



ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER
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GOVERNING BOARD OF EDUCATION
 Freddie Villalon, President
 Devin Del Palacio, Vice President
 Steven Chapman, Member
 Dr. Kino Flores, Member

SUPERINTENDENT
 Nora Gutierrez

October 7, 2020

Dear TUHSD Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your patience as our Governing Board and I thoughtfully evaluated the online learning model and data relating to Coronavirus in our community. The Governing Board had a difficult decision to make last night as they weighed several learning model options with the health, wellness and safety of our students and our staff in mind.

As you know from our previous communications over the summer, we had indicated to you that we would be providing online learning through **Friday, October 9th** in order to limit the spread of the Coronavirus in our community, as well as for the health, wellness and safety of our students and our staff. This Friday will mark the end of our first quarter as we go into Fall Break the week of **October 12th**.

We understand the need for parents to plan ahead as much as possible. The Governing Board met on **Tuesday, October 6th** and made the difficult decision that all schools in the Tolleson Union High School District would remain with the current online learning model for the remainder of the first semester, concluding on **Friday, December 18th**.

All decisions for returning to in-person, on-campus learning will be based on data and the metrics. We have been closely monitoring the data and looking for the metrics in our district to improve. Unfortunately, the data below (dated October 1, 2020) shows that our district positivity rate is at 9.25%, well above the 5% rate required for students to return to in-person learning on campuses.

Our District is following the metrics and data that helps drive our decision to safely reopen our school sites for in-person learning at the appropriate time. State and County health departments have recommended benchmarks to guide the decision to transition from remote learning to in-person learning. The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) target benchmarks for the COVID-19 return to in person learning are the following:

- Reported cases less than ten (10) cases per 100 thousand of the population
- A percent positive number below 5% positivity
- The number of COVID-like illnesses below 5%, for two consecutive weeks.

Below are the guidelines as posted on the Maricopa County Department of Public Health online dashboard.

| Benchmarks | Minimal | Moderate | Substantial |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Cases | < 10 cases/100k | 10-100 cases/100k | > 100 cases/100k |
| Percent Positivity | < 5% | 5-10% * | > 10% |
| COVID-like Illness | < 5% | 5-10% | > 10% |



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It is with great concern that we share the information posted below which shows our district positivity rate at 9.25%. This data reflects the numbers for the Tolleson Union High School District as posted on the MCDPH dashboard reflecting our numbers over the last two weeks. This most recent information was released on October 1, 2020. The information is released every Thursday and can be found on the MCDPH school metric website listed here (<https://www.maricopa.gov/5594/School-Metrics>).

| Most Recent Data [1] | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Cases Per 100k People | 58.14 |
| Percent Positivity | 9.25% |
| Covid-Like Illness | 2.00% |

| Prior Week's Data [2] | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Cases Per 100k People | 44.23 |
| Percent Positivity | 9.19% |
| Covid-Like Illness | 2.00% |

We recognize the impact that this decision has on our families. Our Governing Board and I believe that this is the best decision for the health, wellness and safety of our students and our staff. We will continue to monitor the data and we invite our community to also keep abreast of the COVID-19 metrics for our area through the above-mentioned link.

Tolleson Union High School District will continue to focus on academic achievement for our students and provide support and resources for them to be successful with targeted interventions, connectivity, technology, and caring teachers and staff. We want you all to know that we are #TollesonStrong and that together we will get through this.

Sincerely,

Nora Gutierrez
Superintendent