



September 28, 2021

Dear Academia Del Pueblo School Community,

Yesterday afternoon, Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Katherine Cooper ruled that it is unconstitutional for the state of Arizona to prohibit school districts from enacting face mask requirements. With yesterday's news ruling in favor of school district control over mask requirements, we re-evaluated our mask regulation, carefully considered the data, and decided to continue using masks.

Academia del Pueblo will continue to require face masks for students, staff, and visitors while indoors on campus until further notice.

This decision is consistent with the recommendations of Maricopa County Department of Public Health, the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding universal masking while community transmission of COVID remains at an elevated level, which it currently is and has been in ADP since the end of July.

There will continue to be an opt-out option for students and staff on the basis of religious, personal, and medical reasons. Opt-out forms can be obtained by contacting the front office. Families who did not previously apply for a mask accommodation for their children for physical or mental health reasons but wish to now will be able to submit applications through October 1, 2021, the last day of school before Fall Break.

Our tracking of COVID-19 cases on campus since the new school year began shows that the mask requirement that went into effect at the beginning of the school year has been a successful part of our layered mitigation strategies to reduce virus transmission on campus, keep students learning in person, and reduce the number of students having to quarantine. Extending the mask requirement until sometime after Fall Break affords the opportunity to see what impact that time away from school has on school cases and to make appropriate decisions based on the facts at that time.

We had certainly hoped to be in a different position with the pandemic by this point in time, but our community continues to struggle with it. To lift the mask rule now is not prudent, nor does it "follow the science." Should the judge's ruling be overturned on appeal, ADP will follow the law.

It is our strong hope that community transmission of the COVID-19 virus returns to a moderate level soon and that the anticipated approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Pfizer vaccine for students ages 5 - 11 puts ADP in the position of being able to return to a mask-optional policy. Our commitment to enable all of our students to attend school in person has not wavered and will continue to be our driving force.

Thank you for your cooperation and support as the ADP community continues to collectively navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,
Academia del Pueblo Leadership Team

"A Tradition of Excellence"

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