

Dear Parents,

We hope you had a restful, joyful, and peaceful holiday break. We are excited to welcome our students back to campus.

Please find necessary COVID-19 updates below:

MYHS (MIDDLE YEARS / HIGH SCHOOL)

We have had multiple positive cases of COVID-19 in our MYHS community over the holiday break. To ensure the health and safety of our students and families, we are planning to begin the semester online for the first two weeks.

- Teacher planning days will be Monday, January 4 and Tuesday, January 5
- Students will begin the semester online on Wednesday, January 6
- At this time, we plan to return to MYHS in-person instruction on Tuesday, January 19

RETURNING TO CAMPUS IN JANUARY

To help us to stay open with in-person learning, and to minimize the possibility of a COVID-19 outbreak at the school in January, we are making a heartfelt appeal to families for their return from winter break.

If you or your immediate family will be interacting with anyone outside of your current group of contacts (your usual, daily “bubble”) during winter break, please consider staying home and utilizing the online learning option for the first 1 – 2 weeks after holiday break.

We know and understand that this may not be possible for some families. However, if you have been exposed to people outside of your bubble, and you do have the flexibility to have your student online for the first two weeks of the spring semester, please consider doing so. For those families who will be in contact with people outside of their bubbles, while it is not mandatory, we encourage you to take a COVID-19 test 5 - 7 days after contact *and* in time to receive results before returning to campus.

If you or your student know that you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you must remain in quarantine, and off campus, for 14 days after the exposure. Your student may not return to campus during this time.

Families requesting to switch to online learning may complete a [Mode of Instruction Change Form](#).

LOWER ELEMENTARY, UPPER ELEMENTARY & MYHS

Upon return to campus in January, please ensure your student has masks and/or gaiters for campus use. Over time some masks have been misplaced or damaged. January is a great time to replenish their stock with new masks.

IN CASE OF ILLNESS OR EXPOSURE

If someone in your family has been **ill with COVID-19 or may have been exposed**, please follow the guidelines below.

- Stay home
- Contact your health care provider
- Follow the Illness Policy in the [Parent Handbook](#) located on the Parent Resource Hub
- **Notify the school immediately** via our attendance line (480) 893-6516 or support@desertgardenmontessori.org.

We are working closely with the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) and we must, as a school, report all positive cases within our community.

CDC RESOURCES

The holiday season brings a greater number of potential social and travel events to our community. These factors have resulted in increased infection rates since Thanksgiving and will likely continue to do so according to the CDC and the MCDPH. The links below can help families aid in decision making as you both enjoy your break and make travel or stay at home decisions.

[Holiday Travel](#)
[Celebrating Winter Holidays](#)

PHONE NUMBERS & SUPPORT

- **Main Office / Front Desk (live attendant):** (480) 496-9833
- **Attendance Line (24/7 voicemail):** (480) 893-6516
- **Email:** support@desertgardenmontessori.org

Happy New Year,



Shetal Walters
Executive Director