



Arizona
Education
Association

345 East Palm Lane

Phoenix, AZ
85004-1532

(602) 264-1774

(800) 352-5411

FAX
(602) 240-6887

www.arizonaaea.org

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Governor Ducey,

COVID-19 cases are again rapidly rising in our state and have been rising for the past six weeks. Arizona teachers and staff continue to believe they and their students are at increased risk. We previously sent two letters to your office (August 21st and October 30th) calling for a statewide plan that is transparent and accountable, prioritizes school safety, and ensures students and educators are working and learning in safe and just schools. It is past time for you to take action in the best interests of our children and our educators.

The guidelines in place are not sufficient. They have created confusion and divisions inside our communities. Too many Arizonans feel this pandemic is a hoax. They are not taking seriously your recommendations to “mask up” to stop the spread. Parents, students, and educators need you to state in the strongest and clearest terms a plan with mandates their safety and reverses the spread of this virus.

We are once again calling on you to immediately create and implement a statewide COVID-19 Plan for Safe Schools that, at a minimum shall:

- Mandate masks are worn statewide in schools and on buses until the end of the school year.
- Any school with a majority of zip codes inside their attendance boundary showing reported cases of COVID-19 above a rate of 100/100,000 for two consecutive weeks shall immediately transition to hybrid (meaning less than 50% of students on campus) or distance learning mode of instruction for at least two weeks or until the reported COVID-19 cases in a majority of the zip codes inside their attendance boundary drop beneath a rate of 100/100,000 for two consecutive weeks.
- Any school with a majority of zip codes inside their attendance boundary experiencing a third consecutive week of increased COVID-19 cases over 100/100,000 shall immediately move to distance learning for at least two weeks or until the reported COVID-19 cases in a majority of the zip codes inside their attendance boundary drop beneath 100/100,000 for two consecutive weeks.
- Provide additional funding and support for districts that move to distance learning mode until January due to the spread of COVID-19 in the communities they serve.
- Require safety protocols for school districts regarding COVID-19 which must include:
 - Timely notification of exposure for students and staff that may have been in contact with an exposed person.
 - Time off available for staff to quarantine when exposed to COVID-19.
 - Requiring symptomatic students and staff to quarantine for 14 days, and show negative test results before returning in person.

AEA’s MISSION

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- Provide additional funding necessary to ensure our public schools that can be open to in-person learning are able to sustain the safe and healthy learning environments needed for our students to learn safely. This includes:
 - Additional funding for proper PPE and cleaning supplies as recommended to combat COVID-19
 - Inspections of school buildings, prioritizing ventilation and HVAC systems
 - Additional funding for upgrades to HVAC systems and air filters to provide safe and proper ventilation for students and staff
- ADHS and ADE shall jointly create and monitor a mechanism for parents and school staff to report non-compliance with the statewide COVID-19 school safety plan by school administration.
- ADHS and ADE shall jointly create a process for enforcement of noncompliance of statewide safety measures.

Educators and students cannot wait any longer, they need you to take action now. We are still here and ready to work with you on a statewide approach that ensures all educators and students have access to safe and just schools.

Governor, it is time for you to lead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph H. Thomas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph H. Thomas, President
Arizona Education Association

cc: Senate President Karen Fann
Speaker of the House Rusty Bowers
Minority Leader-Elect Rebecca Rios
Minority Leader-Elect Reginald Bolding