

Dear Parents,

As you're probably aware the Arizona Department of Health Services was required to set benchmarks for schools to consider for the physical reopening of schools. On Friday of last week these benchmarks were released as well as a report card for each county in Arizona. I have attached a copy of both of these documents.

The benchmarks reference three COVID data points over a two-week period:

- ✓ Number of new cases
- ✓ Percentage of positive tests
- ✓ Number of hospital visits due to COVID like illness

Currently Greenlee County is in the red for the first two indicators and green for the last indicator. This is based on the two period from July 12 to July 25. It is our understanding that more recent COVID data in Greenlee County is trending down.

After meeting with local health officials the decision has been made to bump the target date for the physical reopening of schools to **Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>**. As noted, this is a target date, we will continue to monitor how these benchmarks are trending in Greenlee County.

This means that instruction will continue through the Distance Learning Model until at least August 28<sup>th</sup> and through the Morenci Digital Pathway through the first semester.

We will be providing more information as it becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact your child's principal.

Sincerely,

David Woodall

# Benchmarks

There are two key components to reopening school buildings for in-person instruction. First is the quality of the school's mitigation plan, or the "how". This plan outlines strategies the school will implement to reduce the spread of COVID-19 among students and staff upon reopening school buildings regardless of the building is open for [onsite support services](#) or in-person instruction. This plan must be adopted, implemented, and posted on the LEA's website before onsite support services may begin. The second is the level of spread occurring within the community, or the "when". Both the school's individual mitigation plan as well as degree of community spread are equally important in determining when it is safe to reopen a school building.

The CDC defines community spread as follows:

**Minimal community spread:** Evidence of isolated cases or limited community transmission, case investigations underway; no evidence of exposure in large communal setting

**Moderate Community Spread:** Sustained transmission with high likelihood or confirmed exposure within communal settings and potential for rapid increase in cases

**Substantial Community Spread:** Large scale, controlled community transmission, including communal settings (e.g., schools, workplaces)

The ADHS further defines community spread levels with the thresholds outlined below. These thresholds are consistent with the national standards set by the Coronavirus Task Force.

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%

# COVID-19 School Benchmarks

## By Arizona County

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) recommends county-specific public health benchmarks to be in the **moderate** or **minimal** transmission category in all three benchmarks for two weeks in order to provide Hybrid (virtual and in-person) learning. The [ADHS Schools Toolkit](#) defines community spread levels with the thresholds outlined below.

- **CASES:** a two-week decline in the number of cases can be used to meet this benchmark or two-week of a case rate of less than 100 cases per 100,000 population;
- **PERCENT POSITIVITY:** for initial opening, two weeks of percent positivity less than 7% within the county; and
- **COVID-LIKE ILLNESS (CLI):** two weeks with hospital visits due to CLI below 10%.

	Cases	% Positivity	CLI
Apache	✓	✗	✓
Cochise	✓	✗	✓
Coconino	✓	✗	✓
Gila	✗	✗	✗
Graham	✓	✗	✓
Greenlee	✗	✗	✓
La Paz	✗	✗	✓
Maricopa	✓	✗	✗
Mohave	✓	✗	✓
Navajo	✓	✗	✓
Pima	✓	✗	✓
Pinal	✓	✗	✗
Santa Cruz	✓	✗	✓
Yavapai	✓	✗	✓
Yuma	✓	✗	✓



For additional information & the schools dashboard, visit [azhealth.gov/schoolsCOVID19](https://azhealth.gov/schoolsCOVID19)

Updated: 8/6/2020