



Dear Families,

With the Thanksgiving holiday right around the corner, we expect to see an increase in gatherings and travel, which can lead to a possible increase in COVID cases. We want to encourage all of our faculty, staff, and families to be as safe and healthy as possible.

Our COVID-19 response protocols and procedures have been built to allow our students to continue to receive a high-quality education while working to maintain a safe environment. We have prioritized putting into place as many proactive practices as possible at each of our campuses.

In most cases, we are not seeing spread of the virus on any of our campuses, but just this week, **the county health department directed us to close our Archway Scottsdale location for two weeks due to two cases where the students may have had contact with each other, and four other cases that came from off campus. In total, six cases on a campus of over 1000. These pauses to in-person instruction are incredibly disruptive, and we want to avoid them as much as possible.**

Therefore, as a mitigation measure to any increased post-holiday disruptions, we have decided that it is best to give a few days of buffer after Thanksgiving. This will allow a full week between family gatherings and the return to school in order to ensure that families can be diligent about quarantining should they contract the virus over the holiday or discover that someone with whom they were in close contact contracted it.

Therefore, all schools will participate in distance learning through Wednesday, December 2. All in-person learning will resume on Thursday, December 3. However, as many of you know, we do have a campus that will return on Monday, December 7. Our hope is to have as many of our families return to in-person learning as soon as possible, though.

This means that all in-person scholars will be remote learning, and all school activities, including athletics and clubs, will be postponed for three days from Monday, November 30 – Wednesday, December 2.

On Thursday, December 3, we are asking that parents **NOT** send their students back to school if:

1. Anyone they have been in contact with has tested positive for COVID-19.
2. They have been tested for COVID-19 and are waiting for test results.
3. Someone in their household has been tested for COVID-19 and is waiting for test results.
4. They have any symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever ($>100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$), cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, sore throat, headache, muscle/body aches, runny nose or congestion, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or a new loss of taste or smell.
5. They have traveled internationally by air and do not have a negative COVID-19 test five days after their return.

On-site supervision for distance learning will be provided for those who need it.

We do apologize for the inconvenience that this will cause many families; however, we believe that by taking a more precautionary approach to the holiday season we might avoid future

community quarantines and allow for in-person learning to continue for the remainder of the semester.

I would also ask that you carefully review the FAQs below to get a better understanding of how you can help keep our school communities as safe and healthy as possible.

Your headmaster will be following up with a communication on how this proactive closure will look at your specific school and what resources will be available to families that may need things such as laptops and on-site care during the closure.

We appreciate your continued patience and partnership through these ever-changing and challenging times. Your prioritization of the health and safety of one another, especially during the holiday season, will allow our students to receive a Great Hearts education in as healthy and safe an environment as possible.

Best,

Erik

President, Great Hearts Arizona

What should I do if I find out that someone we were around over the holidays has tested positive for COVID-19?

You and your family should get tested. Even if your results are negative, you should still stay home for 14 days from the time you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. Anytime during those 14 days you could still have a positive result. Watch for symptoms – fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, body aches, diarrhea. Stay away from vulnerable people.

If my child is a close contact of someone who tested positive, but my child's test results are negative, why does my child need to remain out of school for the full 14 days?

The virus can incubate in the body for 1-14 days before it starts to shed. A person will not test positive until that shedding starts. So, they may be negative on day 3, but positive on day 13.

What should we do if we travelled by air internationally over the break?

Our policy requires you to quarantine for 14 days from the day that you return to the United States or to get a negative test result 5 days after you return.

Do I have to quarantine if I travel domestically?

Our policy does not require you to quarantine if you travel domestically, but the CDC and several states recommend that you stay home for 14 days after travelling. If you choose to stay home after travelling, your school will provide your student with learning materials and not mark your child unexcused as long as you are back in Arizona for those 14 days.

If my student gets tested, can they return to school?

Students should always stay home while waiting for their test results. It is also a good idea to stay home while someone in the household is waiting test results just in case. There is only one situation

that will allow a student to return to school and that is only if they were not a close contact of someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days and their test is negative.

How is it determined that my child is a close contact?

The Maricopa County Department of Health defines a “close contact” as someone who has been within 6 feet of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for an accumulated time of 15 min or more over a period of 24 hours. This is with or without a mask, indoors or outdoors.

What does quarantine mean?

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. They should not participate in any group activities such as school, sports, meetings, or social gatherings, as well as attend events with others.

Do I need to keep my other children home?

No, if... No one in your household has tested positive for COVID-19. When you have one child who is considered a close contact, your other child(ren) and family members at home would be considered a “close contact of a close contact” and they do not have to quarantine. They are allowed to come to school. They personally have not been exposed to someone with COVID. If your quarantined child should start to exhibit symptoms then s/he should be tested and if positive, other family members would also then need to quarantine. Additionally, if your quarantined child develops symptoms, keep all other siblings home pending the results of the COVID-19 test.

Yes, if... It is a member of your household who has tested positive for COVID-19. All other family members would be considered close contacts and would need to quarantine for a full 14-day period and longer if they are unable to isolate from one another. See CDC guidelines [here](#).

Am I at risk?

People who are most at risk are those who have been in close contact (within 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes) with someone who has the infection. According to CDC, risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age and even more so for those who are immune-suppressed or have underlying health conditions such as heart, kidney or lung disease, obesity, or diabetes.

What do I do next? Can I get tested for COVID-19?

People who have been exposed to COVID-19 are at risk of becoming ill for up to 14 days after the exposure. If you haven’t developed symptoms by that time, you are unlikely to develop symptoms from this exposure. Should you wish for you or your child to be tested, you can access a list of testing sites [here](#).
