



September 10, 2021

Dear Scottsdale Unified Parents and Guardians,

This is a somber week as we recognize the 20th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the crash of a fourth hijacked jetliner in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Most of us will always remember where we were and what we were doing when we first learned of these horrific events.

It is a somewhat different story for current SUSD students, none of whom had yet been born on that sunny Tuesday morning 20 years ago. It is an event that they learn about in social studies and history classes, much the same way we learned about World War II when we were in school. It was gratifying to learn yesterday of a project undertaken by a group of Chaparral High School students to plant 2,997 American flags in the courtyard outside the school's media center, representing and honoring each of the lives lost in the attacks. You can learn more about that project [here](#). Other SUSD 9/11 recognitions include Desert Canyon Elementary School's 7th annual First Responder Heroes event that took place this morning. This evening, we have learned that Saguaro High School security guard and military veteran Evan Havis will join the Sabercat football team as they take the field for a pre-game ceremony. While 9/11 took place two decades ago, our students, teachers and schools continue to find ways to make its anniversary meaningful.

Today is also World Suicide Prevention Day, wrapping up a week's worth of events dedicated to reversing the mental health issue that, worldwide, sees 700,000 people per year taking their lives, according to the World Health Organization. That works out to one person every 40 seconds. Even before the pandemic, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2019 and the second leading cause of death among those between the ages of 10 and 34. Those are sobering statistics. Even more alarming, mental health professionals are now deeply concerned about new, aggravating factors the pandemic has piled on people already in stress.

As a school district, we are committed to continuing to emphasize the importance of the social-emotional health and well-being of our students and staff, and have committed important resources to them. SUSD's Support Services office produces a [monthly newsletter](#) for students and their families that identifies community mental health resources and opportunities to learn common suicide warning signs and prevention tools for those experiencing mental health issues.

Next week, on September 14 at 6 p.m., [Child Crisis Arizona](#) is offering a suicide awareness program for parents that particularly addresses the current teen suicide epidemic. You can read more about it and sign up to attend this virtual event [here](#). The following week, at 6 p.m. on September 21, [SUSD and the Arizona Attorney General's Office](#) are teaming up on a suicide prevention virtual presentation for parents.

If you are struggling, or you know someone who is, the [National Suicide Prevention](#) Crisis Hotline is available 24/7 at 1.800.273.TALK (8255). You can also text HOME to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

Community Update

COVID-19 [community transmission](#) numbers continue to drop, though they remain in the high transmission range for the week. The number of active cases reported this week was [down to 34](#), but please note that because of our being off Monday and Tuesday, this week's report covers just three school days instead of the usual five. Next week we'll get a clearer picture of where we stand with our campus cases.

For the Record

We have heard that it has been suggested that last month's mask requirement is part of a plan designed to ultimately result in SUSD schools returning to learning virtually after the new state law takes effect September 29. As a refresher, we started the school year with masks being optional. After school started, COVID case counts started rising dramatically to a level we never experienced all of last school year, and we started seeing evidence of in-school virus spread which also, for the most part, did not occur last school year. Subsequent to reinstating a mask requirement, COVID cases peaked, then started dropping two weeks ago from 167 to 64. We still are not out of the woods, but we can state emphatically that *every* decision we are making is designed to ensure our schools ***remain open for in-person learning***. Anyone who suggests that there is a secret agenda to close our schools and return to a virtual learning model is not being truthful.

Nutrition Services

We continue to feel the results of logistical challenges being encountered by some of our food suppliers. This sometimes results in school meal menus being adjusted without much notice. Regardless, every meal your child receives from SUSD Nutrition Services always meets all national and state guidelines for nutrition and product safety.

Athletics

In closing, we want to remind you that the annual Middle School Fall Sports Festival takes place tomorrow in the gyms at Arcadia, Coronado and Saguaro High schools, where more than 500 girls will be playing volleyball, and on the baseball fields at Coronado and Chaparral Park, where close to 300 boys will take part in "America's favorite pastime." [Here's the master schedule](#) for tomorrow's activities. The first match-ups get underway at 7:30 a.m.

Have a great weekend!

Scottsdale Unified School District [Cabinet](#) and [Leadership Team](#)

Community COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination Resources

SUSD continues to partner with [Embry Health](#), which operates three, convenient COVID testing sites in the SUSD community:

- Oak Learning Academy campus, 7501 E. Oak St., Scottsdale - open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday
- Chaparral Business Center, 8840 E. Chaparral Rd., Scottsdale – open from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 7 days a week

- Phoenix Camelback Seventh-day Adventist Church, 5902 E. Camelback Rd., Phoenix – open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday thru Friday

COVID-19 vaccinations are widely available throughout our community at both stand-alone pharmacies, such as Walgreen’s and CVS, and at pharmacies located inside major grocery stores. They also do COVID testing on-site.

Albertsons: <https://www.albertsons.com/pharmacy/covid-19.html>

Costco: <https://www.costco.com/covid-vaccine.html>

CVS: <https://www.cvs.com/immunizations/covid-19-vaccine?icid=cv-s-home-hero1-link1-coronavirus-vaccine>

Fry’s: <https://www.frysfood.com/rx/covid-eligibility>

Ranch Pharmacy: 10769 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd., Scottsdale

Safeway: <https://www.safeway.com/pharmacy/covid-19.html>

Walgreens: <https://www.walgreens.com/topic/promotion/covid-vaccine.jsp>

Other community vaccination resources:

NOAH - Neighborhood Outreach Access to Health: <https://noahhelps.org/covid-vaccine/>

Maricopa County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Vaccine

Locations: <https://www.maricopa.gov/5659/COVID-19-Vaccine-Locations>

Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Vaccine

Locations: <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/vaccines/index.php#find-vaccines>