learning

The transitions from in-person to remote instruction can be difficult and disruptive for everyone involved. The information we are sharing today will provide time to plan and consistency for our students, staff and families so that all of us know what to expect over the next few months.

Resources to Meet our Students' Needs

When the community spread of COVID-19 is brought into our buildings, we follow Macomb County Health Department guidelines for individuals who may have had exposure. This leads to students, teachers and staff members needing to quarantine for 14 days. The result is that UCS and surrounding districts face significant problems finding substitute personnel to continue in-person instruction and support district operations.

Utica Community Schools Board of Education

Robert A. Ross, Ph.D., *President* Mary K. Thomas, Ph.D., *Vice President* Michele Templeton, *Treasurer* Denyeal Nesovski, *Secretary*
Jennifer L. Prybys, *Trustee* Kimberly Becker, *Trustee* Kelli Rankin, *Trustee*

Working as a Community to Slow the Spread

As the leaders of our health systems have noted, without shared community responsibility, hospitals are being overwhelmed and our students, families and staff members are put at a higher risk. It is important we *all* work together to follow appropriate mitigation and safety strategies to reduce community spread to levels where we can once again return to in-person learning.

A mid-January return provides us an appropriate distance from the anticipated spikes during the holiday season. Given the uncertainty of the COVID-19 environment, we will continue to monitor health and safety factors to determine the possibility of returning students or groups of students at an earlier date. I know we are all frustrated, even exhausted, by this global pandemic. However, our shared commitment of working to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and news of a potential vaccine can provide us a sense of optimism and hope.

Our community has much to celebrate this Thanksgiving. I am proud to see the continued resilience of our children and the commitment of our staff and families to help students reach their full potential.

I wish you and your family the best for a safe and happy holiday season.

Warm Regards,



Robert S. Monroe

Interim Superintendent