

Dear Manitou Spring School District Community,

I hope that everyone had a wonderful Winter Break. I spent a large amount of time with friends and family...just reconnecting and enjoying Colorado. I finished writing a book that has been in the works since last Winter Break. It was fun to see it all come together.

It is now great to see snow all around us, especially after a long stretch without substantial snowfall. My thoughts have been with the communities impacted by the Marshall Fire.

We are looking forward to staff returning tomorrow and students returning to school on Thursday, January 6. The start of a new year is so exciting.

Here are some updates:

#### Late Start Wednesday PLC/MTSS

Also, we need to change April 13 to a regular start date. This change is due to the date established for SAT. School districts do not set the SAT test date.

#### COVID-19 Updates

There have been updates in terms of COVID-19 during the break. I will try to capture those changes as succinctly as possible.

1. \*\*El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) updated guidance to match new recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) regarding COVID-19 isolation and quarantine for [the general population](#). The updated guidance shortens the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to five days, ***if asymptomatic on day five***, followed by five days of wearing a mask when around others.

If a person is positive with COVID-19 and still symptomatic, they will need to remain at home.

2. We have updated the Symptom Tracker Intake Form, which is now titled [Health-Related Absences Form](#). This has been a critical tool for us to maintain in-person learning. Anyone who is sick or positive with COVID-19 needs to complete this form.
3. Just before the break, the 7-Day Incidence/100,000 was 205. Just two weeks later, the 7-Day Incidence/100,000 is now 666.3. Due to this increase in positive cases, the City of Manitou Springs' City Council has postponed the date to reconsider the [mask mandate until January 18, 2022](#).

All visitors and staff will need to continue to wear masks. At Ute Pass Elementary School, mask-wearing is still strongly recommended for students.

4. EPCPH guidance for local school districts, effective December 18, 2021, no longer requires mandatory, automatic quarantines for COVID-19 in local schools. When a student or staff COVID-19 case is identified, EPCPH requires exposure notifications in settings that include

elementary students and younger. EPCPH requires notification of exposure to those who are considered close contacts as soon as possible.

I love setting intentions for a new year. As boring as it may sound, my intentions do not really change very much from year to year, and I love re-grounding in my “why.” Yes, I set health and fitness goals that are relative to my current realities, but my BIG life intention remains the same—to grow each day.

I look forward to spending this year together—making it the best for students, families, and each other.

Happy 2022!

-Elizabeth