



Arizona: Opening for Learning

Governor Ducey issues executive order for schools

Governor Ducey issued an executive order on July 23rd that directs the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) to develop public health metrics to indicate when it is safe to reopen schools for in-person instruction. The Arizona: Open for Learning plan was developed in consultation with Superintendent Hoffman and school leaders across the state amid concerns by both parents and educators about the tentative August 17th reopening date. According to the plan, governing boards will retain ultimate authority on when to reopen, and there is no longer a date on which schools are required to begin in-person or hybrid instruction. Schools will be required to begin offering distance learning on their first regularly scheduled day of instruction and apparently will need to offer on-site learning opportunities for some students beginning on August 17th. However, new flexibilities are added for social distancing and other mitigation. Schools will also need to adopt policies regarding face coverings for staff and students over age 5.

Additionally, the plan invests a total of \$440 million in federal dollars from the CARES Act in schools. To qualify for these dollars, schools must provide on-site learning opportunities and support services as outlined in the plan. Below is a breakdown of the allocated funding:

- **\$370 million** to ensure budget stability for schools and provide additional dollars when students are physically in the classroom.
- **\$40 million** to expand broadband in rural communities and bridge the digital divide.
- **\$20 million** to provide extra support for high-need schools.
- **\$6 million** for the Arizona Teachers Academy to assist with the teacher shortage.
- **\$1 million** in micro-grants to support innovative programs to continue educating Arizona students.
- **\$1 million** for vehicles for the Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind.
- **\$700,000** for leadership development through Beat the Odds Leadership Academy.
- **\$500,000** for tutoring from Teach for America to provide tutoring to kids most in need from schools most impacted across the state

To view the Arizona: Opening for Learning plan click [here](#).

To view the executive order on education in Arizona click [here](#).

To view the Arizona School Board summary of the plan click [here](#).

Governor extends closures

Governor Ducey extended his executive order which closes bars, gyms, movie theaters, fitness centers, water parks and tubing operators across the state. Originally set to expire on July 27th, the new order will indefinitely close all operations and will be reviewed every two weeks for possible termination or revision. Bars, with a series 6 or 7 license, which primarily applies to traditional bars and wine bars are required to close but may offer takeout or delivery.

The order also extends the limit on social gatherings of more than 50 people and the suspension of special event permits. In addition to the extension, the order enables local governing jurisdictions to approve events, provided they meet certain safety precautions.

To view the executive order click [here](#).

COVID-19 hospitalizations decline

Governor Ducey and Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) Director Christ announced that the precautions implemented under a series of executive orders are working to contain the spread of COVID-19 after the recent surge in cases.

New data reported by AZDHS suggests that the number of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients in Arizona's hospitals dropped to its lowest level this month. According to AZDHS, new data indicates that 85% of current inpatient beds and 87% of ICU beds are in use, which includes people being treated for COVID-19 and other patients. Overall, 51% of ventilators were in use. Most notably, Arizona's 20-day streak with at least 3,000 COVID-19 inpatients each day ended last week. During the past three weeks, cases increased by 75% and tests increased by 47%. Of known test results from last week, 15% have come back positive.

For more information on free COVID-19 testing sites click [here](#).

The website where individuals may pre-register for an appointment at a federal surge site is [here](#).

Statewide campaign to promote mask use announced

In partnership with Arizona advertising and public relations firms, Governor Ducey announced a statewide partnership to promote the use of masks and other precautions to contain the spread of COVID-19. The innovative approach will feature creative advertising concepts in English and Spanish, supported by \$3 million from the Governor's Office, for distribution across media platforms statewide. The content will run for an initial eight-week period, with new concepts being released over the course of the campaign.

An example of the content can be found [here](#).

Executive order issued for 2020 election

After discussion with Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, Governor Ducey issued an executive order that will make additional state assets available to support election officials statewide. The order instructs the Department of Administration (ADOA) to identify State-owned facilities to be utilized as voting locations and to assist counties in providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and other equipment necessary to allow safe hygiene practices when voting. It also enables state employees to serve as poll workers on election day without impacting their pay or leave time, helping ensure polling locations are staffed and lines are kept short. The primary is on August 4th and the general is on November 3rd. Residents must register to vote in the general election by October 5th.

To view the executive order click [here](#).

For voter registration information click [here](#).

For poll worker information click [here](#).

Court rules on Prop 123

The 9th U.S. District Court of Appeals overturned a U.S. District Court decision from September 2019 regarding Proposition 123, the voter-approved 2016 measure that redirects an estimated \$3.5 billion from the State Land Trust to Arizona public schools over 10 years.

In 2016, state resident Michael Pierce sued the Governor after Prop 123 was passed by a narrow margin of 1.5%. Pierce argued that the state could not transfer funds from the state's land trust without congressional approval and a federal district court agreed. In the earlier decision issued by U.S. District Court Judge Neil Wake, it was ruled that the Governor acted illegally by withdrawing money from a state land trust to fund education without congressional approval. The court stated that the state took monies illegally and spent them. Wake argued that a single provision about withdrawals in the 2,400-page appropriations bill was not enough to be considered congressional approval. The Governor's office argued that the action was legal because voters supported it and Congress subsequently approved it in the Consolidated Appropriations Act in 2018.

The appeals court ruled in favor of the Governor. A three-judge panel held that Congress gave the necessary approvals in 2018 so that no case or controversy existed.



Governor Ducey Provides COVID-19 Update



Arizona Update on Issues



[Click here to find COVID-19 resources and volunteer opportunities](#)

[Click here to find out how to donate a mobile hotspot](#)

Upcoming Legislators' Birthdays



Happy Birthday
Sen. Lupe Contreras (D)
Monday, July 27th

Representing LD19, Senator Contreras was first elected to the Legislature in 2013. An Arizona native, he was chosen by his peers to serve as Senate Assistant Minority Leader. A graduate of Glendale Community College, he is the Director of new business for Pomeroy & Associates, a law firm which he joined in 1999. At the Legislature, Contreras is a member of the Senate Finance, Judiciary, Transportation and Joint Legislative Audit committees. This session his top legislative priority was SB1567 which would have established that justification is a defense in any prosecution of a criminal offense, instead of for any offense under Title 13 (Criminal Code). To wish Senator Contreras happy birthday: lcontreras@azleg.gov.



Happy Birthday Rep.
T.J. Shope (R)
Wednesday, August 12th

Representing LD8, Representative Shope was first elected to the Legislature in 2012. An Arizona native, he was appointed to be Speaker Pro Tempore of the House in 2016 and reappointed in 2018. A graduate of Arizona State University where he earned a B.S. in political science, Shope is the owner of an independent grocery store in Coolidge. At the Legislature, he serves as Chairman of House Ethics and is Vice Chairman of the Rules Committee. Additionally, he is a member of the House Education and Natural Resources Committees. This session his top legislative priority was HB2243 which would have appropriated \$28 million from the general fund to the Department of Transportation to replace and expand the Gila River bridge on Interstate 10. To wish Representative Shope happy birthday: tshope@azleg.gov.

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