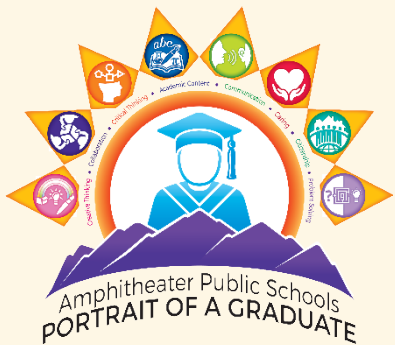




February 8, 2022

Superintendent's Report





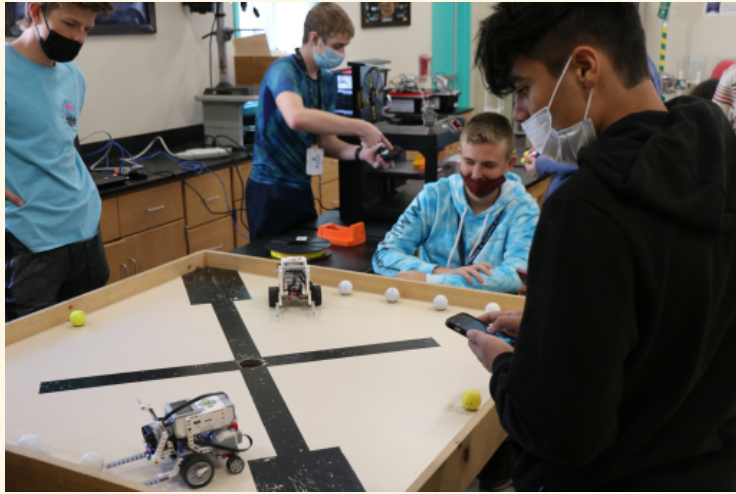
Around the Schools



Cross Middle School students held a Chinese New Year parade on Feb. 1. The colorful costumes look fantastic.



Around the Schools



Eighth-graders from around the District got to visit Ironwood Ridge (top left), Canyon del Oro (bottom left), and Amphitheater High School (above) to get a feel for what high school will be like and some of the opportunities they will have next year. Thanks to all who made this wonderful experience possible – the staff, teachers and high school students who made next year's freshman class feel welcome!



Around the Schools



First-grade scholars at Prince Elementary are exploring light. After conducting experiments, they determined whether the light and the given material represented translucent light, opaque light or reflecting light.



Copper Creek Elementary School held an awards assembly today to honor the students and staff who demonstrate it's Cool to be Kind!



Thank You



Last week, the Oro Valley Cup Golf Tournament brought students and staff from all three of our high schools together with community members to raise money for Project Grad. Thanks to all of the golfers, sponsors and volunteers for their support!



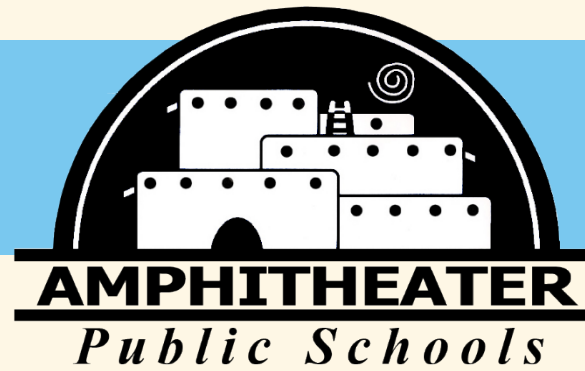
Thank You



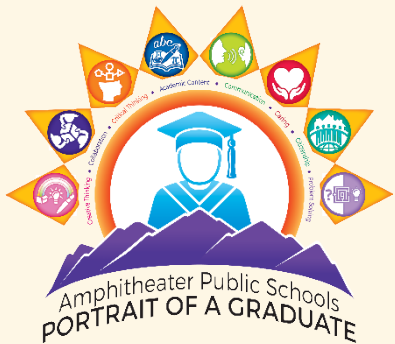
The Amphi Foundation provides our schools with gift cards that teachers can use to help pay for science materials. This week, gift cards helped make it possible for first-graders to dissect owl pellets to learn more about the creatures and their diets.



Thank you once again to the Amphi Foundation and volunteers who make the Shoes to Smiles program such an incredible experience for our students. During this trip, the Foundation purchased more than 100 shoes for students from several of our schools. Students also got socks and goodie bags.



The Aggregate Expenditure Limit; Deadline Approaches





The Aggregate Spending Limit (AEL)

- In 1980, Arizona voters passed a measure that limits how much K-12 schools can *spend* in a school year.
- This “aggregate expenditure limit”, applies to the total amount that all* K-12 schools are spending *as a whole* each year.
- While the issue is not entirely clear, the prevailing thought is that this limit does not apply to charter schools.



The AEL – Important Facts

- The cap fluctuates each year depending on school enrollment in the state (based on the previous year) and inflation.
- Most school funds are counted towards the limit. However, there are some exceptions, including federal COVID relief funding (ESSER), other federal grants, and budget overrides.



The AEL Crisis – Why Now?

- Proposition 301 (the sales tax for education), was a referendum passed by voters in 2000, expired in 2020. The proposition expressly excluded its funding from the AEL, but the Legislature did not (could not) include a similar exemption in 2018, when it extended the 301 funding mechanism. So, the extended “Prop 301” funds are now subject to the AEL.
- In addition, over the past few years, the state has been restoring, bit by bit, school funding for capital items, which was cut by 90% during the Great Recession. Those restored funds are now also falling under the AEL’s constraints.
- Most notably, however, AEL has been triggered by the decline in student enrollment last year (2020-21) due to the COVID pandemic. (Decreases in school enrollment last year mean a lower spending limit this year, even though most of students showed back up in the classroom for the 2021-22 school year).



Can it be fixed?

- Yes.
- The legislature has the ability to permit schools to exceed the aggregate expenditure limit for one year at a time. This requires a two-thirds “super-majority” vote and signature by the Governor – BY FEBRUARY 28.
- The legislature has done this a couple of times in the past, again mostly from a technical perspective.
- Action is needed this legislative session. BUT NO BILL TO ADDRESS IT HAS YET TO BE HEARD IN ANY COMMITTEE.
- **Note: A waiver of the AEL would not give schools any new money. It is not a budget increase in that sense. It only *authorizes* districts to spend the existing budget funds which the Legislature and Governor already approved and allocated for the current fiscal year.**



Is this really a crisis?

- The majority of a school district budget is spent on personnel costs (typically around 85-90%).
- Thus, it is impossible to avoid layoffs, cuts to programs or services, or worse if these cuts have to be enacted.
- There would also be extraordinary impact to our state economy – 16% of spending and wages for a huge part of our state population suddenly gone.
- A loss of \$1.2 billion to our state's economy; a loss of \$150 million to our local economy.



What would this mean for us?

- About a 16-17% cut in our district budget: \$14,467,117.
- Dramatic loss of programs and services, significant job cuts, or reductions in pay for employees.
- Would almost certainly cement Arizona's position as the "laughing stock" in education nationally – after decades of trying to keep up and catch up with the rest of the country, this would propel us backwards by decades worth of funding.



So...*HOW* do we fix this?

- Our state constitution requires the spending cap issue be resolved by the Legislature no later than March 1, 2022.
- Longer term: we need a conversation about why we have a spending limit, who benefits, what should be included, and -- most importantly -- whether an education spending limit from a 42 year old formula allows Arizona to meet the goals we have for our children and their education, and our future as a state.



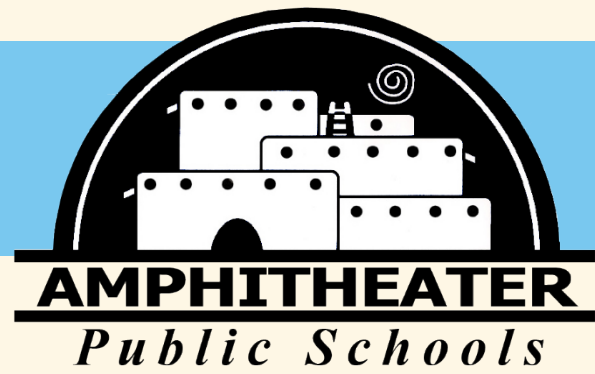
What can *YOU* do?

- This is the most consequential issue facing K-12 education this year.
- It is “existential”.
- Our legislators need to understand this issue is at the top of our minds as parents, educators and concerned citizens of Arizona.

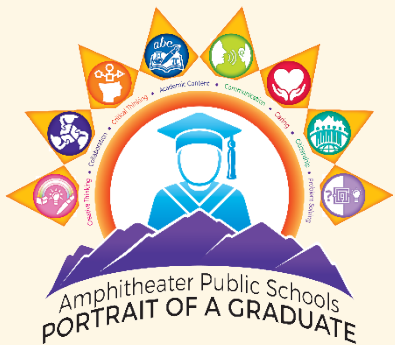


Why should lawmakers override the AEL?

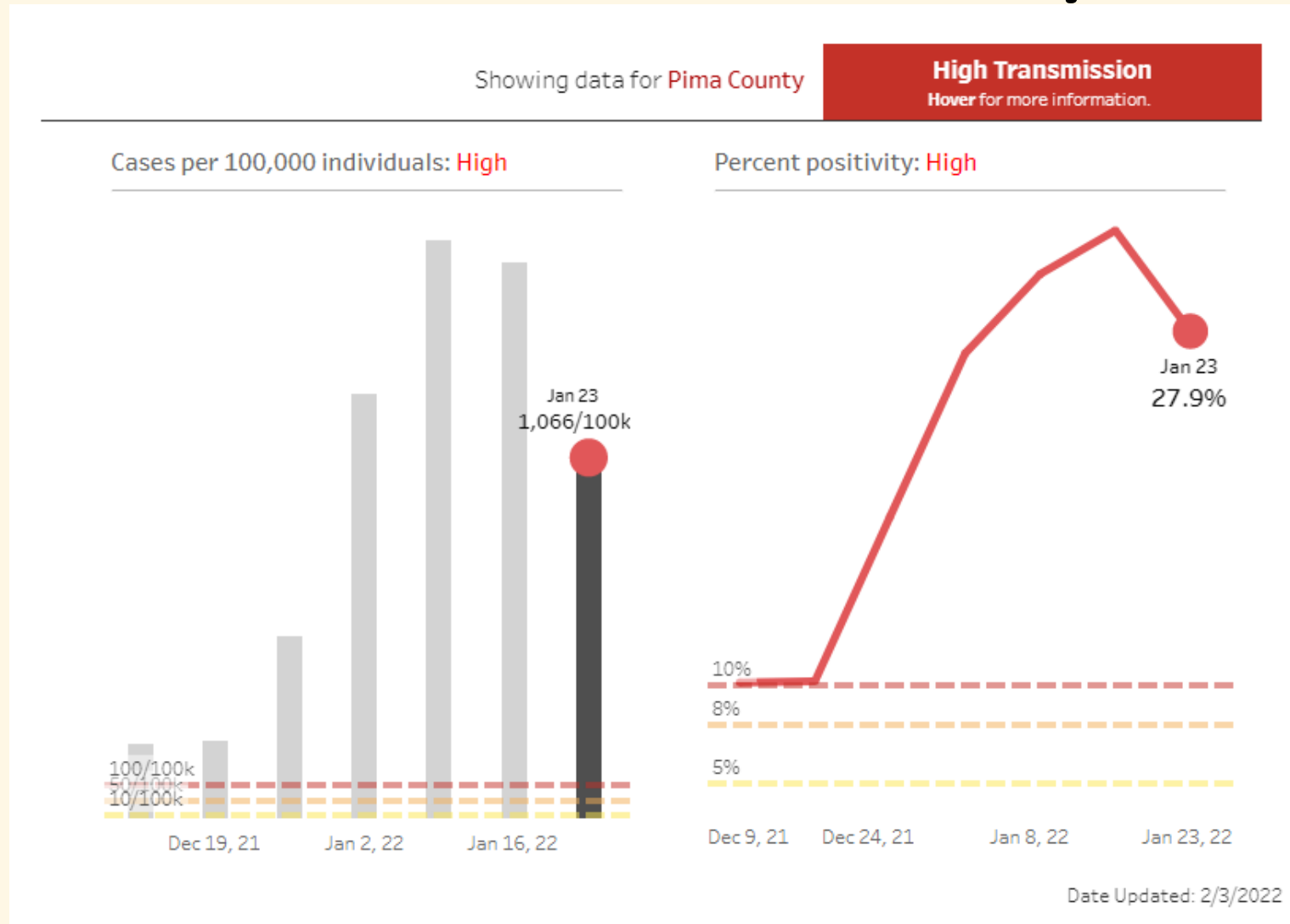
- Arizona is in the best economic position it has been in in over a decade. All the state's progress in restoring, even exceeding, pre-recession funding for schools would be lost.
- This will result in the largest cut to education in any single year.
- It will severely harm the Arizona economy and the education of our children.
- Our children have been through enough in the last two years. For schools to be precluded from simply using the money that has already been appropriated to them seems the worst kind of political gaming in education imaginable.
- Every district will lose an average of \$1400.00 per student. The cut is equivalent to 45 days of instruction.
- This would be devastating to academic recovery and growth following the pandemic.



A Pandemic Update

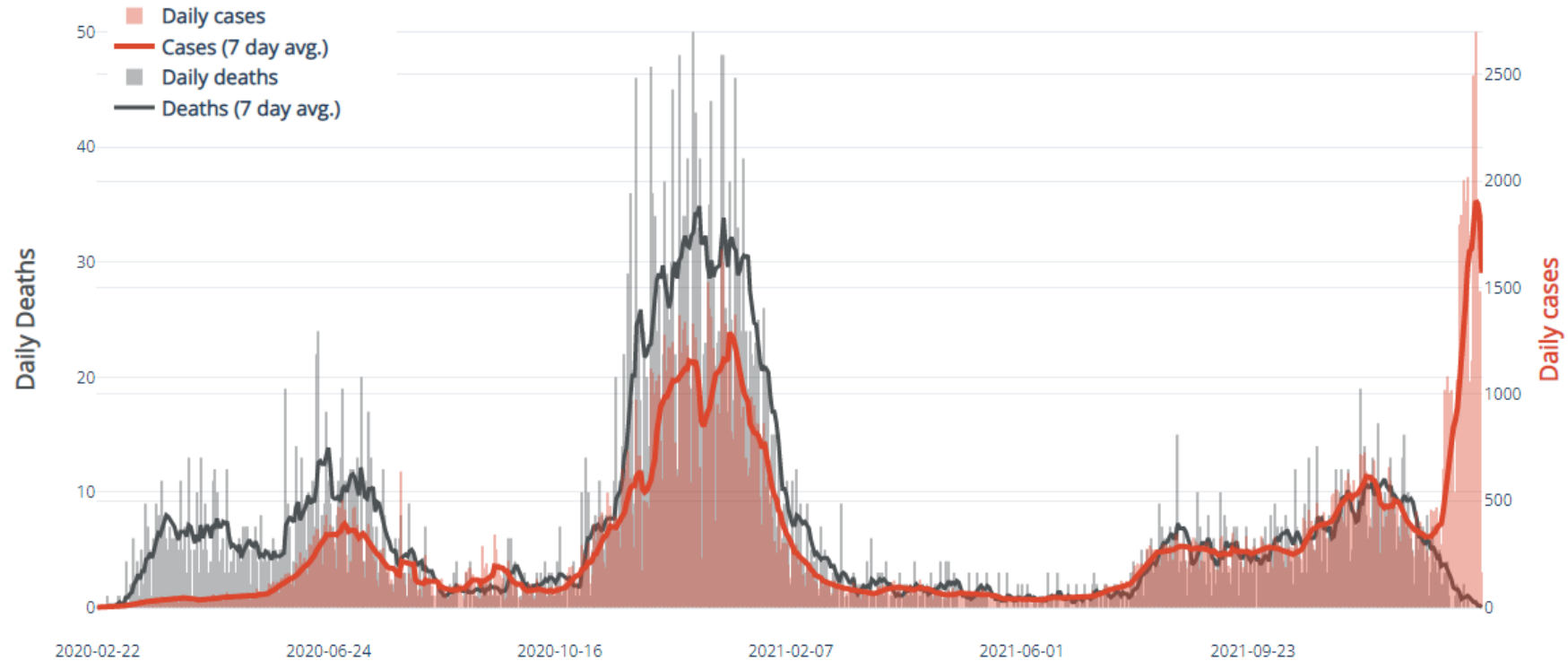


The 2 Key Indicators: Cases per 100K and Percent Positivity in Tests



Long Term Data

Cases and Deaths



 **TOTAL CASES**
200,095

 **TOTAL DEATHS**
3,345

FEMALE CASES
52.12 %

MALE CASES
46.74 %

<5 YEARS 2.15 %	05-19 YEARS 17.03 %	20-44 YEARS 44.11 %	45-54 YEARS 13.04 %	55-64 YEARS 11.07 %	65+ YEARS 12.40 %
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The Pima County Metric Charts – Last meeting and Now

COVID IN THE COUNTY

Pima County is on **Red Alert** for high transmission rate of COVID-19



HIGH RISK

Pima County's case rate is 1,658 per 100,000—more than 16 times the CDC threshold for high transmission of 100 cases per 100,000. ◀ Cases increasing

Cases over two consecutive weeks (with complete reporting of cases)

Percent Positivity

COVID-19 like illness

Lab Testing Availability and Utilization

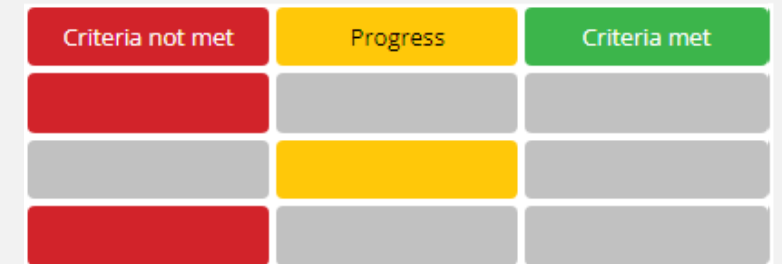
Hospital Bed Capacity

Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Emergency Responders

Timely case investigation

Testing of symptomatic contacts within 48 hours

Facilities/support for patients who can't be discharged home – Statewide



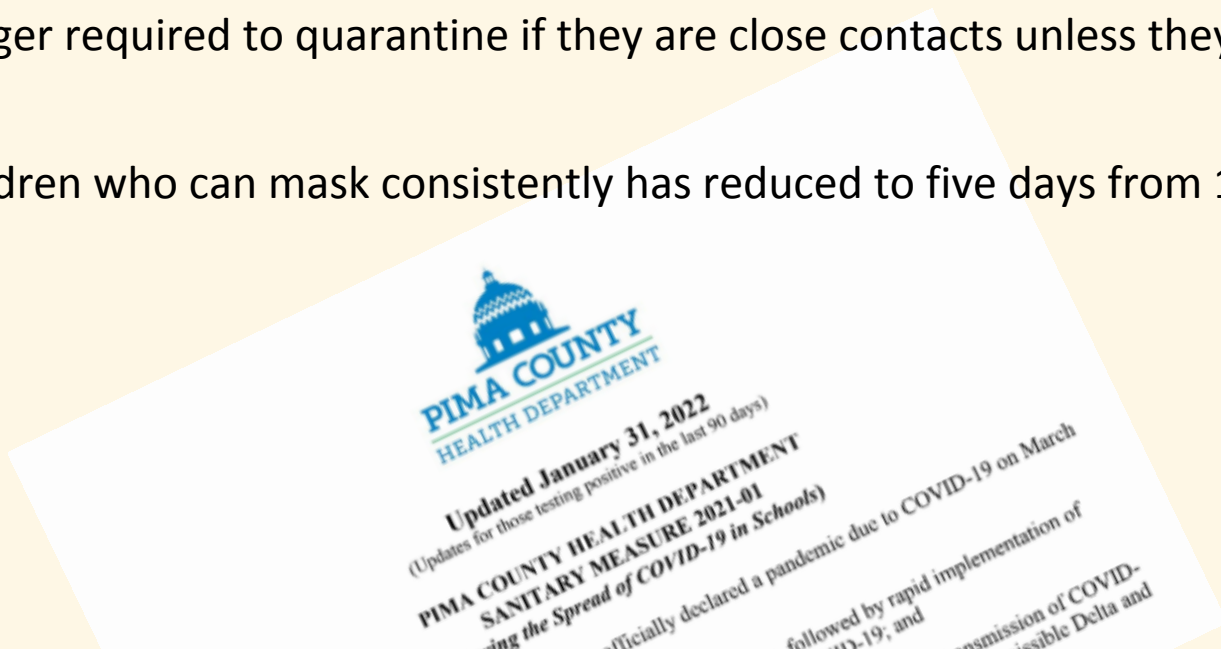


Pandemic Guideline Changes

The Pima County Health Department has made some shifts in its guidelines and has updated its Sanitary Measure that sets out requirements for schools and school districts.

Close-contact updates

- New Sanitary Order specifies that K-12 students who are close contacts with COVID-19 cases must quarantine for at least 5 days unless they meet quarantine exemption requirements.
- Individuals who have tested positive for COVID in the past 90 days are exempt from quarantine whenever they are close contacts of a current COVID case.
- Adults who are *asymptomatic* are no longer required to quarantine if they are close contacts unless they develop symptoms.
- Quarantine period for preschool-age children who can mask consistently has reduced to five days from 10.





Pandemic Guideline Changes

Other changes

Outbreaks

- The Pima County Health Department is no longer issuing outbreak notification letters, but they have provided sample letters to schools as a resource.

Testing

- While the County continues to suggest Test to Stay programs as an option, they have experienced test shortages, making it difficult to offer such programs in our schools. We have been fortunate to receive a shipment of tests, but we are not able to implement the Test to Stay program as outlined by the county due to workload issues and inconsistent availability of tests. Additionally, the latest batch of tests we received requires additional training. That is being handled in health offices.



Pandemic Guideline Changes

Other things to note

- The County is no longer performing contact-tracing for cases reported to our schools. Each school site has a designated contact-tracer who works directly with our Pandemic Mitigation and Compliance Officer.
- Omicron seems to be creating a shift in thinking and approach. When COVID first struck and before vaccines were readily available, the approach to COVID mitigation was to do everything possible to keep it out of schools and communities.
- The national rhetoric from the CDC and research scientists seems to indicate that we may be starting to enter a new phase of the pandemic, or as it may soon be, an endemic, meaning that the focus may shift to living with the pandemic rather than trying mainly to prevent it.
- The mask mandate issued by the Pima County Board of Supervisors is set to expire Feb. 28, 2022.
- District staff will continue to monitor pandemic and advisory developments to adjust our practices and policies as the pandemic and public health advice evolves. This includes revisiting current mask requirements.

Amphi District Cases -- Last Board Meeting and Currently



8

Active cases in Employees

Equates to .41% of Employees



28

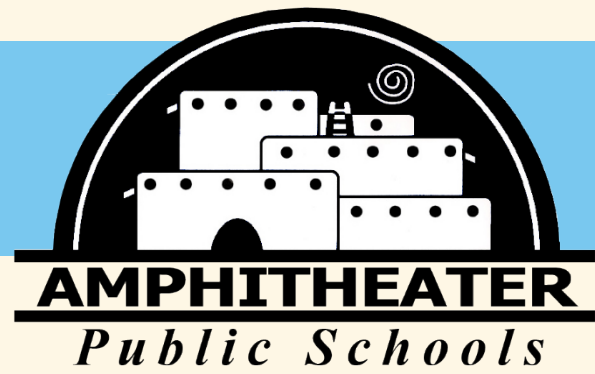
Active cases in Students

Equates to 0.23% of the Student Population



A Loss in Our Family

- Throughout the pandemic, District students, families and employees have lost their parents, spouses, partners, and other loved ones to the pandemic. We do not forget that terrible reality behind the “data”.
- Our District has also lost staff members. Very recently, we lost Tammy Barrie – a bus driver of 22 years with Amphi. Our hearts go out to her children, other family members, and her Amphi Family – all the friends and colleagues she had in the Transportation Department and all the schools she served – not to mention the children who knew and loved her.



Questions?

