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Utah State Board of Education
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Chair Huntsman and members of the Board:

As the Board finalizes guidance for schools to re-open in the fall, the UEA asks you to incorporate the attached items. Earlier drafts of the guidance document create too much ambiguity. It is imperative there be clear requirements from the Board to protect the health and safety of students and employees in schools. And in a time of teacher shortage, the Board must establish clear requirements to ensure employees feel confident and safe returning to their classroom. Additionally, clear requirements from the Board help ensure teachers can focus on teaching rather than enforcing inconsistent or arbitrary policies like when and where students wear masks or maintaining six feet of physical separation between the teacher and student or among students. Finally, it is important to emphasize that current CDC guidelines for re-opening schools recommend this occur only in areas where 1) there have been no new COVID-19 cases for two weeks and 2) there is adequate testing and tracing available to isolate any outbreaks.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara Jones, Ph.D.
Director, Education Excellence and Government Relations

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