# MEMORANDUM

Date: August 6, 2020

To: Pima County Back to School Committee

From: Dustin Williams
Pima County Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Terry Cullen
Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department

Re: **Back to School Committee August 10, 2020 Meeting Agenda Item 5**

We are currently reviewing the guidance issued by the Arizona Department of Health Services to inform the safe return to in-person, face-to-face classroom instruction, and will supplement this with local guidance. The Pima County Health Department (PCHD) has been researching what other states and localities are doing across the country, and has developed a list of public health principles of decision making for schools regarding re-opening, operating and closing during this pandemic. The PCHD is using these principles to inform our guidance to schools regarding not only the timing of re-opening, but also the development of prevention plans for each school or school district. We look forward to discussing these with you at Monday's Committee meeting.

**Public Health Principles of Decision Making for Schools Regarding Re-opening, Operating and Closing During the Pandemic**

1. Equitable outcomes for all students, staff, and faculty regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or their need to refrain from in-person activities due to concerns about COVID-19.

2. Returning safely to in-person instruction decisions based on state and local public health guidance.

3. Integration of emerging scientific based evidence in decision making.

4. Ability to ensure appropriate isolation of symptomatic students/staff and protocols in place for transportation to location for quarantine or isolation.

5. Protection of individuals in community, and their family members, who are vulnerable to severe COVID-19 disease, or to harassment or discrimination

6. Consideration of harmful effects due to school closure (e.g. social-emotional effects of quarantine/isolation; widening disparity in educational attainment; reduced access to meals; increase in substance misuse, domestic violence, anxiety/depression).

**Pima County Health Department Guidance under These Principles**

1. Timing of opening and closing for face to face instruction

   The Pima County Health Department's recommendations to schools for the timing of school re-opening, and possible closures after re-opening, will be based on the following:

   a. Arizona Department of Health Services guidance

   b. Current Pima County COVID-19 Progress Report (Attached dated 8.5.2020)

   c. The latest scientific information available

2. Development of School Specific Prevention Plan

   PCHD also recommends the development of a written, worksite-specific, COVID-19 prevention plan for every school district or facility. This plan should include a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas and work tasks. PCHD has been developing a guidance document to assist schools with developing their prevention plans. Each site is strongly encouraged to designate a person or team to implement the plan as developed. This individual or team will be provided contact information for a liaison at PCHD. The liaison will be available to assist with technical aspects of this document, communicate rapidly evolving information about COVID-19, and relay potential outbreak information among students or staff.

Attachment

CHH/dr

c: C.H. Huckelberry, County Administrator
   Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy County Administrator
   Dr. Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
        Health and Community Services
   Nicole Fyffe, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator
   Diana Durazo, Special Projects Manager, County Administrator's Office

# COVID-19 Progress Report and Local Recommendations

As of August 5, 2020 (No change since last update)

## Disease Data

Tracking information about cases and deaths helps us understand changes to the activity of COVID-19 in Pima County. These measures may indicate when COVID -19 spread is slowing in the community – whether naturally or as a result of the actions being taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

| | Criteria not met | Progress | Criteria met |
|---|---|---|---|
| Decreasing cases over two consecutive weeks | 🟥 | | |
| Decreasing COVID-19 related deaths over 14 days | 🟥 | | |
| Decreasing hospitalizations | 🟥 | | |

Disease Data criteria for changing RED to GREEN ⌄

## Healthcare System Availability

Understanding our healthcare system's ability to identify new cases of COVID-19 AND the ability of healthcare facilities to safely and responsibly provide care for patients should a surge in COVID-19 cases occur is important. Our healthcare system's capacity to provide testing for anyone with symptoms, care to patients, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) makes it possible for our community to respond to future cases of COVID-19.

| | Criteria not met | Progress | Criteria met |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lab Testing Availability and Utilization | | 🟨 | |
| Adequate hospital bed capacity to care for 2X the current COVID cases (+ surge) – Statewide | 🟥 | | |
| Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Emergency Responders | | 🟨 | |

Healthcare System Availability criteria for changing RED to GREEN ⌄

## Public Health Tracking and Prevention

This set of tracking points helps us understand the capacity of our local public health system's ability to quickly identify, investigate, and conduct surveillance of new cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 in our community and provide appropriate follow- up care to hospitalized patients.

| | Criteria not met | Progress | Criteria met |
|---|---|---|---|
| Timely case investigation | 🟥 | | |
| Testing of symptomatic contacts within 48 hours | 🟥 | | |
| Facilities/support for patients who can't be discharged home – Statewide | | 🟨 | |

Public Health Tracking & Prevention criteria for changing RED to GREEN ⌄