



## Board Memo

**Date:** September 30, 2024

**To:** President Paul Widdison, Vice President, Jon Ritchie, and Members of the Board of Education of Weber School District: Douglas Hurst, Bruce Jardine, Janis Christensen, Jan Burrell, and Kelly Larson

**From:** Gina D. Butters, Superintendent

**Subject:** Request for Approval to Submit a 180-Day Rule Waiver to the Utah State Board of Education for West Field High School

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### Overview:

This memo seeks the Board of Education's approval to submit a waiver request to the Utah State Board of Education to allow West Field High School to operate for fewer than 180 instructional days during the current school year due to its delayed opening.

### Background:

West Field High School, originally scheduled to open at the beginning of the school year (on August 21, 2024), experienced unforeseen construction delays due to site water mitigation challenges, supply chain shortages and disruptions, labor shortages, and a very tight construction timeline, in general. As a result, the school's opening/start date had to be delayed by eight days (to September 3, 2024). These eight days consisted of four half days and four full days for students. The delay will impact the school calendar, reducing the total number of available instructional days.

The Utah State Board of Education's 180-Day Rule (R277-419) requires all public schools to provide a minimum of 180 days of instruction per academic year. However, the Utah State Board of Education allows for waivers in cases of emergency or extenuating circumstances.

### Rationale for the Waiver Request:

- The current delay in construction is beyond the control of the district and the school administration.
- The district has implemented alternative plans to ensure students do not experience a significant loss of learning time. These measures include adjusting the school day

schedule—specifically, start times and lunch durations—to incorporate additional instructional time, effectively compensating for the time lost due to the delayed start.

- The waiver will provide the necessary flexibility to address the delayed start without compromising the overall quality of education.
- Approval of this waiver will help minimize disruptions for students, staff, and families, allowing for a smooth transition, from the time the school opened, through the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
- Families and employees will avoid the need to extend an already disrupted school year beyond Memorial Day, thereby preserving planned family vacations, holiday breaks, and other scheduled activities. Additionally, this will prevent the need to adjust the graduation date for West Field High School's inaugural graduating class, ensuring a smoother and more predictable conclusion to the school year.

**Request:**

We are requesting the Board of Education to approve the submission of a formal waiver request to the Utah State Board of Education. If approved, the waiver will allow West Field High School to operate with fewer than the required 180 instructional days for the current school year, ensuring compliance with state regulations while addressing the unique circumstances of the delayed opening.

**Next Steps:**

Upon the Board's approval, we will immediately submit the waiver application to the Utah State Board of Education, outlining the circumstances of the delay and the measures being taken to mitigate the impact on students' instructional time.

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Thank you for your consideration of this request. We remain committed to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education, even in the face of these unexpected challenges. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

Gina D. Butters  
Superintendent  
Weber School District

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**Action Item:**

Motion to approve the submission of a 180-Day Rule Waiver Request for West Field High School to the Utah State Board of Education.