



Schools of Opportunity that Welcome, Love, and Inspire All Students to Go Places and Do Things that Matter

PXU Announces Mask Requirement, Reiterates Commitment to Public Health, Public Education, and the Safe Return to In-Person Learning

July 30, 2021

The Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) remains steadfast in our commitment to the health and safety of the staff, students, and communities we serve. We teach and trust science, follow guidelines and recommendations from health experts, and use health data to drive our decisions. The science is clear that the best way to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 and known variants is to get vaccinated. We have and will continue to play a leading role in public health and provide widespread access to the vaccine. We are hosting vaccination Points of Dispensing (PODs) at eight locations today and tomorrow, July 30 and 31, for anyone 12 years of age and older. Please visit www.PXU.org/BeHealthy for information.

We are committed to quality public education and fully recognize the need for in-person learning. Campus health and safety is our top priority as we return next week. To do so, we must – and will – implement mitigation strategies that minimize spread, reduce quarantining, avoid school closures, and enable us to provide mental health services and engaging opportunities such as clubs, sports, and the arts.

Unfortunately, the Delta variant is quickly spreading. Today, all 32 of our [zip codes](#) have *high* or *substantial* spread. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Arizona Department of Health and Safety (AZDHS), and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) have all updated their guidelines to include “universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.” ([CDC Guidance](#))

Our current Board-adopted policies still require masks when indoors in the presence of others. However, this past month, we did align our masking practices district-wide with the current prohibition of mask mandates. Recently, we have heard from our staff, students, and families that they want us to realign our mitigation practices with the guidelines and recommendations of national and local health agencies.

In an effort to protect our staff, students, and community, PXU has a good faith belief that following guidance from the CDC and other health agencies regarding mitigation strategies is imperative. Therefore, Phoenix Union will begin the school year on August 2 enforcing our existing Board-adopted mask requirement of universal indoor masking only, regardless of vaccination status. This masking requirement is for all staff, students, and visitors. At the August 5 Board meeting, District leadership and Governing Board will discuss mitigation plans, including masking policies, and consider the temporary continuation of the mask requirement until the CDC (and/or other federal, state, and local health agencies) changes their masking guidelines.

We serve nearly 30,000 beautiful young men and women and over 4,000 employees and must take every precaution necessary to protect the lives of those entrusted to us. Please continue to visit www.PXU.org for announcements and more information about our mitigation efforts and any upcoming vaccination opportunities.