



## Coconino County COVID-19 Response: School Re-Opening Overview

### Coconino County Health and Human Services Public Health Role: Educational Institutions

Coconino County Health and Human Services (CCHHS), the Local Health Department, is responsible for providing public health education to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and investigating and monitoring any known cases of and exposure to COVID-19 throughout the county. CCHHS' primary responsibility pertaining to educational institutions during the COVID-19 incident involves providing public health education, guidance, and support to decision-makers as re-opening plans are prepared to ensure the safety of all staff, students, and community members in preparation of school resuming. This process requires each institution (CCHHS, School Districts, etc.) be familiar with state, local and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance. The complex interplay of different organizations with varying needs, across jurisdictions, requires open communication in navigating, identifying, and developing solutions.

CCHHS has implemented the following strategies to support educational institutions in our county:

- *Scheduling regular meetings with school representatives, including public schools, charter and private schools every two weeks* to discuss challenges, best practices, provide education and guidance, and establish a clear channel of communication.
- *Establishing School Liaisons for each educational domain, including Pre-K/Childcare, K-12, and Higher Education.* School liaisons for each domain regularly share information and serve as a point of contact for any questions or concerns partners may encounter. County staff continue to meet with higher education partners, including NAU and CCC, to review re-entry plans, provide guidance, and discuss the re-entry process.
- *Meeting regularly with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Education Task Force and the ADHS Local Health Department School Re-Opening Workgroup* to seek guidance from the State, and to share questions and concerns on behalf of our educational partners. Conversations between CCHHS and State representatives have continued in an effort to obtain clear guidance for implementing safe in-person learning in schools, as state offices are the primary regulatory authorities for schools.
- *Reviewing School Re-Opening plans.* CCHHS continues to partner with schools to provide a technical review of their re-entry plans to share best practices and provide suggestions for improvement to ensure each plan is in alignment with recommendations from the CDC and ADHS.
- *Disease Investigation:* CCHHS has always, and continues to, conduct thorough disease investigation, monitoring and tracking of communicable diseases, including clusters and outbreaks within the County. CCHHS staff will continue to conduct testing for COVID-19 in the community, and will investigate instances of COVID-19 within educational institutions.

Arizona Executive Order Overview: All school plans must be in compliance with both [Executive Order 2020-41](#) and [Executive Order 2020-44](#). These orders provide schools with the flexibility to deliver distance learning options as approved by the Arizona Department of Education or the State Board for Charter Schools, and authorize the delay of in-person instruction in conjunction with varied hybrid models of instruction delivery. *School re-opening dates may vary based on individual planning decisions.*

For more information and resources visit: <https://coconino.az.gov/2374/Guidance>