



August 10, 2020

Dear Parents and Families,

As we near the start of the 2020-21 school year, we want to thank all of you again for your support and patience as we have navigated all of the information and complexities of preparing for a safe and reasonable return to school.

After a holistic review of all information, including the benchmarks released by the Arizona Dept. of Health on 8/6/20, the most current metric data, and our family and community needs, Leading Edge Academy currently plans to continue to offer families a choice of an in-person return to school and a distance learning option on 8/17/20. However, all return to school plans will be reviewed and final decisions will be made by the school governing boards on Wednesday, 8/12/20. The school boards will be reviewing the most current metric data from a variety sources. Upon initial review, this data seems to indicate that our schools local data is in the moderate range of community spread. Per the Arizona Dept. of Health benchmarks, a moderate community spread indicates a hybrid school opening which is a combination of in-person and remote learning.

We have consistently held that providing school choice to parents and families is critical during these unprecedented times and that parents are in the best position to determine what is best and safest for their family. Our goal has remained the same; to offer families rigorous, safe, and reasonable options for a return to school. This belief was supported by a statement released today from the Arizona Charter School Board. That statement said in part...

*“School choice was founded on the principle that there cannot be a one-size fits all approach to schools, and the Board is aware that the same founding principle applies to how our schools will reopen this school year. Every school community has different needs which will determine what their reopening process looks like. I am confident in our charters’ ability to make the most appropriate choices for their community whether that is offering instruction in-person, hybrid, or online.”*

Results of our parent survey have consistently indicated that our families are requesting return to school options that meet the needs of their students and family. Listed below are the results of the parent survey as of 8/10/20:

Campus	In-Person Learning Option	Distance Learning Option
LEA Mountain View	73%	27%
LEA Gilbert Elementary	67%	33%
LEA GEC	67%	33%
LEA Maricopa	57%	43%
LEA East Mesa	56%	44%

Any families that did not respond to the parent survey or who want to update their selection will need to contact their student’s campus directly to make that change. Additional information about both the in-person and the distance learning options will be forthcoming for school campuses but listed below is an overview of the important elements of each:

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### **In-Person School Option**

- First day of school will be August 17, 2020.
- Parents will be required to sign a waiver of liability upon the return to in-person school and will be asked to certify that they will provide their student with a face covering and will screen their students for symptoms of illness before bringing them to school each day.
- All staff and students will be temperature checked and assessed for symptoms each day upon arrival to school.
- Anyone displaying symptoms will be sent home and must meet specific guidelines to return to school/work per the Leading Edge Academy COVID-19 Health Policy Addendum which was board approved on July 8, 2020. (Please see COVID-19 webpage for policy)
- Face coverings (face masks and/or face shields) will be required for staff and students per Governor Ducey's Executive Order 2020-51 on 7/23/20. Exceptions will be made for students when physical distancing can occur or when students are in playground settings with distancing. In addition, students will be provided breaks where their face covering can be removed in a safe environment.
- The physical school environment will be organized to promote physical distancing. Signage will be utilized and classroom layouts will be modified to ensure that students are not facing one another and are physically distanced as much as possible.
- Lunches will be delivered and eaten in classrooms to minimize the mixing of classes or will be served in cafeterias where physical distancing can be implemented.
- Recess schedules will be developed to allow for smaller groups and to minimize the mixing of classes.
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be intensified in all schools and high touch surfaces and playground equipment will be sanitized regularly. Hand sanitizer will be readily available throughout the school campus.
- Communication protocols will be utilized to effectively communicate any possible exposure to COVID-19 by students or staff. Any person reporting a positive COVID-19 test will be required to follow the guidelines set forth in the Leading Edge Academy COVID-19 Health Policy Addendum before returning to school/work.

### **Distance Learning Option**

- First day of school will be August 17, 2020
- Students will continue to be enrolled in their brick and mortar school but will be utilizing a distance learning option.
- Students will be working daily in the learning management system called SchoolsPLP or Lincoln Learning. This platform provides a rigorous curriculum aligned to Arizona state standards and will provide students with a consistent foundational program.
- Students will also be working directly with teachers each day through the use of live virtual platforms such as Zoom or Google Meets. The live sessions will provide students with direct instruction and an opportunity to seek additional assistance as needed. Students will

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participate in a minimum of 2 live sessions each day. All live sessions will be recorded and may be viewed from the SchoolsPLP/Lincoln Learning platform at a later time.

- Student attendance is required by law just as in the brick and mortar setting and will be taken each day. In order for students to be considered present for a full school day, they must be engaged in the SchoolsPLP/Lincoln Learning platform a minimum of 240 minutes each school day. Time spent working on assignments in the platform, participating in live whole group sessions, and participating in any small group additional support will count toward the 240 minute requirement.
- Although a daily schedule will be provided by teachers for students to follow, attendance will be determined by completion of the 240 minute requirement regardless of whether or not a student adheres to the daily schedule.
- This distance learning plan will provide students and parents more support and structure than the distance learning provided during the closing of schools in the spring 2020 while also providing them with the flexibility needed in a learning at home model.

Additional information can be found on the Leading Edge Academy webpage under the COVID-19 updates or click the link below.

<https://leadingedgeacademy.com/fall-return-to-school-plan/>

Thank you for your continued support of Leading Edge Academy and we look forward to a great school year.