



August 12, 2020

Dear Families,

Most of you have by now seen the [Department of Health Services' benchmarks for returning to in-person instruction](#). In summary, DHS has three key benchmarks (Cases, Percent Positivity, and COVID-like Illness) they are tracking.

They have placed each of the benchmarks in a range identifying the level of concern.

Benchmarks	Minimal	Moderate	Substantial
Cases	<10 cases/100,000	10-100 cases/100,000	>100 cases/100,000
Percent Positivity	<5%	5-10%	>10%
COVID-like Illness	<5%	5-10%	>10%

DHS recommends county-specific public health benchmarks fall within the moderate or minimal spread category in all three benchmarks for two weeks before offering any in-person learning.

More specifically:

- **Cases:** a two week decline in the number of cases or two weeks with new case rates below 100 per 100,000
- **Percent positivity:** two weeks with less than 7% positivity
- **COVID-like Illness Syndromic Surveillance:** two weeks with hospital visits due to COVID-like illness below 10%

Additionally, DHS states that Local Health Departments may modify a specific benchmark.

As of the latest reporting from this past Thursday, the benchmarks for Maricopa County looked like this:

Benchmarks	Current Data
Cases	2,625.4
Percent Positivity	12.4%
COVID-like Illness	10%

Updated numbers will be released tomorrow for the state.

We are currently working through a process, including a discussion with our Board, on understanding how this information will impact our in-person learning start dates. Please be looking for another email from me in the days ahead with more clarity.

I can assure you that when we have new information and its impact, we will share it with you as it comes in, and not simply wait for the regular Wednesday letter.

We are committed to reopening our schools just as we are committed to adhering to the state and county guidelines. Thank you for your continued patience and resilience as we navigate these waters together.

All my best,

Erik
