

Strategic Plan for 2020-2025

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An Integrated Approach to Decrease Risky Behaviors and Promote Healthy Behaviors to Arizona Public School Students

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Introduction

Arizona (AZ) is located in the southwest region of the United States of America and shares a border with Mexico (as seen in Image 1). The U.S. Census lists Arizona as the fifth highest (a 1.6% increase) in state population growth in the nation from July 1, 2016 to July 1, 2017 (8). Even with this increase in population, Arizona is still the 14th largest state by population standards with 7,405,743 citizens (8).

Arizona's population increase mainly came from the over 79,000 people that moved into the state, not an increase in babies being born. One out of every five of those over 79,000 new residents traveled from another country to settle in Arizona (8). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 83.1% of the overall AZ population identifies as White alone, and 31.4% identifies as LatinX alone (11). KIDS COUNT Data Center analyses the raw data collected from the population division of the U.S. Census Bureau (9), into specified groups for comparison. Of Arizona's total population 27% of adults identify as LatinX and 60% identify as White. However, the child (0-17 years old) demographics' majority from White to LatinX holding 39% and 44% of the population respectfully (9). The missing gaps in the population totals are low numbers (all under 5%) in the Black, Native American, Pacific Islander/ Native Alaskan, and Asian race/ethnicity categories (9). Table 1 shows the breakdown of the LatinX, White, and Other populations into smaller age groups.

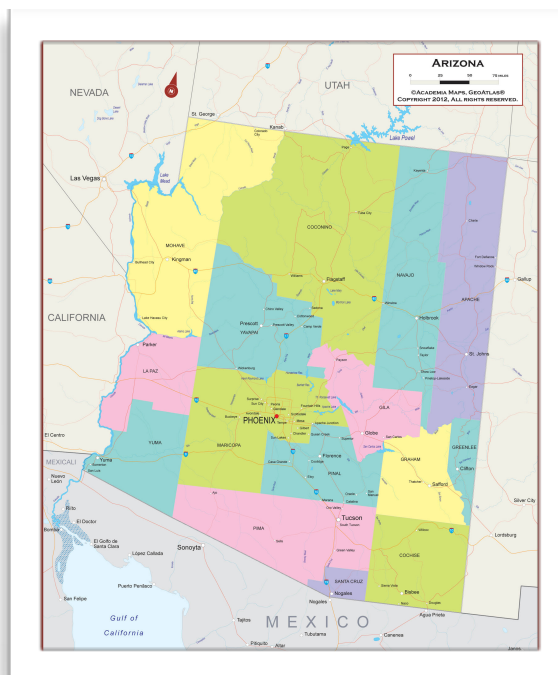


Image 1: State of Arizona

Table 1: Child Population by Race and Age Group

Age Group	LatinX	White	Other
0-4 years old	45%	38%	17%
5-11 years old	44%	39%	17%
12-17 years old	44%	41%	15%

1,112,146 and 137,438 students enrolled respectfully (4). This lends to a higher percentage of Arizona public schools having a majority of LatinX students in their student population.

This 5-year strategic plan will analyze the health status and behavior risk factors of Arizona's student population, and how to work towards decreasing the current heightened issues to create a safe, healthy, immersive, and welcoming environment.

Who We Are

The Strategic Planning Committee

Diane Douglas, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction
 Lucas J. Narducci, President, Arizona State Board of Education
 Alicia Williams, Executive Director, Arizona State Board of Education
 Janice Mak, Classroom Teacher on the Arizona State Board of Education
 Patricia Welborn, Public Member on the Arizona State Board of Education (4)
 Dr. Chris M. Christ, Director of Arizona Health Services (6)
 School Nurse
 Elementary Guidance Counselor
 Middle School Guidance Counselor
 High School Guidance Counselor
 Class of 2020 High School Student Presents - One per congressional district
 1st: Jared Sheppard
 2nd: Monica Lewis
 3rd: Clarence Hall
 4th: Edward Smith
 5th: Vincent Bergen
 6th: Emily Bennet
 7th: Carlos Martinez
 8th: Alejandra Cortez
 9th: Mallory Lakin

Partners

Arizona Department of Health Services
 Arizona Department of Education
 Alliance for a Healthier Generation
 Arizona Professional Sports Teams
 Football - Cardinals
 Baseball - Diamondbacks
 Soccer - Phoenix Rising (FC)
 Hockey - Coyotes
 Basketball - Phoenix Suns (NBA), Phoenix Mercury (WNBA)
 Collegiate - Arizona Wildcats, Arizona State Sun Devils
 University of Arizona Psychology and Public Health Capstone Students
 Arizona State University Psychology and Public Health Capstone Students
 Chapul - Arizona-based cricket flour protein bar company (5)

Background Information

Arizona is ranked the 31st healthiest state out of 50 (3). The adult population has an obesity rate of 29.5%, high school students have an obesity rate of 12.3%, and 10-17 year olds have an obesity rate of 14.2% (10). These rates place Arizona as the 20th least obese state (out of 50 and DC), in the U.S. for both adults and 10-17 year olds, and 7th least obese state (out of 39 states and DC) for high school students (10). The lower amount of obesity in the high school population is likely attributed in some part to the current policies and programs in place by the Arizona Department of Education.

Arizona Public Schools Participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs where 99.8% of AZ Public Schools are meeting and staying updated with the meal nutrition standards (2, 10). On top of this, 25% of schools participate in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program (2, 10). This program brings fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms to the schools for use in lunches and snack times. This is one way that the state Arizona utilizes their received funding for promoting healthy schools.

Since its origin in 2015, the Arizona Department of Education's comprehensive plan to improve Arizona's education system, *AZ Kids Can't Wait!*, has been updated yearly on the accomplishments of the priority proposals set years before and establishes new priority proposals for the upcoming year. *AZ Kids Can't Wait!* utilizes the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model to improve Arizona students education. Previous priority proposals include raised test scores, increased funding for teachers, expanded support for English language learners, improved attendance rates, increased support for registered health professionals in the schools, and more. *AZ Kids Can't Wait!* focuses on the environment created in the school and creating an academic space for academic success. *AZ Kids Can't Wait!* has become a great first step in supporting the Arizonans of the future (1, 2). However, it fails to aid students struggling with risky behaviors outside the classroom that lead towards negative health outcomes in the future. These can be seen below from the bi-annual 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System results listed below.

Arizona Public Schools require licensed early childhood education to have time for daily physical activity (10). This continues throughout the students' primary and secondary education. Recess is promoted for all grades from kindergarten to 12th grade, and two recess sessions are required for students in kindergarten through 5th grade (2). School recreational facilities are available for recreational use outside of the school day (2).

Eighty-six percent of adults 25 and older hold a high school degree, where only twenty-eight percent hold a bachelors degree (11). Throughout the state of Arizona, over 13,000 students are qualified for Arizona direct entry into public state universities. Of these 13,000 students, 84% are admitted without academic deficiencies (4).

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), monitors six health-related behavior categories that contribute to the leading causes of death and disabilities among

youth and adults. The goal of this bi-annual survey is to evaluate state and county wide programs effectiveness in decreasing risky behaviors in high school students to prolong a healthier adult life, and instill healthy habit practices. The major risky behaviors of concern among high school students in 2017 are:

- 19.2% of HS students rode with a driver who had been drinking
- 15.6% of HS students carried a weapon on school property
- 21.1% of HS students were in a physical fights
- 15.2% and 19.2% of HS students were bullied online/ school property
- 36.3% of HS students felt sad or hopeless (everyday for 2 weeks +, stopped activities, w/in last 12 months)
- 14.6% made a plan, 19.2% seriously considered attempting, and 11.3% attempted suicide
- 29.9% ever tried cigarette smoking, 51.0% ever used an electronic vapor (16.1% currently used in past 30 days)
- 54.9% of HS student smokers did not try to quit smoking at all for the 12 months before the survey & currently smoke
- 33.1% of HS students currently drink alcohol, 38.8% drink alcohol given to them by someone else
- 15.4% of HS students used prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription
- 34.0% of HS students have ever had sexual intercourse, 47.4% did not use a condom, 73.9% did not use birth control
- 22.5% of HS students do not drink milk
- 17.2% did not eat breakfast during the 7 days before the survey, 65.2% did not eat breakfast all 7 days during the 7 days before the survey
- 53.7% , 75.5% were not physically activity for at least 60 minutes a day per 5, 7 days
- 53.6% of HS students did not go physical education on one or more days in an average school week
- 15.9% overweight, 12.3% obese, but 31.9% described themselves as slightly or very overweight

The summary of risky behaviors that are effecting high school students the most are bullying (anger management and mental health), suicide consideration, tobacco/ alcohol/drug consumption, sexual health, physical activity and physical education, and morning nutritional habits (7).

Summary of Proposed Work

Mindfulness

From the 2017 high school student Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS), the highest rates of concern all came from a place of only thinking about the current moment and had high levels of negative behavioral risk factors. To combat this, utilizing mindfulness in different ways can decrease these numbers in: health education and life skills, physical activity and education, family, school, and community partnerships, staff wellness, safe environment, emotional and social wellbeing, health services, and nutrition. The hope of this intervention campaign is to not increase teacher workload by integrating techniques into already established course work. The main evaluation tool for the priority areas will be the bi-annual YRBSS. Mindfulness will be utilized in all aspects on risky behavior

Mission

Arizona Public Schools will create a safe, healthy, opening, and mindful environment for students and staff to encourage academic and personal growth.

Vision

Arizona's *Integrated Approach to Decrease Risky Behaviors and Promote Healthy Behaviors to Arizona Public School Students* fosters a community for academic success and personal emotional and physical wellbeing.

Core Values

These core values will be utilized throughout the strategic plan process and community in order to aid the students in increasing their sense of self and reducing the targeted areas for the 2017 high school student YRBSS listed above in the background information section and below in the priority areas section.

Accountability

Teachers, parents, and administrators will be held accountable for each other and the students in working towards a healthier, safer, and more mindful student environment. Yearly mindfulness workshops will be included into teacher professional development days in the academic calendar.

Wellbeing

The overall wellbeing of the students is the core reason for this integrated plan.

Innovation

Arizona will be taking a new approach to decreasing risky behaviors in public school students by focusing on outside of school negative factors that decrease the students overall wellbeing and not obvious school health issues.

Determination

It is Arizona's mission to provide its residents with all of the tools to have the successful and meaningful academic and adult life of their choosing.

Priority Areas and Integrated Approach Plan

Behaviors to improve in Arizona students through mindfulness and integrated course work.

Bullying - Anger Management

Goal: Decrease the overall occurrences of bullying through understanding bullying in different contexts in Social Studies and English classes. This also includes decreasing anger in students to decrease the amount of weapons brought to school and physical fights that occur during and outside of school.

Bullying and anger issues are apparent throughout historical and literary references. By talking about these aspects through the curriculum already taught, there will be little change or strain on the teachers. Anger management can be observed through a student's behavior and through personal journal reflections about the books or lessons taught in class. The understanding of the rights and wrongs of bullying and how to overcome bullying can be analyzed through the students understanding of the material. An example of this would be racism throughout American history, or how people from different districts treat and react to each other in the *Hunger Games* franchise.

Teachers will be able to evaluate their students understanding of the priority area and the importance of decreasing the related risky behaviors through their understanding of the material in academic and personal responses on the curriculum topic.

Suicide Consideration - Mental Health and Sense of Self

Goal: Decrease rates of suicide occurrence and consideration in students, increase students personal sense of self and self image, and decrease their sense of hopelessness through mindfulness journaling in English classes and course work. These risky behaviors have negative effects on a person's mental health.

The idea of journaling will be introduced in fourth grades as a way to start and end students' school days with a few words or sentences. This will progress through middle school with the journals remaining in the classrooms until 7th grade. In 7th grade students can start bringing home their journals. Journaling will be emphasized in English and Reading classes. By high school, journaling is no longer an assignment but if facilitated into all aspects of the school day through personal reflections of the material learned.

These tactics will engage students into understanding their sense of self worth, and learn different aspects of their mental health. This will also decrease their sense of hopelessness, considerations of suicide, or at the least be a notification for teachers to

reach out to the student(s). This can be measured through percentage of student participation in school related activities (e.g. art club, debate team, athletics).

Sexual Health

Goal: Decrease the rates of unsafe sex occurrence through increased open conversations in science and health classes, and conversations with University students.

Sex Education is hard to understand and speak up in class towards a teacher or if one's significant other happens to be in the room. In partnership with Arizona State University and the University of Arizona public health capstone students, open conversations about safe sex, sexual orientation, and more can be conducted freely. These conversations take the ideal of asking an older sibling about sex, and starting a healthy conversation with people around the students age (the college students), and have/are experiencing the same situations. Free condoms will be left in a container outside of the nurses office to decrease STI and unwanted pregnancy prevalence.

Tobacco/Alcohol/Drug Use

Goal: Decrease the rates of drug related risky behaviors including tobacco and electronic vapor use, alcohol consumption and driving with someone under the influence, and wrongful use of prescribed pain medications, through science classes.

Physical Activity and Education

Goal: Establish a policy for mandated occupancy of 2-3 days of physical education throughout the school week on a rotating schedule to establish increases in physical activity and physical education amount students.

An example how this could be portrayed is having a six-day rotation schedule where half of school students will have required physical education on even days, and the other half on odd days. Physical activity is also promoted to be brought into the classroom. Examples include walking to a new location for class that day, having physical activity breaks in class, or teachers assigning assignments that encourage physical activity/movement.

Morning Nutritional Habits

Goal: Work with community partners to donate protein bars for student consumption during homeroom to decrease the rates of students not consuming breakfast during the school week, and establish a routine of morning nutritional habits for post-high school years.

Chapul (5) will be the original protein bar community partner/ donator. Homerooms will have baskets with one bar per student on the teachers' desks at the beginning of the school day. The teachers will stack up on their bars from the teacher or department lounge/storage area every morning. Students have the option to take the bar or not. Teachers are allowed to nibble on breakfast bars in homeroom to promote protein bar consumption and invite their students to join.

Community Integration

Goal: Establish a sense of community and understanding by establishing a school policy to begin Spanish classes to be taught as a second language in second grade, and maintained throughout twelfth grade. In high school, students will have the option to add a foreign language (not Spanish or English) to their course work.

Arizona is one of the fastest growing states in the nation, and is having a population shift in majority and minority races/ethnicities. With all students becoming proficient in both Spanish and English opens up more opportunities for them after high school, and eliminates the language barrier divide between students, parents, and teachers.

Evaluation of Goals

By 2025, there will be a 5-10% decrease in each of the highlighted statistics in the bi-annual Youth Risky Behavior Surveillance Survey, with an 1-2% decrease in each YRBSS release.

By 2021, 30% of Arizona schools will have integrated “anti-bullying lessons” into their current curricula.

By 2021, journaling in fourth grade will be integrated into 30% of fourth grade classrooms.

By 2025, journaling will become a constant throughout the K-12 system in 50% of Arizona public and charter schools.

By 2025, there will be a 20% increase in overall high school student participation in school clubs, athletic teams, and programs for each Arizona high school.

By 2023, 60% of Arizona high schools will have at least one sex education class per term with university capstone students.

By 2025, 40% of Arizona high schools will have bi-monthly sex education classes with university capstone students.

By 2050, 30% of Arizona public university public health departments will have capstone students leading the sex education classes.

By 2022, 40% of Arizona school districts will have created their policies for drug use on campus and at school sponsored events.

By 2025, 70% of Arizona middle and high schools will have integrated tobacco, alcohol, and pain medication use into a minimum of two lectures a month in middle school and four lectures a month in high schools.

By 2021, 50% of Arizona schools will have created their own policies on required physical education during school.

By 2025, 40% of Arizona teachers will have documented monthly physical activity occurrences in their classroom.

By 2023, 20% of Arizona school districts will have free protein bars available for each student in homeroom from middle school through twelfth grade.

By 2025, 80% of Arizona high schools will have free protein bars available for each student in homeroom.

By 2030, 5 more protein bar companies will be community partners (preferably Arizona-based).

By 2025, 50% of Arizona public and charter schools will have Spanish language classes taught in second grade classes and up.

By 2021, 10% of Arizona public and charter schools will have Spanish language classes taught in second grade classes and up.

By 2050, 80% of Arizona high school graduates will be fluent (spoken and written) in Spanish and English.

By 2025, 30% of all Arizona teachers will be proficient in speaking English and Spanish.

By 2050, 90% of all Arizona teachers will be fluent in speaking and writing in English and Spanish.

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