



September 24, 2021

Dear Scottsdale Unified Families,

We know you are anxious to learn what the school district's position will be with regard to masks after September 28, the last day of SUSD's current mask requirement.

As of the time of this letter's writing, the Maricopa County Superior Court judge hearing the Arizona School Boards Association, Children's Action Alliance and Arizona Education Association lawsuit challenging the new state mask prohibition has not issued a ruling. However, the [Governing Board's August 17, 2021 directive](#) requiring masks specifically indicates that if the law goes into effect as scheduled on Wednesday, September 29, 2021, SUSD will no longer have a mask mandate. If the judge indicates the law is not constitutional or enforceable, that same Board directive provides SUSD Superintendent Dr. Scott Menzel, in consultation with Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH), with the authority to determine whether the mask requirement should be maintained or to initiate a new one at some other time. MCDPH continues to recommend universal masking while indoors when transmission levels are elevated, as they are now, consistent with the guidance provided by both the CDC and the Arizona Department of Health Services.

The following represents Scottsdale Unified's anticipated plan should the law take effect:

- ***While community transmission of COVID-19 remains at high or substantial transmission levels in our community and while a significant number of our students remain ineligible to be vaccinated, beginning September 29, 2021, the wearing of face masks will be strongly recommended while indoors on SUSD school campuses and other district property.***
- ***Quarantines***
  - Students who are unmasked and determined to be a close contact of a positive case will be required to quarantine, per MCDPH.
  - Students who are wearing masks and who do not have symptoms will not be required to quarantine.
  - Students who are vaccinated or who have had COVID within the last 90 days will also not be required to quarantine, per MCDPH.
  - *This is a continuation of the practice SUSD initiated on August 20 and has been successful for us.*

We understand that there are those in our community who want SUSD to continue with a mask requirement, regardless. Likewise, there are those who will be glad to see it go. In consultation with local public health authorities, our approach will continue to be – as it has been since the pandemic began in March 2020 – to do what we believe is best for our 22,000 students, 3,500 staff and the greater SUSD community so that students can continue to learn in person with their

teachers, while also complying with Arizona law. We will continue to closely monitor our on-campus student and staff case counts. Here are the latest numbers:

	Staff Positive COVID Cases	On-campus student positive COVID cases reported	Symptomatic students on campus and sent home	Students quarantined due to SUSD close contact	Off-campus positive cases	Students quarantined due to close contact outside of campus	COVID-like Symptoms - Called in Sick	Positive Student Athlete and afternoon school clubs
8/4 - 8/12	19	59	215	486	37	146	481	6
8/13 - 8/19	17	125	238	924	23	221	542	6
8/20 - 8/26	19	148	184	420	14	124	488	5
8/27 - 9/2	4	60	135	18	14	82	415	3
9/3 - 9/9 <small>(no school 9/6 and 9/7)</small>	6	28	56	9	4	40	151	1
9/10 - 9/16 <small>(1 week following Labor Day)</small>	4	41	89	3	4	39	178	0
9/11 - 9/23 <small>(1st full week following Labor Day)</small>	8	33	77	4	7	35	219	1
<b>Totals thru 9/23</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>1864</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>2474</b>	<b>22</b>

As noted previously, we are preparing to launch a pilot surveillance testing program soon. It will be located at Cherokee and Navajo Elementary schools. These schools’ parents expressed particular interest in trying out this possible new layer to add to our strategy. No child will be tested without parent permission. Early detection of asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic cases can help prevent the virus from spreading further. The district is also reviewing the potential of piloting a “test and stay” program that would allow close contacts who are not symptomatic to be able to take a PCR test which, if negative, could allow them to continue to stay in school. Finally, looking ahead into the not-too-distant future, our students ages 5 to 11 will soon be able to be vaccinated.

***Masks on SUSD school buses continue***

This [CDC order](#) supersedes state law and must be followed by all school districts. Students who choose to ride an SUSD bus will continue to be required to wear masks while *on the bus*. Students are not required to wear masks while waiting at a bus stop or after disembarking.

***Varsity Tutors***

If your child is or has been home as a part of quarantine during this school year, is ill due to COVID-19 or a COVID-like illness, or could just use a little extra learning support, we invite you to use Varsity Tutors. SUSD is partnering with Varsity Tutors to provide additional support to our students whose learning has been impacted by the pandemic. Varsity Tutors provides 1-to-1, individualized, virtual tutoring in the subject area(s) your student needs, and on your schedule. Please fill out the [Varsity Tutor Permission Slip](#) to initiate access to your student’s free, six hours of tutoring. You will receive an email from Varsity Tutors within 48 hours to set up your student’s specific tutoring time. Students are able to access their tutoring hours by logging in to Single Sign-on, then Clever, then Varsity Tutors.

## ***Hiring Fair***

Like many school districts around the Valley and state, SUSD is experiencing personnel shortages in some key areas. We hope to alleviate at least some of that next week when the Human Resources Department hosts a [two-day Hiring Fair](#) September 30 and October 1 at the Mohave District Annex, 8500 E. Jackrabbit Rd., Scottsdale. We appreciate your giving us a hearty endorsement to anyone you know who may be looking for rewarding, full-time or part-time employment with our vibrant organization!

Happy Autumn, everyone!

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

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## **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=cvS-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>