

**WEEK 2**

Aug 15-21



# **AWAKEN** **A GENERATION**

*TO LIFE. TO PURPOSE. TO PASSION.*

**AUG 8-28, 2020**

21 DAYS  OF PRAYER  
for Arizona Schools and Universities

## **Statewide School Prayer Initiative**

Use this guide on your own or with friends and family during our focus week (August 8-28), and throughout the year. We encourage you to prayer-drive or prayer-walk your community as often as possible.



BRIDGEBUILDERS INTERNATIONAL  
Leadership Network

*Awaken a Generation:  
21 Days of Prayer for Arizona Schools and Universities  
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# WEEK 2: STUDENT LIFE

## Excelling in Studies and Growing in Godly Character

### Day 8 | ACADEMICS

*Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold,  
for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her. . .  
I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.  
With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. . .  
(Proverbs 8:10-12; 17-18, NIV)*

Academics have certainly taken an abrupt turn during these unprecedented times. Today, the majority of students across our country are participating in “virtual learning” instead of an in-person education. Things look much different than they did merely a year ago. While we are grateful for the gift of technology, learning through a device has drastically impacted academics for our youth. Not only are they missing crucial in-person instruction, but they are missing out on testing skills, social dynamics, lessons in teamwork, important extracurriculars, and so much more.

Furthermore, for many, there is a sense of fear surrounding school. *Is it dangerous to attend? Will I get sick? Should I keep my child home full time (even when some in-person instruction is offered)?* A privilege that was once celebrated has started to feel dangerous, and many families draw further and further inward. As we watch the entire face of education change in front of our very eyes, we must cry out for God’s Spirit to be present in the hallways, classrooms and homes—protecting teachers, parents and students, calming anxious nerves, filling hearts that feel isolated and alone, being close to the weary. Now, more than ever, we need God’s divine sense of peace, as well as His protection and guidance for teachers, students, families, and leaders.

#### Let’s Pray:

Father, thank You for every step of progress in our schools and for those who work tirelessly towards improving them.

- ◆ We pray Proverbs 8:1-21 over our students. God, make their time in the classroom (or virtual classroom) count—may You compound their time and provide supernatural wisdom through these unprecedented times.
- ◆ We pray for every student in our public, private, and home schools, and in our universities. We ask that You would pour out a love of learning and a hunger for knowledge, and ignite their drive for academic success. Give them a deep desire to seek godly wisdom and its blessings. Let

them value their education and be so motivated that they would let nothing stand in their way of graduating! May they be lifelong learners who excel in their respective fields.

- ◆ We pray that teachers would be able to strike a fine balance between in-person instruction and virtual learning. We pray You would anoint them with wisdom as they navigate these new teaching conditions as outlined by the CDC. We pray for health and renewed energy and passion. We pray against all fear and anxiety and declare it has no place in our classrooms.
- ◆ We ask for fresh, innovative solutions *from heaven* at both the state and local level in how to raise our graduation rates. Please do an undeniable miracle: turn Arizona into a state that leads the way for the nation. May we educate and equip our students in a way that empowers them to thrive!

Amen!

## Day 9 | TRUTH AND EXCELLENCE IN CURRICULA

*Be careful not to let anyone rob you of this faith through a shallow and misleading philosophy. Such a person follows human traditions and the world's way of doing things rather than following Christ.*  
(Colossians 2:8, GOD'S WORD)

*"The education of youth should be watched with the most scrupulous attention. . . [It] lays the foundations on which both law and gospel rest for success."*  
—Noah Webster, well-known American educator

Research shows that now, more than ever, moral convictions are waning in today's society. Many, if not most, textbooks have been drastically revised to present a new view of American and world history, and the history of humanity. Science is presented as a system of knowledge that excludes God. Fewer and fewer Americans believe in a clear and distinct right or wrong, and often our public schools are reinforcing these new norms as "progressive" and "just." God's morality is rapidly eroding throughout our country, and the education system helps lay the foundation for a child's worldview. We must pray!

Through sex education classes, children as young as elementary-aged are being taught about marriage, identity, and sexuality "norms" that are outside of God's biblical plan for us. As our country leans more and more into moral relativism, students are learning in schools that morality is up for them to decide. May our Christian students stand firm in their convictions, and may they be a light to those who do not believe, pointing them to God's righteousness.

### Let's Pray:

Lord, shine Your light upon our schools and drive out all darkness, spiritual blindness, perversion of truth, and hostility toward You and Your truth, we pray.



- ◆ We pray that all attempts to use curricula in our schools as a way to disciple our young people in humanism, moral relativism, and other godless ideologies would be stopped. We pray that our education system would honor You. We ask You to raise up godly men and women to be on textbook selection committees for every school district in Arizona. We ask for teachers and school boards to select curriculum that preserves our godly heritage as a nation.
- ◆ Father, we ask that You lead and guide those in positions of decision-making in our schools to set fair policies that protect the rights of our teachers and students to openly present their biblical points of view in an open, fair and non-threatening manner.
- ◆ Lord Jesus, when teachers and students are confronted with subject matter that goes against their biblical worldview, we call upon You to give them the right words to speak with wisdom, strength and gentleness.
- ◆ Raise up watchmen and gatekeepers for truth and excellence in our schools who would guard over what is taught to our young people!

Amen.

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## Day 10 | LIFE-GIVING CULTURE

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*For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.  
(Colossians 1:13, NIV).*

*Death has been swallowed up in victory. "Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?"  
(1 Corinthians 15:54-55, NIV)*

*I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for; they will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal LIFE, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.  
(John 10:9-10, MSG)*

Today's prayer focus is on driving back the cultural influences that promote violence and glorify death, replacing them with the life-giving power of God's Spirit and Truth.

Tragically, youth culture has become poisoned with a death obsession, to where death has become an idol for many. Death symbolism (skulls, dripping blood, "dead" eyes, black clothing, corpses, zombies, the grim reaper, etc.) are common themes in TV shows, games, videos, clothing, music, and graphics marketed to youth.

There is an alarming increase in youth interested in vampirism. Incorporating elements of goth subculture and sadomasochism, the vampire subculture ranges from fans who enjoy vampire-themed entertainment and dress to role players in live-action games.



In addition to pop culture glorification of death and violence, this generation is traumatized by real-world threats or encounters with death: the brutality of the drug cartels in our region, gang violence, school shootings, suicides, and more.

We must pray for the radiance of God's love and peace to live within the hearts and minds of today's youth. We pray that they will know that darkness does not come from God. We declare the Word over our students that Jesus offers them an abundant and full life—filled with peace and joy!

## Let's Pray:

Jesus, You are the Way, the Truth and the Life, offering us eternal LIFE, far better than we ever dreamed of! You are the Light of the world. Even in the deepest darkness, *"the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."* (John 1:5).

- ◆ We come into agreement with your Word that You are removing the veil of death and deception and that the power of this death obsession is broken, according to Isaiah 25:7!
- ◆ We declare that delusion, rebellion and the strong anti-Christian mindset associated with this culture of death is removed from the youth of Arizona. Untangle the web of confusion, manipulation, and deception, and replace it with the clear truth of the gospel.
- ◆ We take authority over the spirits of discouragement, defeat, death, and suicide, and declare, in Jesus' name, that they have no place in the lives of our students. In Jesus' name, we break the power of this self-inflicted curse over those who fully expect to die at an early age! We ask that You would counter this lie with the TRUTH about the abundant life You offer us and that every student would find eternal life this year.
- ◆ For those who are oppressed by the spirit of death, ensnared in the occult or witchcraft, we speak freedom, deliverance, and life, in the name of Jesus.

In the powerful name and authority of Jesus we pray, Amen.

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## Day 11 | PHYSICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

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*Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health,  
just as your soul prospers.  
(3 John 1:2, NASB)*

*Your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit . . . honor God with your bodies.  
(1 Corinthians 6:19-20, NIV)*

The youth of our nation face a health crisis of epic proportions, including things like alcohol and drug abuse, sex and STDs, obesity, and depression. Marijuana use is ever increasing; some states are



legalizing marijuana and even though it is still illegal under the age of 21, commercial enterprises are targeting youth in their marketing efforts.

Today's children face threats of violence never before seen in this country. Shootings—even the unthinkable horror of school shootings—riots, beatings, and more fill our news headlines, bringing fear and apprehension to many.

On top of this, every student across the nation is currently living through a global pandemic. This raises myriad health concerns, ranging from physical, mental, and emotional. Jesus, make a way!

### Let's Pray:

Father, we pray for the physical health, well-being, and safety of all our students.

- ◆ We ask that as the Divine Physician, You would protect our students, heal the ones battling sickness or disease, and release them from any and all forms of addiction in Jesus' name!
- ◆ We ask that families would be equipped to disciple youth in a godly way, imparting practical wisdom that leads to a healthy lifestyle. Transform the health of entire households, starting with the parents and filtering down to the students! Please inspire a real change in eating and exercise habits and help our students be nourished with wholesome food.
- ◆ We declare, in Jesus Name, that our campuses are safe from illnesses, and specifically the COVID-19 virus. We pray that the pandemic would not affect or influence their health and safety. We ask You to set up a hedge of protection in the spiritual realm that would result in havens of safety and health for the students in our state.
- ◆ We pray for an end to the pervasive drug culture in our schools. Please protect our children and young people from getting involved in gangs, drugs, sex, and other destructive activities.
- ◆ God, we also pray You would keep our school campuses safe from anyone with ill intent who would seek to bring harm through shooting or other forms of terror and violence. Equip every school with frontline workers who would have eyes out for "wolves" who would in any way harm the students.

We pray all this in Jesus' name, Amen.

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## Day 12 | EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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*. . . casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*  
(1 Peter 5:7, ESV)

*Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health  
and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.*  
(3 John 1:2, NIV)





Our students have already been in isolation for months leading into this school year. They've not seen their friends, and some have been with families who are less than functional or ideal in their lifestyles and relationships.

According to the National Institutes of Health, nearly one of three of all adolescents ages 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder, and these numbers have been rising steadily. These statistics, combined with the rate of hospital admissions for suicidal teenagers also doubling over the past decade, are cause for grave concern.

While there are a number of factors that are likely contributing to student anxiety, three stand out as particularly noteworthy:

1. **A world that feels scary and threatening.** The news has been filled with non-stop threats of pandemic, death, race riots, terrorism, shootings, and the like. Our students from youngest to oldest have been exposed to widespread fear and threats like no other generation before them.
2. **The stress of their new normal.** Everything about school will be different this year. Their whole routine/structure has been disrupted. Everything they are used to that normally brings them comfort and stability at school will be affected. Social distancing. Masks. Going to school in shifts (possibly not with their friends). Little to no social and extra-curricular activities. In some places, no recess or lunch rooms. Their social interactions and ability to move freely will likely be greatly restricted.
3. **The negative effects of social media.** Today's children and teens are connected constantly to social media and being bombarded by all kinds of negative messaging. The resulting anxiety has been undeniable. While it is a great way to communicate through distance, take attractive photos, and stay in touch with loved ones, its abuse is rampant. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat are cesspools of abuse, bullying, comparison, provocation, and darkness. Studies show that social media does more harm than good—it's not good for anyone's mental or emotional health. It lowers self-esteem, encourages comparison, and paints an unrealistic picture of reality. It causes adolescents to feel that they are never enough and that they need to buy more, do more, or act differently in order to be accepted. This is a lie.

We must pray against all the ways social media tells our youth that they are not good enough. Our children must know their worth is unquestionable, despite the messages they are receiving from social media. We must pray against the ways these platforms have destroyed their self-esteem, and ask that God renews their mental and emotional well-being with His divine presence in their lives.

## Let's Pray:

Lord, we pray for the emotional and mental well-being of our students, knowing that every day they face pressures from others, as well as from what they see online, in the news, or on their smart phone.

- ◆ We ask that any messages that inspire fear or lower their self-esteem and their self-worth be replaced with Your unceasing acceptance of them and love for them. May they always know that their worth is unchanging! They are special, with an original design and plan for their life!



- ◆ Give them peace and reassurance in the face of their new normal at school or home. Help them, and their teachers, to find new ways to interact, learn, and grow within the current safety guidelines. We break the power of fear and anxiety over them, in Jesus' name.
- ◆ We pray against all the ways social media can be a toxic weapon in the lives of our children and teens. We pray against the spirits of comparison, jealousy, and greed that have robbed them of their youth and innocence. We pray against the ways cyber bullying and mean-spirited online interactions have allowed fear, inadequacy, isolation, and rejection to fester.
- ◆ We declare in Jesus' name that the mental and emotional well-being of our students will not be defined by what others say about them, nor will it be defined by what they think of themselves! We declare contentment, confidence, self-love, generosity, kindness, and joy over the lives of today's youth. We ask that students would have the boldness to step away from social media when they know it is harmful, even when it is not the popular choice to do so.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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## Day 13 | STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

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*Run as fast as you can from all the ambitions and lusts of youth;  
and chase after all that is pure. Whatever builds up your faith and deepens your love  
must become your holy pursuit. And live in peace with all those  
who worship our Lord Jesus with pure hearts.  
(2 Timothy 2:22, TPT)*

*Love overlooks the mistakes of others,  
but dwelling on the failures of others devastates friendships.  
(Proverbs 17:9, TPT)*

*Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."  
(1 Corinthians 15:33, NIV)*

School relationships can be among the most life-giving or the most damaging in a person's life. From romantic relationships to hierarchical "pecking orders" to racial dynamics and beyond, there is great opportunity for learning—and great opportunity for abuse.

The kinds of friends a person chooses in school can set the course for the rest of their life. It is said that a person actually becomes like the three to five people they spend the most time with. Choosing friend groups is a huge part of what will make or break student success and relationships.

Because teachers and support staff cannot be everywhere and monitor everyone, students are often on their own to navigate these areas of socializing in schools. We can ask God to protect students from damaging relationships. We can pray for their minds to be open to God's truths about friendship, love,



and marriage, and the value of every human life. We can pray they learn to seek understanding and unity with others who may be different from us, for whatever reason.

To the extent that teachers and curricula are involved in shaping young people's minds about sex, marriage, relationships, racial equality, and other topics like these, we can pray that there would be alignment with God's heart and mind. As young adults are experimenting with new ideas, values, and behaviors, we can pray they will be turned away from relationships and interactions that are damaging and hurtful to themselves and others—and choose God's path of purity, love, compassion, and unity.

## Let's Pray:

Lord, we lift up our students of all ages to you, asking for Your help, guidance, protection, discernment, and grace as they navigate the sometimes precarious minefield of human relationships.

- ◆ We pray against the sexualization of our children and the constant messaging from media that they need a romantic relationship to feel accepted. We pray against sexual harassment and every form of sexual innuendo, immorality, and abuse in our schools.
- ◆ We pray Your Spirit would lead our children into choosing positive, healthy relationships in friendship and dating. We pray they will have an inclusive mentality that refuses to shut out those who may be different from them, and that honors everyone from all races and walks of life.
- ◆ We pray for a spirit of inclusiveness that would help our children respect, honor, and accept all people based on the fact that we are all Your children, no matter where we come from, what we look like, or any other factor. You love us all unconditionally; help our children to experience and extend that love to one another.
- ◆ We pray against the vindictive behavior of bullying. We pray that there would be a change in the culture that feeds this maliciousness. **As part of that culture change, we ask that You would make Your people shine!** Let Christians be known as courageous student champions who defend victims and can bring healing and peace into a situation. Help them to be inclusive with one another, so no one feels “left out.” We pray for those who feel alone; help them to find healthy relationships and feel a part of a company of friends.
- ◆ We also ask that You would defend Christian students and teachers from those who would seek to bully, intimidate, or silence them. We ask that You would raise up many who are not ashamed of the gospel and who will exercise their rights to freedom of speech and freedom of religion with boldness and graciousness.
- ◆ Raise up strong and godly leadership among Christian groups and campus clubs, we pray, and help them minister effectively to those around them. As the gospel advances on campuses, may the culture shift to one of love, respect, joy, and peace among all students.

Amen.



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## Day 14 | OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

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*Say no to wrong. Learn to do good. Work for justice. Help the down-and-out.  
Stand up for the homeless. Go to bat for the defenseless.  
(Isaiah 1:17, MSG)*

*God can pour on the blessings in astonishing ways so that you're ready for anything  
and everything, more than just ready to do what needs to be done.  
(2 Corinthians 9:8, MSG)*

*"Vision is the #1 predictor of success in school. It's much more predictive than test scores."  
-John Huppenthal, former Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction*

Many schools are overwhelmed with helping students who lag behind and require a tremendous amount of help due to their home circumstances, such as lack of parental presence or support, or poverty. They may be immigrants or refugees from different parts of the world. Many of these students have never been in a school and are illiterate even in their own languages. Teachers face an enormous challenge in trying to include and educate children from such a variation of educational backgrounds and families of origin.

Across the nation, there are schools facing these issues. We know that obstacles such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, addiction and substance abuse within the home, broken families, depression and other mental illness, generational curses, familial expectations and norms, undiagnosed learning disabilities, racial inequality, homelessness and more, can all be mitigating factors in the academic success of any student. However, God, through His supernatural power, can make a way!

### Let's Pray:

Father, Your Word tells us that without a vision people perish (Proverbs 29:18).

- ◆ Lord, we pray for VISION for administrators, principals, teachers, parents and students! Give them Your vision of what their schools can become and stir their faith and hope to action. Let them see that NOTHING is impossible with God, no matter how bad the situation!
- ◆ Father of Light, we ask You to plant a vision within our students to see academic success as a real possibility in their lives. Give them a vision to overcome the challenges they live with.
- ◆ We pray for mentors and tutors to come alongside each one who is struggling and give them the educational support and vital encouragement needed to finish their schooling.
- ◆ Please open the windows of heaven over our struggling schools: for finances and good staff, that they would receive a blessing they can't contain! Lord, we ask that You would be glorified when their needs are supernaturally met.



- ◆ Help our students who are struggling—whether with learning disabilities or with troubled families or anything else that would hinder them. We pray that You would restore their confidence and motivation, that failures and setbacks would not discourage them. And we ask that You would release the specialized teachers these students need.
- ◆ Encourage all who feel like giving up to press through to victory, we pray, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

