

Sky Islands 2021-22 COVID-19 BACK TO SCHOOL MITIGATION PLAN

We are committed to providing a safe in-person learning environment for the 2021-22 school year. However, per Arizona State law ([A.R.S. § 15-342.05](#)), the school cannot require students, staff or visitors to be vaccinated. Sky Islands will maintain important health procedures to protect students and staff throughout the school year by following the requirements of public health officials. In addition to federal and state health agencies, we are following the health updates from the Pima County Department of Public Health.

Additional updates to this plan may be made in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Arizona Department of Public Health (ADHS), PCHD, Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the decisions made by the school's Governing Board and Leadership Team.

CDC Key Takeaways

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority.
- Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Getting a vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning.
- Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
- In addition to universal indoor masking, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk.
- Students, teachers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC), along with our local Pima County Health Department (PCHD) state that the prevention strategies remain critical in protecting yourself and others from COVID-19.

Although vaccination against COVID-19 is strongly recommended, along with indoor mask wearing, it is not a requirement of working or attending school. We are not allowed to ask or keep record of who has been vaccinated. Non-mask wearers and non-vaccinators will be treated equally within the school setting and workplace.

Sky Islands may make revisions to this plan at any time based on changes in federal, state or county requirements or changes in community spread of COVID-19 or any variants.

IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

Temperature Screening

- Staff, students, and other visitors will enter through the front office and get their temperature screened.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists fever as one criterion for screening for COVID-19 and considers a person to have a fever if their temperature registers 100.4°F [38 °C] or higher -- meaning it would be almost 2 degrees above what's considered an average "normal" temperature of 98.6 degrees.
- Although a *fever* (>100.4°F) is a common symptom of *COVID-19*, people may be infected with the *coronavirus* but not have *fever*.

Masks

Per Arizona State law ([A.R.S. § 15-342.05](#)), schools cannot require face coverings for students or staff inside our school building. Although not mandated in Arizona at this time, masks are highly recommended by the CDC, ADHS (Arizona Department of Health Services), and PCHD, to be worn indoors.

However, to provide for the health and safety of all Sky Islanders, we do recommend masks for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals while indoors, during times of substantial or high transmission, per the CDC and Arizona Department of Health Services. You can view the transmission rates in our community on the Pima County Health Department website: https://webcms.pima.gov/government/health_department

Pima County recommends that fully vaccinated individuals wear a mask for up to 14 days after coming in close contact to an individual who tested positive.

Grouping of Students Into Cohorts

- Keeping students in cohorts, as possible, helps lower the spread of COVID-19 by limiting contact with multiple people
- Seating charts for classrooms are a necessity and will be used to determine close contacts if a positive case is identified
- All itinerant staff and other individuals that are not at the school daily will enter through the front office and sign in.

Vaccinations

Per Arizona State law ([A.R.S. § 15-342.05](#)), schools cannot require students, staff or visitors to be vaccinated. For information on vaccinations, visit Pima County Health Department's website.

Campus Procedures

- Frequent hand-washing is recommended for all students and staff.
- Hand sanitizer is available in every classroom and common area.
- Masks are available to students and staff by request.
- Students will be encouraged to physically distance 3-6 feet when possible.
- Parents are asked to screen their Sky Islander prior to sending them to school each day.

Stay At Home When You Are Sick

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe illness and may include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue (not as a sole symptom in the school setting)
- Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- Sore throat, congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell.

Check the CDC web site for the latest list of COVID-19 symptoms.

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 like symptoms, or other communicable disease symptoms, stay home until you have met the requirements to return to school/work. The health and wellness of students/co-workers depends greatly on this preventative practices.
- A student with COVID-19 like symptoms will be sent home.

Before you return to work/school the standard following criteria will have to be met:

- Receive a negative COVID-19 test, **OR**
- Receive written clearance to come back from a healthcare provider, **AND**
- Are feeling better with improved symptoms, **AND**
- Are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication

Positive Cases and Quarantine –*Notify the school immediately*

If you HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR OR HAVE SYMPTOMS CONSISTENT WITH COVID-19, you should HOME ISOLATE and stay at home until:

- 10 days have *passed* since symptoms first began **AND**
- Your symptoms have improved **AND**
- You remain fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication

If you are COVID-19 positive and **have no symptoms** your home isolation is complete after 10 days have **passed** from the date **your test was administered**

In Arizona, quarantine authority is given by county public health outlined in Arizona Administrative Code, Title 9, Chapter 6 (R9-6-361), which states the following: Students who are considered a close contact to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 must quarantine for 10 days from the date of exposure (which is day zero).

- A close contact is defined as being within 3-6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or more over a 24-hour period of time, or who have been in direct physical contact with the person who tested positive.
- When a school or site is notified of a positive case, it will be reported to PCHD and the student or staff member will need to follow PCHD home isolation guidance.
- Sky Islands will notify the parents of students who are believed to be a close contact and will recommend that the student begin to follow PCHD's quarantine guidance.
- The decision to isolate and/or quarantine is made by PCHD, and the school is required by law to exclude students from participating in school for the duration of the isolation or quarantine period.

*During this time, teachers will provide the student with work to support their learning at home. Please check the SkyLink for class assignments. <https://skyislands.org/class-blogs/>

COVID-19 Communication

Parents will receive updates from the school administration about any outbreaks. Note that an outbreak is defined by PCHD as two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically-linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

Accommodations

In accordance with Section 504 in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973, reasonable accommodations will be made for any student with a 504 Plan as well as for students with an IEP.

Additional COVID-19 information:

- <https://webcms.pima.gov/>
- <https://www.azdhs.gov/>