



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arizona Medical Association's Statement on Upholding Public Health Policies in K-12 Schools

July 16, 2021 (Phoenix) — The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) and the physician members it represents stand firmly behind the implementation of public health policy based on scientific evidence. Following sound public health recommendations is the key to ensuring that our community remains healthy, especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

On behalf of the Arizona medical community, ArMA advises that schools and education leaders follow federal, state, and local health authorities' guidelines on current measures to prevent and respond to COVID-19. The CDC recently issued updated guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools and that guidance included:

- Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated.
- Schools should maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk.
- Screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe.

The current CDC and ADHS guidance provide for a mandatory ten-day quarantine for unvaccinated students exposed to COVID-19. While this may pose certain challenges for both students and schools, ArMA supports the science and evidence-based policy behind minimizing the spread of COVID-19 and reducing the threat posed by the pandemic. Those wishing to review these guidelines can do so on the CDC's website [here](#) and ADHS' website [here](#).

"It is in the best interest of students, parents, teachers, staff, and community members for school districts to adhere to the guidelines recommended by the CDC and ADHS," stated Miriam Anand, MD, ArMA President. "These officials are using the latest and most reliable information to make evidence-based recommendations on what is best for the health of our communities. As physicians, ArMA stands behind this guidance."

While more than half of Arizona's eligible population is now vaccinated against COVID-19, millions of residents, including children under the age of twelve, remain unprotected and vulnerable. As more contagious variants of the disease, such as the Delta variant, circulate in our state, ArMA continues to

encourage those who are eligible to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

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About Arizona Medical Association

The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) is the largest organization in the state representing the interests of all physicians. Since 1892, ArMA has been advancing patient care and providing its members with leadership, advocacy, education, and networking. For more information, visit www.AZmed.org and follow ArMA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).