



## Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19 School Closures

*Last Updated at 3:20 PM on Friday, March 20, 2020*

*This document will be updated as new information becomes available.*

On Friday, March 20, 2020, Governor Ducey and Superintendent Hoffman announced an extension of statewide school closures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. **As of March 20<sup>th</sup>, schools will be closed through Friday, April 10, 2020.** The Governor, in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services, will continue to reassess the situation and provide more information on a week-by-week basis.

On Thursday, March 19, 2020, the Arizona Legislature passed emergency legislation, now awaiting transmission to the Governor's Office, that outlines requirements and expectations for schools surrounding educator and staff pay, statewide assessments (AZM2, etc.), school accountability and letter grades, and more. The Governor is expected to sign this legislation into law on Monday, March 23, 2020.

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### **Q: What schools are affected by the COVID-19 school closure declaration?**

The Governor's declaration applies to all Arizona K-12, brick-and-mortar schools, including district, charter, private schools, and career and technical education districts (CTEDs) associated with a K-12 facility.

School closure is **NOT** a complete shutdown of school operations and instructional obligations to students. During school closures, staff are still expected to engage in work-related activities, and students and families are expected to meet the instructional requirements of their teachers and schools.

School leaders, teachers, staff and parents must work together to plan for continuity in education and critical services during this time. Specifically, during the closure, educators and community leaders are called on to:

- Continue to deliver educational opportunities to the extent possible through remote learning and independent study, which may or may not include online learning or printed materials, among other options;
- Provide school meals; and
- Arrange for supervision of students during ordinary school hours.
- Schools will continue to be funded as if they were in session and staff will continue to be paid. If these conditions are met, makeup days will not be



necessary, and the Department is working with the Governor's Office and legislative leaders to provide clarity in the law.

For more information, see the School Closures: Clarification and Guidance tab on our page: <http://bit.ly/AZED-COVID-19>.

**Q: What schools are not affected by the COVID-19 school closure declaration?**

The declaration does **NOT** apply to:

- Online schools and drop out recovery programs that have the capacity to operate remotely. These programs/online schools should stay open and continue to offer services to students and honor contracts with school districts.
- Daycare facilities and preschools, which are encouraged to follow all guidance by the Department of Health Services (see [HERE](#)). Families are encouraged to keep children at-home whenever possible and to reserve spots in day-care and other childcare facilities for the children of first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential workers.
- Adult education programs, although ADE has recommended all these programs close their face-to-face classes from 3/16 through 3/27/2020.
- Educational programs offered in county jails and county juvenile detention centers. We advise these programs to follow protocols by the Arizona Department of Corrections and Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections.

For more information, see the School Closures: Clarification and Guidance tab on our page: <http://bit.ly/AZED-COVID-19>.

**Q: What are you doing to ensure students are fed during the COVID-19 school closures?**

The Arizona Department of Education will be working with schools who intend to continue their meal service programs for children during the time schools are closed due to COVID-19. ADE has received approval from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to waive the congregate meal requirement of the meal service programs.

Click [HERE](#) find a list of school districts and non-profit organizations that are offering meals to any individual under age 18 in your community.



To find a food bank in your community, visit [Arizona Food Bank Network](#).

**Q: How does the COVID-19 school closure declaration impact the pay and work of school staff?**

The Arizona Department of Education and Superintendent Hoffman are providing the following recommendations on educator and staff pay and work:

- It is our recommendation that schools continue to provide regular pay to all hourly and salary staff – including certified and classified staff, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, administrative assistants, etc.
- We do not recommend that districts and charters require staff to use sick/personal leave during mandatory COVID-19 school closures while staff are reporting to work in-person, working remotely, or remaining on-call.
- We are asking state leaders to create maximum flexibility that allow schools to continue serving students – from providing instruction to delivering school meals. This may mean a change in staff’s typical roles and responsibilities, or the location from which they carry out work (e.g. from home).

We are working with state lawmakers to make sure any statutory concerns are addressed. For more information, please see “Recommendations to Ensure Continuity of Educator and Staff Pay” on our page: <http://bit.ly/AZED-COVID-19>.

**Q: Will assessments be cancelled for school year 2019-2020?**

A: The U.S. Department of Education announced on Friday, March 20, 2020 that the federal requirement for testing is waived for all states. ADE is working on submitting a waiver accordingly.

**Q: How does the COVID-19 school closure declaration affect high school graduation?**

During COVID-19 closures, we encourage schools and educators to collaborate to identify creative ways to support continued learning for high school seniors and those who are scheduled to graduate in May 2020. ADE is putting together a resource hub for online learning tools that will support continued instruction and curriculum. The hub can be found on [bit.ly/AZED-COVID-19](http://bit.ly/AZED-COVID-19) under “Family & Educator Resources.”



We expect more information regarding flexibility in graduation requirements from the State Board of Education (SBE) next week.

**Q: How does the COVID-19 school closure declaration affect teacher certification?**

For the health and safety of our employees, ADE Certification will provide services to customers **only** online, by phone or by mail. Here are some options that will allow you to seek certification during this time.

To apply online, visit [AzEdCert](#) page for directions and the link to the AzEDCert Educator Portal. The following services may be completed online:

- All initial certificates (Substitute, Standard Professional, CTE, STEM, Subject Matter Expert, Emergency, etc)
- All approved areas (Content area designations added to appropriate certificates)
- All endorsements (Specialization – content and student groups – added to appropriate certificates)
- Certificate renewal

Transfers, deficiency removals, name change, and duplicate copy requests are not available through our online portal at this time. Please apply by mail to:

- Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit  
P.O. Box 6490  
Phoenix, AZ 85005-6490

**Q: How does the COVID-19 school closure declaration affect adult education?**

Adult Education and High School Equivalency (HSE) Services Unit understands there is heightened concern in regard to the COVID-19 virus, and we also understand the desire and need to continue with assisting our students, HSE testing candidates, and third-party verifiers with the documents needed.

Starting Thursday March 19th and until further notice, we are only accepting Official HSE Transcript Requests and Access Code Requests via our email inbox, [Adulted@azed.gov](mailto:Adulted@azed.gov) or through regular mail at:

- Arizona Department of Education – Adult Education Services  
1535 W. Jefferson, Bin 26  
Phoenix, AZ 85007



Click [HERE](#) for more information.

**Q: Does the COVID-19 school closure declaration impact federal grant funding for my school or local education agency (LEA)?**

The Arizona Department of Education has received inquiries from LEAs regarding school closures and federal grant funding. We are aware of potential implications and have sought guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. ADE remains open, and we continue to process grant applications and provide support to LEAs. At this time, the May 1, 2020 grant deadline remains; however, we are closely monitoring the situation and will provide additional guidance as soon as available.