



Fort Thomas Unified School District #7

15560 W. Elementary School Road / P.O. Box 300

Fort Thomas, Arizona 85536

"Empower Students, Ensure the Future"

Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Community,

I am writing to provide the latest information regarding the opening of Ft. Thomas Schools for In-Person Learning. I wanted to update you on our plan to fully return to In-Person Learning beginning Wednesday, September 30th.

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) set benchmarks for school districts to consider for the physical reopening of schools. The benchmarks reference three COVID-19 data points:

1. Number of new cases- less than 100 per 100,000
2. Percentage of positive tests- 7% or less
3. Number of hospital visits due to COVID-19 like illness

Currently, Graham County on Benchmark #1 is slightly over 100 per 100,000, but on Thursday the new report will show that our County is well below the number to meet the metrics. This is very good for the community our schools serve. For Benchmark #2, Graham County has only been testing symptomatic people rather than a larger portion of our population. While we are still at 8% on Thursday, the new report will show the County has a percent positive of 6%. This is a very good number based on the limited tests. For Benchmark #3, Graham County clearly meets (which is a southeast regional grouping). Our numbers are continually improving.

If you follow the San Carlos Health Care updates, the community of Bylas currently has the lowest number of active cases for any of the Tribes Districts with 6 active cases. This is significantly lower than it was at its peak a few weeks ago.

In-Person Learning

Using community information and county metrics, and after consulting with county health officials, **WE are confirming that we are moving to In-Person learning on September 30th!** We want to send a big thank you to our community for doing what's needed to be done to control the spread of the virus, supporting us through different learning models, and following our reopening protocols so far. This does not mean that those who still want to continue with Distance learning will have to come to the school for In Person Learning. **You can still elect to stay with Distance Learning at home.**

Our staff has been preparing to reopen for full classes and we ask that everyone review our Mitigation and In Person Learning Plan found at ftusd.org. Masks are mandated on school campuses by Executive Order 51. Staying home when symptomatic, wearing masks, and frequent hand-washing are the most effective deterrents to the virus spreading quickly. Even if we have some isolated cases pop up, these practices could help us stay open with full In-Person Learning.

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Before students get on the bus or come to school:

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;
- congestion or runny nose;
- cough;
- vomiting;
- diarrhea; or
- new loss of taste or smell.

Parents should screen students for the above symptoms each morning, should self-report symptoms, and must keep students at home if any symptoms are present. Our morning buses will run normal routes for students Beginning September 30th. With the new protocols in place please be patient as the buses may run a little behind until we all get used to our new normal. All routes after school will leave the schools at 3pm. Again, it is so important we continue to follow the mask and sanitation protocols. **Everyone has been doing fantastic with this and we so appreciate it!**

We believe In-Person Learning is the most effective way to instruct students and build social skills. We are VERY excited we are at a point where we can start this mode of learning and look forward to keeping it going!!!

[Detailed In Person Learning Plan](#)

Thank You,

Shane Hawkins

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