



# IOWA

## Department of Education

Ann Lebo, Director

Kim Reynolds, Governor  
Adam Gregg, Lt. Governor

*Via Electronic Mail Only*

August 20, 2020

Thomas Ahart  
Superintendent  
Des Moines Independent Community School District

Dear Dr. Ahart:

Thank you for your request for permission to provide primarily remote or continuous learning, dated August 17, 2020.

Governor Reynolds's proclamation of disaster emergency, dated July 24, 2020, allows the Department of Education to approve instruction through primarily remote learning, "in consultation with the Iowa Department of Public Health," based on "public health conditions in the building or district." The guidance on selecting the appropriate Return-to-Learn model released July 30, 2020, was established in consultation with the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Your request and current public health data contain evidence that the Des Moines Independent Community School District does not meet the criteria in that guidance for moving to primarily remote learning. The Iowa Department of Public Health has corrected the current fourteen-day average percent positivity rate for Polk County as 8%. And your request, including the detailed letter of you provided, and our consultation with the Iowa Department of Public Health have not identified any other basis for concluding that it is appropriate to start the school year with primarily remote learning. For these reasons, your request is denied.

This denial does not affect the Des Moines Independent Community School District's ability to continue providing primarily remote learning for those students whose parent or guardian voluntarily selects the remote learning opportunity from among multiple options provided by the district in accordance with your Return-to-Learn plan. Nor does it affect the district's ability to provide hybrid learning that offers at least half of its instruction in person.

Please let me know if I can answer any additional questions or if I can provide assistance as you proceed with your future plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Lebo".

Dr. Ann Lebo  
Director

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