



October 22, 2021

Dear Scottsdale Unified Families,

Welcome back, everyone, and welcome to the second quarter of the school year! There is a lot going on, so we'll get right to it.

### ***Community Update***

The transmission level of COVID-19 in our SUSD community remains [high](#). Although cases per 100,000 have dropped slightly, the % positivity has gone up. [Building-level cases](#) following fall break were at a low level for the four school days reported this week. We also have been notified of 27 off-campus cases among students and staff who did not return to school this week because they are following county quarantine protocols. Next week's report will better reflect our current on-campus status.

### ***Mask Update***

We know you are wondering what about what will happen to our mask requirement at the end of the month. We have previously communicated to you that the current requirement would continue until *at least* two weeks after fall break. That decision stands and we will notify you in advance of any change.

We have also shared that there are two significant factors that will impact when we can move from a mask requirement to being mask-optional:

- *Community transmission levels*  
While these levels are in the high or substantial range, as ours continue to be, the CDC, AzDHS and MCDPH recommend the wearing of masks while indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- *The ability of our students ages 5-11 to be vaccinated*  
We keep hearing that the decision to approve the Pfizer vaccine for elementary school students is coming very soon. When it does, it will take a few weeks for those families who choose to vaccinate their younger students to get the two-shot process completed.

We review our mitigation protocols weekly and will continue to provide you with weekly updates of any changes.

### ***Vaccination Events for SUSD Families***

In the meantime, and as we shared with you earlier this week, the district hosted vaccination events today at Arcadia and Desert Mountain High schools. Three more are set for next Friday at Chaparral and Coronado High schools and at the Mohave District Annex next to Mohave Middle School for you, your family members and age-eligible students, as well as our staff and their families. These are *voluntary* events being made available for your and our staff's convenience. Here again is the [flyer](#) with the sign-up links if you are interested in participating. Time slots are still available both days at all locations.

### ***Testing***

Drive-thru, COVID-19 surveillance and diagnostic testing sites continue to operate at Cherokee Elementary School, 8801 N. 56th St., Paradise Valley, and in the Navajo Elementary School neighborhood at Open Arms Church, 4640 N. Granite Reef Rd., Scottsdale, for all SUSD families and district employees and their families. This testing partnership with In Office Diagnostics is offered at no out-of-pocket cost to families or the district. These testing locations are offered as a convenience to our community. Both are open weekdays (Monday through Friday) from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Learn more about the program [here](#).

### ***School volunteers***

In our continuing effort to return to something that looks like pre-COVID school life, we are adding another way for parents to volunteer at their students' schools. COVID-unvaccinated individuals or those with a COVID diagnosis of more than 90 days ago can submit proof of a negative COVID test conducted no more than 72 hours prior to volunteering on campus. Test results must be provided to the school nurse via email no later than the close of the school day before the volunteer activity. The test result must include the volunteer's name, date and the time of the test.

Please remember that principals manage the number and frequency of volunteers on their campuses and all would-be school volunteers must be authorized in advance by SUSD's Human Resources Department. Additionally, all volunteers must follow the district's indoor mask protocol.

### ***Fall school events***

We know many of our elementary schools are planning harvest and Halloween events, and we want to make sure you know that for these unique, signature events, visitors will be allowed on campuses. Principals will establish and communicate attendance guidelines for their school's event. Masks will be required of visitors at any event taking place indoors.

### ***Important upcoming events***

- Next **Wednesday, October 27**, SUSD, in conjunction with notMYkid, presents a special showing of *Not Alone*, an award-winning documentary about teen depression and suicide. These topics are always of concern, but even more so today because of the pandemic. The event, featuring local child advocate Katie McPherson, kicks off at **6 p.m.** Register for the virtual event [here](#).
- On **Thursday, October 28**, Desert Mountain High School's International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program hosts an information session for SUSD and non-SUSD 8<sup>th</sup> grade families. This outstanding program has been a part of Desert Mountain's fabric and culture for more than 20 years, and each year produces excelling graduates. Last year, 47, or 18%, of Arizona's IB diplomas were awarded to Desert Mountain seniors, three of whom were among only four students statewide to score in the highest diploma point range. Find out more about next week's event [here](#). It gets underway at **5:45 p.m. in the Desert Mountain Auditorium**.

Thank you for reading this week's update!

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