



Phoenix Advantage Charter School

School Opening Plan 2020-2021

PACS

Phoenix Advantage Charter School Governing Board

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Pre-Adoption



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August 2020

Dear PACS Community,

We are in a time that is challenging. Uncertainty can bring about many emotions. I hope this School Opening Plan will address many of the safety concerns we all share during this COVID-19 pandemic and, as a result, brings about more certainty on how Phoenix Advantage Charter School will open and operate.

On behalf of the Governing Board, thank you to all who have engaged and participated in this process. Your individual and collective voices were heard. While there will be parts of this plan you may not agree with, know that the PACS plan is based on the safety and well-being of children and employees. While there will need to be adjustments along the way, it allows us a path forward.

The School Opening Plan was created with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control. Although this guidance has changed as more information comes clear as to how this virus is contracted and spread, the basic guidelines have stayed the same.

Finally, while many of the practices and procedures we will put into place are for the safety and well-being of all, they are also put into place because we care. In this time of crisis, we care about each child, each employee, and each family. We do this not just because it is our responsibility, we also do so *Because We Care!*

Sincerely,

Rochelle R Elliott
Superintendent



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Plan and COVID-19 Protocols for Opening Phoenix Advantage Charter School

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) recommend that reopening decisions be driven by the current prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. (Please review ADE’s Roadmap for Reopening Schools, page 30, for more information.) The protocols that follow are based on CDC “step” guidelines—specifically, Steps 2 and 3. They are aligned to current Federal, State and Local mandates, proclamations and/or orders. CDC guidelines and Federal, State and Local mandates, proclamations, and/or orders may change at any given time and, thus, may change the protocols that are in this document.

SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The purpose of this tool is to assist administrators in making (re)opening decisions regarding K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to check with state and local health officials and other partners to determine the most appropriate actions while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.

Should you consider opening?

- ✓ Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- ✓ Is the school ready to protect children and employees at **higher risk** for severe illness?
- ✓ Are you able to screen students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure?

ANY NO

DO NOT OPEN

ALL YES

Are recommended health and safety actions in place?

- ✓ Promote **healthy hygiene practices** such as **hand washing** and **employees wearing a cloth face covering**, as feasible
- ✓ Intensify **cleaning, disinfection**, and ventilation
- ✓ Encourage **social distancing** through increased spacing, small groups and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
- ✓ Train all employees on health and safety protocols

ANY NO

MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST

ALL YES

Is ongoing monitoring in place?

- ✓ Develop and implement procedures to check for **signs and symptoms** of students and employees daily upon arrival, as feasible
- ✓ Encourage anyone who is sick to **stay home**
- ✓ Plan for if students or employees get sick
- ✓ Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
- ✓ Monitor student and employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices
- ✓ Be ready to consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area

ANY NO

MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST

ALL YES

OPEN AND MONITOR



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

The following protocols are to be implemented at PACS.

Because information, recommendations and mandates change frequently, information and procedures throughout this document may be updated. If a major change occurs, employees, parents and families will be notified.



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STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS

The Superintendent will coordinate all messages to students, parents, staff, and the community regarding opening, possible closure, and other COVID-19-related information. The Administrative team will ensure that PACS has posters with messaging on handwashing and covering of coughs and sneezes located throughout campus, along with posters at site entrances reminding individuals not to enter if sick.

The administrative team will coordinate physical distancing protocols, including ensuring that student and staff schedules, as well as facility set-up, allow for implementation of the protocols.

The Custodian will coordinate implementation of cleaning protocols, including ensuring that sufficient cleaning supplies are available and as appropriate, students and staff.

The administrative team will coordinate and implement the protocols set forth in the **Protocols-Employees** section of this document for screening of staff. That individual will be responsible for:

- communicating any reported case of COVID-19 among the school population to the Superintendent.
- informing the administration if absences of students and staff on any given day are far above average or if there appears to be a cluster of respiratory-related illnesses.

The Special Education teacher will ensure that the needs of special education students and students with special needs are being met in the context of implementation of these safety protocols.

TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

Training

Prior to students returning to campus, all staff will be trained on implementation of these protocols. Training will include proper use of PPE and supplies; cleaning and disinfecting; and other measures.

Communication

Prior to students returning to campus, parents/families will be sent a copy (or directed to review a copy on the school website) of this plan. As part of this process, PACS will send communication to all parents/families that outlines the symptoms for which parents must screen each morning, as well as the expectation that students will not be sent to school or placed on the bus if they are exhibiting symptoms. PACS will require, as part of the registration process and on a quarterly basis, a documented acknowledgement from parents/families regarding these protocols and agreeing to screen their children daily before sending them to school.

The administrative team is designated to be the COVID-19 point of contact. They will be responsible for answering parent questions regarding implementation of COVID-19 protocols.

The COVID-19 Points of Contact are:

Rochelle Elliott

Shauna Swavee

Stephanie Rodriguez

Susan Broderick



PROTOCOLS: STUDENTS

Protocols are established based on CDC Guidelines along with any federal, state, or local orders. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations.

Face Coverings

Note that in addition to cloth face coverings, FDA approved surgical masks may also be used. Also, washing/sanitizing hands should be done before and after putting on and taking off a mask.

PACS will require universal masking. Students will be required to wear a cloth or surgical face mask, subject to the health condition exception stated below*. Students will not be required to wear face coverings when eating or drinking.

**Any student who has difficulty breathing or who is incapable of physically removing the face masks on his/her own will not wear face masks, and alternate methods of protection will be discussed by parents and staff, including the use of a face shield.*

Students may bring their own cloth or surgical face mask to and from school. PACS will also have a supply of face masks available to provide students who do not have their own and for students who arrive without a face mask.

It is understandable that some students may require time to adjust to wearing face masks. Staff will use their professional judgement to assist a student having difficulty transitioning to wearing a face mask during the day. ***This will be the exception and not the norm.***

Note: Cloth and surgical face coverings are designed to protect other individuals rather than the individual wearing the covering. Accordingly, the greater number of students and staff wearing face masks, the greater the overall transmission mitigation that will be achieved. Plastic face shields in combination with face masks, which provide additional protection for the wearer, will not be required, but will be permitted.

BEFORE SCHOOL ARRIVAL

The CDC provides a “self-check” to help individuals decide and seek appropriate medical care. The self-checker can be used for children and found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

At Home- Daily Health Screenings and Reporting

Students must not come to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms*:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, or chills
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- muscle aches
- sore throat
- headache
- fatigue
- change in congestion or runny nose not related to allergies



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- cough
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- new loss of taste or smell.

This list may not include all possible symptoms. The CDC will continue to update this list as more is learned about COVID-19. A student with a daily runny nose or congestion due to allergies **should not be kept at home.*

PACS will inform parents/families via registration documents, on the school website, ClassTag and via email reminders that they must screen students for the above symptoms each morning, should self-report symptoms, and must keep students at home if any symptoms are present or have a household member who has contracted COVID-19. Students will have the opportunity to make up work missed due to symptoms of COVID-19.

For the health and safety of other students and of teachers and staff, parents/families are required to conduct daily health screenings prior to sending their children to school. Students who are ill or have a household member with COVID-19 should not come to school.

Parents/families are required to report a positive COVID-19 test for a student, or any person residing with a student. Review the REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR A POSITIVE TEST section of this document.

If a parent believes their child has been exposed to COVID-19 but has not been tested or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, they must inform their school principal for further guidance.

Note: PACS will not give out attendance awards for the duration of the COVID-19 health crisis.

ON BUSES

Students will stand together, at the bus stop, while still observing social distancing guidelines. Parents are encouraged to accompany children at bus stops to ensure distancing is maintained.

If a bus driver or aide observes a student exhibiting visible COVID-19 symptoms:

- The driver will contact their dispatcher who will notify the school that a potentially symptomatic student is arriving and should see the school health associate.
- If the parent is at the bus stop, the driver or aide will inform the parent that visible symptoms are observed and advise the parent that the child should call in sick or that the school's health office may be contacting the parent when the child arrives at school if the parent refuses to take the child home from the bus stop.
- The driver or aide will, if possible, ensure that the student is socially distanced.

If a student has a chronic condition such as allergies or asthma, parents should inform staff of that condition. If staff has been so informed, students with symptoms of runny nose or cough related to allergies should be permitted to ride the bus.



Bus Seating

PACS has contracted Royal Bus Transportation to transport those who rely on busing services and will spread out riders as much as possible to create distancing given bus capacity. Drivers and students will be required to wear a face mask.

- The bus driver will instruct students to load the bus from back to front to avoid students passing one another. When unloading, they will unload from front to back.
- The driver will instruct students to take seats that are spaced from one another as ridership allows. Depending on the number of students riding the bus, spacing students may not be possible.
- The driver will keep the seat immediately behind them unoccupied if feasible.
- Siblings may sit together.

Transportation will follow the same face covering guidelines outlined for all students and staff. If students are not wearing a face covering when entering the bus, then one will be provided for them.

Additional Bus Information

A communication will be shared with parents during registration, which outlines standard busing information as well as special considerations under COVID-19.

Students will be expected to utilize provided hand sanitizer when entering and exiting buses.

Elementary students riding the bus will be dismissed 15 minutes ahead of their classmates and buses will depart before the remaining students are dismissed. PACS will investigate additional bus schedule adjustments to avoid multiple buses unloading students at the school in a large group. Updated schedules will be available on PACS website as needed.

School buses will be disinfected with an EPA-approved product twice daily: Once after the morning routes and once in the afternoon. After disinfection activities are completed, windows will be opened to allow the bus to ventilate and air-dry.

To assist in the prevention of potential spread, PACS will not offer field trips nor bus transportation to athletic events. If athletic events are scheduled, parents will be responsible for providing student transportation until such time that physical distancing in transit is no longer required.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at school, each student will proceed directly to the student's first period classroom where breakfast will be given.

A staff member will visually check each student for symptoms prior to students entering the classroom. Any student with visible symptoms of a change in congestion or runny nose not related to allergies, cough, shortness of breath, or vomiting, will be sent to the health office. Parents may be contacted for pick-up with the following exceptions:

- If the student has a runny nose and the nurse/health associate observes that there are no other symptoms, the administrative team will contact the parent to inquire as to whether the student



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has had any other symptoms or there have been any COVID-19 exposures in the home. If not, the student may return to class.

- If the student has health information on file that confirms a diagnosis of asthma or other respiratory condition and the nurse/health associate observes that there are no other symptoms, the administrative team will contact the parent to inquire as to whether the student has had any other symptoms or there have been any COVID-19 exposures in the home. If not, the student may return to class.

Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures

Students will be dropped off and picked up from school **without parents getting out of the car, with very limited exception** and with expressed permission from the Superintendent that is provided for good cause. If a parent has prior permission to get out of the car during drop-off/pick-up, the student's arrival/dismissal to/from school may have assigned times different than most students, depending on the situation. If a parent walks a student to school, the parent will not be allowed to enter the school or grounds and must drop off the student outside of the school campus. If parents/families ride a bike to school with student bike riders, parents will not be allowed to enter the school grounds and must drop off the student outside of the campus.

Parents will come to the front office to sign out and wait for their child. Spaces will be marked out requiring 6 ft. distance while parents wait. **Parents signing students in and out of PACS are required to wear a face mask and take a temperature check.**

Basic Physical Distancing Practices

Staff members will educate and remind students regularly to maintain, if feasible, at least 6 ft. of distance between individuals outside of the classroom.

Elementary students will remain with the same groupings and the same staff for most of the day. Schedules for middle school students will be created to allow, as much as possible, the same groupings of students to remain with each other.

Classroom Layout

PACS will attempt to physically distance desks and tables as far apart as feasible and will have desks and tables faced in the same direction, if feasible.

Hallways

Hallways will be marked with adhesive tape to direct students to stay on one side of the hallway for each direction of travel. Where possible given the school layout, certain hallways may be designated one-way.

Playgrounds

Physical activity continues to be a vital part of a student's school day. Teachers will require students to wash their hands before and after recess and masks will be required. If playground equipment is used, cleaning of equipment will be aligned to CDC recommendations.



Cafeterias and Other Areas During Lunch

Schools will use a multiple number of spaces during lunch including eating in classrooms, in the cafeteria and outside. Because masks cannot be worn while eating, students must eat within a 15-minute timeframe* (active eating time- once the student has begun to eat) and proper physical distancing is more important than ever. Students will be prohibited from sharing lunch items with each other and, unless there is prior administrative permission, outside food cannot be delivered to the school.

** From the CDC: "Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. Recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure, but 15 minutes of close exposure can be used as an operational definition. Brief interactions are less likely to result in transmission."*

When eating in the classroom, students with food allergies may need appropriate accommodations. These may include, for example, taking the student to another location, such as a school conference room or the multipurpose room, with one friend (so long as social distancing can be maintained in the alternate location).

When eating in the cafeteria or other areas outside of the classroom, increased safety measures will include the following:

- Marking areas/tables indicating where students may sit.
- Assign students to a specific seat with a minimum of 6 feet between marked seats.
- Limit cafeteria seating to the number of assigned seats.
- If students line up for lunch service, only one class will be permitted to line up at a time, and markings will be placed on the floor to indicate where students should stand to maintain social distancing.
- Prohibit students from sharing lunch items with one another.

Bathrooms

Students will enter bathrooms in groups of 3 and will always be required to wear face masks.

Front Office

Masks must be worn; temperature checks may be taken, and adhesive tape placed on the floor 6 feet from the front desk. Signage directing visitors not to come closer than the tape markings will be posted.

Hand Washing

All students and staff will wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times:

- upon arrival at school (use hand sanitizer if there is no sink in the classroom),
- after being outside for physical activity,
- before and after lunch,
- prior to leaving school for home,
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose, and
- prior to and after removing and putting on a face mask.



Student Belongings/Materials

Sharing of technology devices, school supplies and belongings among students will be very limited and only if it is necessary. If equipment or supplies must be shared by students, staff will clean the item after each use. Parents should also clean student belongings before/after school.

Trips and Activities

Field trips will be canceled. Teachers may use virtual learning opportunities (such as virtual tours of museums) to enhance students' educational experiences.

School-wide assemblies may not be held with students assembled in the same physical location. As an alternative (if feasible), school-wide assemblies will be held virtually, with student groups remaining in their classrooms.

Large-scale school events such as "Back to School Night" or carnivals will be cancelled or reconfigured to maintain physical distancing. Small-scale activities such as parent-teacher conferences may take place over the phone or by other electronic means.

Other extracurricular activities will be cancelled unless the activity can be conducted in compliance with the protocols in this document. To assist in the prevention of potential spread, PACS will not offer field trips nor bus transportation to athletic events. If athletic events are scheduled, parents will be responsible for providing student transportation until such time that physical distancing in transit is no longer required.

Specialized Classes

Because electives and special area classes are vital to the social and emotional well-being of many students, they are permitted. Art and PE may require alternative lesson plans to limit contact and the sharing of supplies, and to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets. Face masks must always be worn.

Visitors and Volunteers

PACS will limit nonessential visitors and volunteers at school except for the safety and well-being of students. Parents will report to the front office and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child and must follow all safety protocols including physically distancing, as feasible, and wearing a face mask. Parent volunteers will not be used in the classroom.



PROTOCOLS: EMPLOYEES

Protocols are established based on CDC Guidelines along with any federal, state, or local orders. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations.

Face Coverings

Note that in addition to cloth face coverings, FDA approved surgical masks may also be used.

PACS will require universal masking. Employees will be required to wear a cloth or surgical face mask. Staff members are required to universally mask during interaction with students or other staff unless they cannot do so for health reasons. In these cases, employees will notify their supervisor and discuss strategies for reducing employee interactions with students or staff and other options for maintaining safety protocols including the use of a face shield. Employees will contact the Superintendent to request a reasonable accommodation and begin the interactive process if they cannot safely wear a face mask.

Unless a health condition prevents it, custodial staff will be required to wear cloth or surgical face masks and/or other personal protective equipment (as available and appropriate) while cleaning and disinfecting the schools and district facilities. Universal masking, wearing of cloth or surgical face masks, will be required for employees and subject to the health condition exception stated below*. Employees will not be required to wear face coverings when eating or drinking.

*Any employee who has difficulty breathing or who is incapable of physically removing the face masks on his/her own will not wear face masks, and alternate methods of protection will be discussed, including the use of a face shield.

Employees may bring their own cloth or surgical face mask to and from school. Schools and sites will have a supply of face masks available to provide employees who do not have their own and for employees who arrive without a face mask. PACS will also provide face shields as needed.

Note: Wearing cloth and surgical face coverings does not replace the need to maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible. Accordingly, the greater number of employees wearing face masks, the greater the overall transmission mitigation that will be achieved. Plastic face shields in combination with face masks, which provide additional protection for the wearer, will not be required, but are permitted.

Daily Screening

Employees will receive a copy (or directed to review a copy on the school website) of this plan. As part of this process, the PACS will send communication to all employees that outlines the symptoms for which employees must screen each morning, as well as the expectation that employees will not report to work if they are exhibiting symptoms. PACS will require, as part of the employee orientation and on a quarterly basis, a documented acknowledgement from employees regarding these protocols and agreeing to screen themselves before reporting to work.



The CDC provides a “self-check” to help individuals decide and seek appropriate medical care. The self-checker can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Employees will not be allowed to work onsite if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 100.4 and higher or chills,
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- muscle aches,
- sore throat,
- headache,
- fatigue,
- change in congestion or runny nose not related to allergies,
- cough,
- vomiting,
- diarrhea, or
- new loss of taste or smell.

Additionally:

An employee will take his/her temperature, if feasible, at home and assess whether she/he is experiencing any of the stated COVID-19 symptoms prior to arriving at work. When the employee arrives at work, the employee will confirm they do not have any of the symptoms listed above. Employees are required to report to the administrative team if they or a person who resides with them, have tested positive for COVID-19. If an employee believes that they have been exposed to COVID-19 but have not been tested or experienced any symptoms, they must seek guidance from the administrative team.

Handwashing

Employees are required to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times, at minimum:

- upon arrival at school
- before and after putting on and taking off a face mask
- after being outside for student physical activity
- before and after lunch
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose
- after physical contact with other staff or students

Enhanced Physical Distancing

Employees are always required to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart, unless this is not physically possible or, for a student’s or other person’s safety. If a situation arises that requires a staff member to touch a student or another staff member the staff member will resume physical distancing as soon as safely possible, wash their hands, and disinfect any surfaces they touched.



School Visitors

PACS will limit nonessential visitors for the safety and well-being of students and staff. Staff will limit their visits and meetings outside of their work location. Meetings outside of the work location will be held virtually, as feasible. Staff visitors will report to the front office, not go beyond unless it is necessary and must follow all safety protocols. Service providers will need to follow all protocols when visiting schools.

PROTOCOLS: CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Protocols are established based on CDC Guidelines along with any federal, state, or local orders. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations. Cleaning will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Custodial schedules will be adjusted to place focus on cleaning routinely throughout the day. An EPA-registered hospital grade cleaner and disinfectant will be used daily on frequently touched surfaces in work areas, such as door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, desks, and learning tools. Additionally, all staff will be provided with cleaner to be used as needed in between classes, at workstations and in common areas. The playground, sports equipment, and any other shared items (if they are being used) will be cleaned between uses by teachers and/or custodial staff utilizing district-provided approved cleaning products.

REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR A POSITIVE TEST

The CDC's, State and County Health Departments' procedures for reporting COVID-19 symptoms or COVID-19 positive tests change periodically. The following procedures may be updated, and employees, parents and families will be notified of major changes to reporting procedures.

If a person becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms or reports a positive COVID-19 test, the procedures listed below should be followed:

Confidentiality must be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

1. If an employee develops COVID-19 symptoms at work, the employee will be separated from all other students, staff, or visitors, and sent home in a safe manner. If the employee is able to self-transport, the employee will leave the site. If the employee is not able to safely self-transport, a family member, friend, or other method of transport to get the employee home or to a health care provider will be arranged by the administrative team. If the employee appears to be in medical distress, 911 will be called.
2. If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms at school, the student will be separated from all other students and staff, except for one staff member to supervise the student. This staff member will wear additional PPE (a face shield, gloves, etc.) and always maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the student, unless there is an emergency. The school will immediately notify a parent or emergency contact to pick up the student and call 911 if the student appears to be in medical distress.
3. Areas that were exposed to the symptomatic employee or student for a prolonged period will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected per CDC guidelines. Depending on the situation, the areas of exposure may need to be closed for a 24-hour period.



4. The administrative team will determine whether other employees or students may have been exposed to the symptomatic individual (within 6 feet and for a prolonged period, typically longer than 15 minutes). If it is determined that those who were potentially exposed should be notified, the notification will recommend that exposed individuals monitor their health closely, contact their health care provider if possible, and if symptoms develop, self-quarantine.

Employees or students who have developed COVID-19 symptoms or had a positive COVID-19 test may not return to the site until they have met the CDC or State/County Health department's guidelines at that moment in time. Because guidelines in this area change regularly, describing the steps that will be taken would not be prudent.

Communicating and Consulting with Local Health Authorities

The Superintendent will be the point of contact for the Maricopa County Department of Public Health and/or Arizona Department of Health Services if there are verified cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area. PACS will follow any additional guidance required by these departments.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Arizona Department of Health Services

<https://www.azdhs.gov/>

Maricopa County Public Health Department

<https://www.maricopa.gov/5460/Coronavirus-Disease-2019>



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