



November 13, 2020

Hello, Scottsdale Unified Families.

As our thoughts turn to the time of year when we traditionally gather with our extended family and friends, we would like to take this opportunity to share how grateful we are to all of you who have joined us on this unpredictable journey throughout 2020. We appreciate all you have done, and with the trends in [our COVID-19 metrics](#) around the country, the state and in our local community, all that lies ahead of us.

Voluntary Two-Week Quarantine

If you will be gathering in a large group, traveling or attending crowded events, we ask that you take extra precautions when it comes to distancing, wearing a mask and keeping your hands clean to slow the spread of coronavirus. To help keep our students, teachers and school personnel healthy – and schools open for on-campus learning and activity – we are asking each family that travels or attends a large gathering for the Thanksgiving holiday to voluntarily quarantine its Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) students at home for the two weeks following the last date of travel. We realize this presents a temporary inconvenience. However, with everyone's cooperation and with everyone monitoring their households for signs of illness, such as cold, flu and COVID-19, together, we can all contribute to a healthy and safe community. If you do observe any signs of illness in your household, we ask that you please keep your student off campus. Any students or employees presenting signs of illness in SUSD facilities will be referred to the school nurse for evaluation and follow-up.

COVID-19 Testing Available in SUSD

We are pleased to announce that the District has entered into a partnership with [Embry Women's Health](#) to conduct zero-cost, COVID-19 antigen testing five days a week at [Oak Learning Academy](#), 7501 E. Oak St. The drive-thru clinic is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. The nasal swab testing is able to detect current COVID-19 infections. Results are reported within 36 – 72 hours. Read more about Embry's free, public health service to our community [here](#).

COVID Update from Dr. Menzel

Although there has been a rise in public health metrics, SUSD has not made the decision to return to online learning at this time. You may be wondering why. There are multiple factors that come into play with respect to making the decision about if and when to return to online learning. Here are some helpful points to keep in mind as we navigate this period of increasing severity of COVID-19 in our area:

- Decisions to return to online learning will be made on a school-by-school basis.
- Community spread benchmarks (cases per 100,000 and positivity rate) will be monitored in SUSD zip codes and in Maricopa County. The third benchmark metric (COVID-19 hospitalization rate) will not be used as a reason to return to online learning if the other factors we are monitoring warrant a different decision.
- The number of positive cases in a building and evidence of spread within the building are also important factors with respect to whether to continue in-person education or return to online. To date, the number of cases remain relatively low in our buildings with very little evidence of spread, which signifies our mitigation strategies are working.

We are regularly monitoring the data and consulting with public health officials to ensure that we make the best possible decision with all of these factors in mind.

Second Semester Planning

Preparations are underway for the second semester. Be sure to read our Questions & Answers document in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). It will be updated each week with the latest information. You may also find it online at www.susd.org/Briefings. If you would like to share your thoughts on next school year's calendar, visit the District's "Let's Talk" application at www.susd.org/LetsTalk, by selecting "Teaching and Learning."

2021-2022 School Year Calendar

SUSD has a calendar committee that will bring forth a recommendation to the SUSD Governing Board in January for the 2021-2022 school year. The calendar committee is charged with the task of developing calendars that adhere to state law requirements, legal holidays and consider religious observances. The committee is communicating with stakeholder groups to gather input over the next few weeks. If you would like to share your thoughts on next school year's calendar with us, you can do that through the District's "Let's Talk" application at www.susd.org/LetsTalk, by selecting "Teaching and Learning."

Substitutes

Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) is now offering the opportunity for community members to receive an Emergency Substitute Certification to become a temporary substitute for SUSD. If you are interested in becoming a substitute teacher, please visit www.susd.org/Jobs or contact Karly Meza at kmeza@susd.org for more information. Requirements to apply for temporary certification include a high school diploma and a fingerprint clearance card. An Emergency Substitute Certificate will allow you to substitute for 120 days for one school year. Substitute Certifications, on a non-emergency basis, can be obtained with a bachelor's degree and a fingerprint clearance card, and are valid for six years.

Questions, Comments or Need Assistance? Let's Talk!

We appreciate the opportunity to hear directly from you. We also know you appreciate a direct response from the person at SUSD who is best equipped and empowered with the right information. That's why we ask that you submit questions, comments and suggestions through the Let's Talk app on our website at www.susd.org/LetsTalk.

We look forward to bringing you another update next week, our last in November, due to the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. We will pause to take time to reflect and observe the holiday on Wednesday, November 25 through Friday, November 27. We will resume our normal schedule Monday, November 30.

In appreciation,

Scottsdale Unified School District [Leadership Team](#)

Remember – there is only one official source of SUSD COVID-19 information on the internet: the SUSD website at www.susd.org/COVID19. Here are a few highlights of what is available in that section of our website:

- **Briefings:** The official copies of the District office weekly briefings to SUSD parents. This page is directly accessible at www.susd.org/Briefings.
- **Campus Closures:** In the event there is a closure of any SUSD campus, it would be listed on this page immediately. This page is directly accessible at www.susd.org/Closures.
- **COVID-19 Case Dashboard:** A detailed count of current and past, known, lab-confirmed COVID-19 case counts by building. This data is updated weekly, on Fridays. It is directly accessible at www.susd.org/Dashboard.
- **COVID-19 Response Plan:** A detailed description of how SUSD will respond when a known case of COVID-19 is identified or when contact with a suspected case happens. This page is directly accessible at www.susd.org/COVIDPlan.
- **Metrics:** Health metrics by zip code, updated each week, on Thursdays. This page is directly accessible at www.susd.org/Metrics.