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July 23, 2020

Hondo ISD Families,

Information around COVID-19 is ever changing, which affects the planning efforts of public schools. Although the reopening of school in August will be very complex due to many unknown variables, Hondo ISD (HISD) will focus our planning efforts around guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the University Interscholastic League (UIL), state/local officials and our families.

Thanks to all who participated in the parent survey. We will use this data to create processes and procedures for a safe return to the upcoming school year.

Due to these results, and the most current guidance from state/local officials, the district will be preparing for two start of school scenarios. The purpose of this letter is to inform our families on some of the decisions we have made at this time. Please know that there are more decisions forthcoming and we will communicate those as guidance becomes clearer and hopefully, less fluid.

First, we would like to discuss educational arrangements. Based on our parent surveys, HISD will be providing students and families options for educational services. These options include a traditional, on-campus setting and a remote, home-based option. Hondo ISD will provide the opportunity for parents to indicate whether they want to return to school on-campus, understanding there will be extensive safety precautions in place, or remotely at home.

The application for families to choose their Fall option will open Monday, Aug. 3 at 8am and close on Wednesday, Aug 5 at 5pm. You will receive the application through Skyward. We realize this is an important decision for families, so we want to make sure families are prepared.

Please log in to your Skyward Family Access account today to ensure you know the correct password. You will need this to answer the Options Application. Only the parent/guardian who is designated as the primary contact for the student within Skyward will be able to complete this application. We appreciate parents working together to provide information in the best interest of their child(ren) and families.

If you do not know your Skyward Family Access login or password, select the "Forgot Login/Password" link on the Skyward Family Access login screen. If you still have issues, please contact the campus clerk where your student attends. If you are enrolling a student NEW to Hondo ISD, please contact the campus.

As a reminder, the application window closes August 5th at 5pm. Because of the complexities inherent in these options, individuals must make a commitment for up to one full grading period (6 weeks), which runs from August 19 through October 2. If no option is made by a parent, the default will be to begin the school year with on-campus, traditional education.

Understandably, there may be instances where a student needs to quickly default to remote learning due to a COVID-19 related illness. If so, these needs will be accommodated to maintain the health and wellbeing of those impacted and to ensure the safety of those in the building. These will be decisions made by the school district based on symptoms or testing, and only require the student to participate in remote instruction for the time of self-isolation or quarantine. Be mindful that as the situation with COVID-19 is constantly evolving, the guidance in this letter and our Back to School 2020 website may be temporarily or indefinitely modified per directives/orders given by state and local officials.

Information for All Families to Consider Prior to Determining an Option Summary of a Traditional, On-Campus Setting:

Face-to-Face/On Campus Instruction

- Available to all students, PK - 12
- Students may follow the traditional schedule, attending school 5 days per week. *During the first 4 weeks of school, the district will have a modified schedule to acclimate students to the new environment and ensure that new processes and procedures are implemented*
- Enhanced sanitation protocols on our campuses will be followed throughout the day.
- Social distancing measures will be implemented wherever possible.
- Face coverings will be required of staff and students.
- Positive COVID-19 cases will be isolated to localized, direct contact treatments and not result in whole school or district-wide closures
- Following HISD protocols, a student(s) will transition to a remote, home-based option due to a positive COVID-19 case but will be expected to return to on-campus learning when possible for the grading period (6 weeks)
- Visitors and volunteers will not be permitted unless a formal appointment is made
- Outside food will not be accepted during the day. Students can still bring lunch with them in the mornings.
- Required pick-up within one hour of parents being notified by the school nurse of a child's illness
- Altered electives/extracurriculars based on conditions allowed and guidance from UIL
- Frequent handwashing and hand sanitizing (stations throughout the building and classrooms)
- It is recommended for students to bring their own water bottle
- Restroom usage regulated
- Special program services offered as normal
- Possible reduction in student movement/transitions in buildings
- Limited sharing of school supplies
- More assigned seating and workstations
- Physical distancing in classrooms and throughout campus, as feasible
- Limited activities that require large gatherings

Remote/Online Instruction

- Available to all students, PK – 12
- Full School Day, Monday-Friday
- Attendance will be taken daily to fulfill local and state requirements
- All work will be done online, so a computer and an Internet connection will be necessary.
- Learning opportunities will be both synchronous and asynchronous.
 - Instruction will require daily participation.
 - Synchronous activities will include real-time activities like Google Meet/Zoom/Canvas video chats or possible in person sessions with limited exposure to others (such as completing a hands-on lab activity at a secondary campus).
 - Asynchronous instruction is NOT real-time and may be accomplished through independent activities and self-directed participation. Students will utilize Canvas Classroom to obtain instruction and submit assignments.
- Students will be expected to log in each day that school is in session, communicate with their teachers, and make adequate progress toward meeting their educational goals.
- HISD staff will oversee remote instruction
- A care-giver will need to be available to support younger students in navigating the daily schedule and providing assistance with the learning as needed.
- Parent training in use of the learning management system will be available.
- Student Helpdesk will be available.
- Students will be expected to participate in district/state assessments to document student learning and growth as required by the State
- Students may be required to test onsite at an assessment center
- Teachers will provide feedback to students and use district grading guidelines on all assignments
- Altered enrichment and electives with limited choice in electives
- Some electives will have on-campus requirements
- Student-issued device will only be provided through an extenuating circumstance provision
- Social-emotional support provided
- Special program services available

- Lunch/breakfast available for pick up

Important Things to Note

- Expectations for coursework and guidelines for grading for Face-to-Face Learning and Remote Learning will be the same.
- Attendance requirements are the same for Face-to-Face Learning and Remote Learning. Students must attend at least 90% of the instructional days in the school calendar to be awarded credit and/or advanced to the next grade level.
- Once a parent makes a choice for instructional delivery, they will be locked in to that instructional delivery method until the end of the grading period (6 weeks). (The end of the first grading period is October 2) If a parent wants to change methods, they must notify the campus at least 2 weeks before the start of the next grading period.

In an effort to improve safety and reduce the number of students on a bus, Hondo ISD is asking able parents to transport their children to and from school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Hondo ISD receives additional guidance and requirements from the state of Texas, TEA and UIL we will begin finalizing our return to school plans.

Please check your email, our return to school website, social media and our local media partners for further updates.

Despite all the unknowns and changing times, Hondo ISD has a committed staff that stands ready to provide your child with the very best educational continuity as possible, while balancing a safe environment for all.

Sincerely,



Dr. A'Lann Truelock

Superintendent

Hondo Independent School District