

IMAGINE SCHOOLS
COVID-19 SCHOOL MITIGATION PLAN
Updated August 26th for the 2021-2022 School Year

In an effort to minimize risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in the school environment, **Imagine Schools** has updated this mitigation plan (“Plan”), following consideration of mitigation strategies and recommendations as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), the Arizona Department of Health Services (“ADHS”), the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (“MCDPH”), and the Pinal County Public Health Department (“PCPHD”). This Plan may be revised by the School administration as necessary to reflect the most current public health standards, without the need for Governing Board approval of the revised Plan.

The mitigation measures contained within this Plan recognize that it is impossible to completely eliminate risks that COVID-19 – or any other communicable disease – will be transmitted within the school environment. As such, this Plan does not guarantee against potential transmission of COVID-19 in the School. Rather, it reflects the School’s continued commitment to, and reasonable efforts aimed at, maintaining a safe and healthy educational environment.

Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact

The School’s designated point of contact for COVID-19 related concerns, including reporting positive test results or COVID-19 symptoms, is: **Please see attached list on webpage.**

Proactive Mitigation Strategies

As applicable, and except as otherwise directed by or after consultation with local health officials, the School will implement the following proactive mitigation strategies in attempting to minimize the spread of COVID-19:

- A. *Staying Home when Appropriate.* The School will require employees and students to stay home for quarantine or isolation¹ when they: (a) feel sick, (b) have tested positive for COVID-19 or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, or (c) are not fully vaccinated² or have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (“Recent positive”) and have recently had “close contact”^{*} with a person with COVID-19, including any household member, (unless the [K-12 exception](#) is met-outlined below).

¹ See CDC Covid-19: Quarantine vs. Isolation <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19-Quarantine-vs-Isolation.pdf>

² Per CDC guidance, in general, people are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their final dose of the vaccine. For more information see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html?s_cid=11406:cdc%20guidelines%20for%20fully%20vaccinated:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY21

Students or staff members who become sick at school or are identified as having had close contact with a person with COVID-19 will be promptly isolated from other students and sent home as soon as possible.* The School will require students/families to notify School's designated COVID-19 Point of Contact if the student or a household member has COVID-19 symptoms. Staff members must notify the School's designated COVID-19 Point of Contact if they or a household member have COVID-19 symptoms.

A vaccinated employee or student, or one who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the exposure ("Recent Positive"), may voluntarily provide proof of vaccination or recent positive test. Although vaccinated individuals are not required to quarantine at this time, the CDC recommends that vaccinated individuals exposed to someone who has COVID-19 should get tested 3-5 days after exposure, even without symptoms³.

*"Close contact" is defined as "any individual who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID 19 for a cumulative total of least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period or had physical contact with a person with COVID 19 starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

K-12 Exception: in the K-12 school setting, a **student** who was within 3-6 feet of an **infected student** is not considered a close contact if **both students** were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks at all times. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff or other adults in the classroom setting.

The School will strongly encourage parents and caregivers to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness, to immediately inform the School any time their children have close contact with a person with COVID-19, and to instruct their students who are sick or have had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to not attend school. The School nonetheless will instruct employees to watch for signs of possible student illness during the school day.

- B. *Hand Hygiene.* The School will encourage and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or as appropriate, use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol after bathroom use, before and after recess, and at other appropriate times during the day. The School will support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap and hand sanitizer.
- C. *Respiratory Etiquette.* The School will encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes and follow hand-hygiene protocols immediately thereafter.
- D. *Signs and Messages.* The School will post signs in highly visible locations that promote everyday protective measures (e.g., hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, wearing face coverings., physical distancing) and describe how to stop the spread of germs. The School will use additional signage as appropriate to alert parents to new procedures, including the

³ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html?s_cid=11406:cdc%20rules%20for%20fully%20vaccinated:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY21

need to keep students home if they have any COVID-19 symptoms, drop-off and pick-up protocols, and access to school facilities, including the front office.

- E. *Face Coverings*. The School will implement its required face covering policy for students and employees, contractors, and visitors as recommended by CDC.⁴
- F. *Cleaning and Disinfection*. The School will clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the School and on buses (if applicable) at least daily and between uses, when reasonably feasible. The School will follow cleaning and disinfection best practices and procedures, to the extent possible.
- G. *Ventilation*. The School will ensure that building ventilation systems operate properly, to ensure circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Schools have been outfitted with air purification filtrations systems during the Summer of 2021. To the extent the School provides transportation for students, the vehicles used by the School will implement reasonable ventilation strategies.
- H. *Shared Objects*. The School will discourage students from sharing items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. The School will encourage students and staff to bring their own water bottles, labelled with their names, to minimize the use of common water fountains. The School will also implement strategies to keep each student's belonging separated from other students' belongings to the extent possible.
- I. *Social Distancing*. The School will encourage staff and students to maintain social distancing (at least three feet apart), when feasible, and will endeavor to employ other separation measures when maintaining three feet of distance is not feasible.
- J. *Absenteeism*. The School will monitor absenteeism patterns among both students and staff. The School may alert local health officials about large increases in student and staff absenteeism, particularly if absences appear to be due to respiratory illnesses.
- K. *Food Service*. The School may minimize transmission risk in food service by taking steps such as: encouraging students to bring their own meals as feasible; serving pre-packaged meals (rather than buffet style); and using disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes). If the School cafeteria space cannot be modified to account for social distancing for all students, some or all students may be required to eat in other locations or at staggered lunch times.
- L. *Visitors*. The School may limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible – especially with individuals who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, county). At certain times, parents may not be allowed to volunteer in classrooms or allowed on campus except for the front office.

⁴ Employee Face Mask Policy , Student Face Mask Policy

- M. *Gatherings and Meetings.* The School may endeavor to pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible. Where in-person gatherings or meetings are held, the School may limit group size and will promote social distancing of at least 3 feet between people, as reasonably feasible. Some gatherings and meetings may be held outdoors, if possible.
- N. *Field Trips and Assemblies.* Each school site may determine field trip and assemblies observing social distancing and outdoor space when possible.
- O. *Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities.* The School may consider limiting or cancelling participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities where social distancing is not feasible.
- P. *Staggered Scheduling.* To the extent appropriate and feasible, the School may attempt to stagger use of facilities by cohort (e.g., arrival/drop-off times/locations) or put in place other protocols (e.g., block scheduling) to limit contact between cohorts and direct contact with parents as much as possible.
- Q. *Drop-Off and Pick-Up.* In addition to potential staggered pick-up and drop-off times, the School may implement additional requirements related to student drop-off and pick-up to alleviate any congestion during these times, including requiring parents to stay in their cars and creating specific locations for students to wait for pick-up at the end of the school day.

Reactive Mitigation Strategies

When a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the School will communicate with and follow the guidance of local health officials in making decisions regarding appropriate reactive mitigation measures, including if, and the extent to which, School operations should be temporarily restricted or closed, in whole or in part, and for how long.

- A. *School Notification of Positive Test.* The School will require staff and students/families to notify School’s designated COVID-19 Point of Contact regarding any positive test result for COVID-19 with respect to any student, staff member or household member.
- B. *Coordination with Local Health Officials.* Upon learning of a positive COVID-19 test result in someone who has been in the School, the School will promptly seek guidance from local health officials to determine an appropriate course of action in light of the circumstances. At a minimum, the affected individual will be quarantined from the School on-site environment (including on-site support services or in-person instruction) and other responsive actions will be taken, as directed in consultation with local health officials or in compliance with their guidance. If an outbreak* of COVID-19 occurs at the School, the School will notify the local health department using any required or suggested notification method.

* An “outbreak” is defined 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.

- C. *Communication with Staff, Parents, and Students.* Consistent with privacy requirements, including those of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), and in

consultation with local health officials, the School will provide notification to appropriate staff and parents regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases in the School.

Re-Entry Mitigation Strategies

When a student or staff member has been required to stay home from school: (a) following a positive test for COVID-19; (b) after showing symptoms of COVID-19; or (c) after recent close contact with a person with COVID-19 the School will implement the following mitigation strategies related to re-entry on the School campus. Isolation strategies are the same for all students and staff regardless of vaccination status, but quarantine procedures may differ for students and staff who are vaccinated and those who are not. All individuals will be permitted to return to School for on-site support services or in-person instruction, upon compliance with CDC and local health official guidelines, which currently provide:

- A. *Following an Illness Suspected or Confirmed to be COVID-19 (Isolation):* After ...
 - 1. At least 10 days* since symptoms first appeared; and
 - 2. At least 24 hours with no fever without use of fever-reducing medication; and
 - 3. Symptoms (such as cough or shortness of breath) have improved.
*20 days if severely ill or immunocompromised.
- B. *Following a Positive Test for COVID-19 but without Symptoms (Isolation):* At least 10 days have passed since the positive test.
- C. *Following Recent Close Contact with a Person with COVID-19 (Quarantine):*
 - 1. Students and staff who are not vaccinated: 10 days after the exposure. Quarantine may end 7 days after the last known exposure if the exposed person meets all three of the following criteria:
 - a. Tested for COVID-19 by PCR or antigen test that was collected after 5 full days following their last known exposure; AND
 - b. Received a negative test result; AND
 - c. Remains symptom-free since their last known exposure to COVID-19

***Negative antibody testing does not qualify for early release criteria**

- 2. Students and staff who are fully vaccinated or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days: 10 days after the exposure. Quarantine may end immediately if:
 - a. The student or staff choose to provide proof of vaccination or proof of testing positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days.

b. Students who are fully vaccinated, should still get tested 3-5 days after exposure, even if no symptoms are experienced.

D. *Following a Negative Test but with Symptoms:*

1. At least 24 hours with no fever without use of fever-reducing medication; and
2. Symptoms (such as cough or shortness of breath) have improved.

E. **K-12 Exception:** in the K-12 school setting, a **student** who was within 3-6 feet of an **infected student** is not considered a close contact if **both students** were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks at all times. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff or other adults in the classroom setting.]

Compliance with Applicable Guidance

If any part of this Plan conflicts with applicable local, county, state law, regulation, or public health guidance, the School will act in good faith to comply with the applicable law, regulation, and public health guidance.