

Open Letter To Arizona Families, Educators, School Leaders, And Education Community Members

Governor's Office

March 20, 2020

Dear Arizona families, educators, school leaders, and education community members,

We want to provide you the most up-to-date information on the status of Arizona's school closures. Over the last week, we've worked side-by-side to keep parents and educators informed and provide resources to families to mitigate the impact of school closures.

We're grateful for the continued partnership of our school administrators and education leaders around the state. And we thank the Arizona Department of Health Services for their continued coordination so we can keep kids safe and healthy.

Today, we are jointly announcing the extension of school closures through April 10, 2020. Our goal is to get kids safely back in the classroom as soon as possible while providing parents and educators certainty so they can plan and make decisions. We will continue to work together to determine what's best for Arizona kids and schools in the face of COVID-19.

It's important for families and parents to know that while this extension will continue to address operational issues, school closures will not stop the spread of COVID-19.

The safest place for children during this time is at home. They should not be cared for by elderly adults or those with underlying health conditions, including grandparents and other family members. We've teamed up with leaders in the non-profit, faith-based and business communities to make childcare available for those who need it. A list can be found on azed.gov.

We also appreciate the partnership of our state legislature in order to provide continued assistance and flexibility to our schools. On Thursday, legislators passed legislation to waive requirements related to educational assessments and ensure teacher and school staff pay is not disrupted, legislation that will be signed as soon as it is received by the Governor's Office.

Daily meals continue to be provided at schools throughout our state to any child under 18. To view a list of meal sites, visit azed.gov. There you can also find additional information, such as special education considerations and learning resources for families and educators.

As it relates to graduation, the Arizona Department of Education is working with education leaders at the local, state and federal level to provide guidance to schools regarding high school graduation. We will provide additional information to schools in the coming days and weeks.

We are asking schools to continue to please adhere to the following measures during this period of closure:

- School administrators should make every effort to provide continued education learning opportunities through online resources or materials that can be sent home.
- School administrators should work with the Arizona Department of Education to provide breakfast and lunch services for Arizona students.

- As demand rises on healthcare professionals and first responders, schools should consider expanding child care programs currently available to ensure minimal disruption to these critical jobs as a result of the school closure.
- When school resumes, school administrators should develop and implement precautions to ensure schools are a safe learning environment, including social distancing measures, regular intervals for administrators to wash and sanitize their hands, and guidance on how to properly and frequently sanitize election equipment and common surfaces.

We are unified in our efforts to address COVID-19, and we appreciate your cooperation and understanding. Our number one priority is the health and safety of all our residents, especially our kids, and as facts and guidance change, we will monitor them closely and keep you updated.

For the latest information about COVID-19, please visit [azhealth.gov](https://www.azhealth.gov). This website is updated daily with new information.

Sincerely,

Governor Doug Ducey and Superintendent Kathy Hoffman