



# OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Superintendent

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August 16, 2021

Dear Amphitheater Staff and Families:

Throughout the pandemic, the Amphitheater School District has remained committed to following the recommendations of national, state and local health officials to the extent possible. This included adhering to recommendations regarding masking – until our state legislature passed a law prohibiting mask mandates in Arizona school districts. We complied with that law.

Today, however, an Arizona Superior Court ruling established that the “no mask mandate” law cannot take effect until the end of September 2021 despite language in the law which stated it would be applied retroactively as of July 1, 2021.

Given this ruling, Amphitheater Public Schools will again require staff and students, regardless of vaccination status, to wear masks while indoors on school district property and on district buses, beginning tomorrow, August 17. Masks will continue to be optional outdoors. The District made this decision for the following reasons:

- Our public health officials – the CDC, the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Pima County Health Department, and the American Association of Pediatrics – are all in agreement that adults and children should wear masks inside our public schools given current pandemic conditions.
- Community spread continues to rise. Pima County is currently in High Transmission, with more than 160 cases per 100,000 population and a positivity rate of almost 10 percent. It was a very different picture just a few weeks ago, and the acceleration of cases has been alarming.
- We are seeing an increased number of cases in our schools. At one school today, 23% of the student body was absent due to illness.
- We must take action to reduce both the number of positive cases and the number of students and staff required to quarantine if we are to ensure the continued operation of our schools in-person.

We understand that masks are a hot topic and even a divisive issue, and I have certainly received many differing thoughts on the matter. At this point, the steep increase in cases, coupled with the current and clear balance of public health guidance, instructs us that the best way to ensure we can keep students and staff in class, learning

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Amphitheater High School • Canyon del Oro High School • Ironwood Ridge High School  
Amphitheater Middle School • Coronado K-8 School • Cross Middle School • La Cima Middle School • Wilson K-8 School  
Copper Creek Elementary • Donaldson Elementary • Harelson Elementary • Holaway Elementary • Innovation Academy • Keeling Elementary  
Mesa Verde Elementary • Nash Elementary • Painted Sky Elementary • Prince Elementary • Rio Vista Elementary • Walker Elementary • Rillito Center • Amphi Academy Online

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to their best ability, is to require masks so long as the law allows and/or until our community spread and cases in schools are well-managed.

The District does allow for individualized health accommodations for those who cannot wear masks. Find more information about that by [clicking here](#). For those who cannot obtain a mask by tomorrow, our schools and buses are equipped with masks and can provide them to those who need them.

I appreciate your understanding, and I hope that our community can come together once again to help ensure our students can have a school experience this year which is as normal as possible.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd A. Jaeger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Todd A. Jaeger, J.D.  
Superintendent