



Arizona Department of Education

On-site Support Services Overview

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Targeted Support Services for Students and Families

What services could be provided as part of on-site support services?

School districts and charter schools are advised to survey families prior to August 17, 2020 to understand family capacity to support distance learning at home, as well as the extent of need for on-site support services and transportation. Schools should consider an alternative plan to deliver school-based services to children at higher risk for severe illness. Schools should take steps to provide families and students access to necessary services on-site, such as:

- Services for students with disabilities whose free appropriate public education (FAPE) needs, as determined by individualized education program (IEP) teams, require in-person support and must be provided specially-designed instruction as soon as the student has started school, in accordance with the attending school calendar.
- Meals that would otherwise be provided at school.
- Paraprofessional support and access to internet and devices for distance learning instruction.
- Medical and mental health services delivered by qualified healthcare providers.
- Targeted support delivered by qualified educators for development of English language and literacy skills.
- Teacher-led instruction and/or tutoring for a subset of academically at-risk students.
- Supervision and academic support for young students who do not have a caregiver at home during school hours.
- Targeted support for children in foster care, including family foster homes and congregate care settings.

Pursuant to EO 2020-51, schools shall not limit availability or refuse to provide free on-site support services to students. Schools are encouraged to explore options for local partnerships with child care providers, as well as the Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration, to expand opportunities for students in need.

Staffing

How will on-site support services be staffed?

School districts and charter schools should take steps to ensure staffing for on-site support services meets the demand, such as:

- Include educators and staff in the development of plans for on-site support services. School staff know their students and community best and can offer critical input on how to meet their needs.
- Assess the comfort and ability of individual staff members to return to provide on-site support services.
- Prepare options for staff who fall into health-risk categories and consider implications.
- Consider the workload of distance learning versus in-person education. Be careful not to overburden or compromise any individual or educator role with unrealistic expectations or demands.
- Consider the expertise of your staff to ensure that the needs of students are being met by the most highly skilled and qualified staff available.
- Define new roles as needed, cross-train staff and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Continuously monitor staff absenteeism due to COVID-related illness or exposure to inform back-up staffing plan.
- Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or are caring for someone who is sick.

Schedule

When do schools have to provide on-site support services?

The requirement to provide on-site support services begins on August 17, 2020.

On-site support services must be offered the same number of days each week as school was in session in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020.

Districts or charters may switch to a different schedule for SY 2020-2021 if the change was approved prior to the Executive Order 2020-41 (June 24, 2020).

School districts and charter schools that wish to move to a four-day calendar and were not approved prior to the Executive Order may do so. Nonetheless, they must meet the requirement to make a physical space available the same number of days as last school year.

Location

Do all school facilities have to be open for on-site support services?

A school district or charter school with multiple facilities may choose to open one building for this purpose, so long as there is capacity to serve all students who need it while following mitigation strategies and public health guidelines.

School districts or charter schools may partner with local governments and/or community-based organizations (e.g. Boys and Girls Club or YMCA) to meet this requirement and use CARES Act recovery dollars to support this partnership.

School districts and charter schools may partner with other public or private education entities to meet this requirement.

Transportation to and from the facility is not required, however schools are strongly advised to make transportation available to students who need it.

Safety Measures

What steps should school leaders take to promote safety for students and staff participating in on-site support services?

EO 2020-51 requires school districts and charter schools to adopt a mitigation plan prior to opening a facility for on-site support services and post it to the school district or charter school's website. Schools should encourage any organizations that share or use the school facilities to also follow considerations.

School districts and charter schools may also adopt procedures to ensure that the number of students present for on-site support services does not exceed recommended physical distancing and mitigation strategies as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The [CDC guidelines](#) recommend schools to implement strategies across 4 key areas to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

1. promoting behaviors that reduce spread (e.g. social distancing, washing hands and wearing cloth face coverings),
2. maintaining healthy environments (e.g., ensuring proper ventilation, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces)
3. maintaining healthy operations (e.g., staggering schedules, keeping students in small groups), and
4. preparing for when someone gets sick.

EO 2020-51 requires schools to implement a policy requiring face coverings for all adults and students over the age of 5. Schools should refer to guidance from the [CDC](#) and the Arizona Department of Health Services to inform their policy. The requirement for masks applies to on-site support services and should be in place once on-site services begins.

Waiver

When is a school district or charter school eligible for a waiver from the requirements to provide onsite support services and how do they apply?

“**Outbreak**” is defined by: Two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing. Alternatively, an outbreak can be defined by public health as a localized increase in COVID-19 incidence in a defined community within the county requiring the closure of the charter school or school district.

EO 2020-51 requires schools to provide on-site support services so that students who need a place to go or who have specific needs are well-supported, which allows schools to offer successful distance learning for all students. A waiver is only required and permitted if all on-site services will cease due to an outbreak. A district or charter may apply for a waiver of the requirement to make on-site support services available if:

1. The local county health department, in conjunction with ADHS, has advised closing the entire district or charter as the result of an outbreak of the virus; or
2. A tribal sovereign nation issues a “stay-at-home” order impacting an entire school district or charter school on or adjacent to a reservation.

Waivers requests will be considered for districts or charter schools that are experiencing an outbreak and are unable to provide on-site services. District or charter schools must provide documentation from their county health department and the Arizona Department of Health Services advising them to close or the tribal sovereign nation that issued the stay-at-home order with their waiver request for on-site support services.

Waiver requests will be considered independently of the public health benchmarks. ADE will review submitted waiver requests and supporting documentation on a rolling basis.

If ADE grants a school district or charter school a waiver of the requirement to provide on-site support services under EO 2020-51, the district or charter school remains obligated to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) as outlined in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). Compensatory educational services may be necessary if a FAPE cannot be provided through distance learning.

To apply for a waiver, please complete the [On-Site Learning and Services Waiver Request form](#).