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COVID-19 Prevention, Mitigation, and Response Procedures

August 8, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for your commitment and continued support of Hondo Independent School District. As we approach the beginning of a school year full of unknowns, we would like to inform you of what we are doing as a district to prevent, mitigate, and respond to COVID-19 cases. This document outlines the procedures each campus will have in place to prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to respond if a positive case is identified.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. That said, research from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19 and some severe outcomes have been reported in children, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized or have severe symptoms. For many children, there are distinct benefits to attending school in person, including instructional, social, and safety benefits. For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics has made a statement supporting on-campus instruction for students in the coming year.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families significantly. The Hondo ISD strategy for opening and operating is outlined below. A more detailed plan can be found on our district website <https://www.hondoisd.net/returntoschool>.

Prevention

To prevent COVID-positive individuals from entering our campuses, your student's school will have the following COVID-19 symptom screening procedures in place:

- All staff will be required to self-screen daily.
- All visitors will be required to screen upon arrival.
- Parents are asked to proactively identify when their student(s) exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or have been exposed and to keep them home. *
- All staff, visitors, and students will submit to a daily temperature check upon arrival to any Hondo ISD facility/campus.

*In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following question:

Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| • Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit | • Chills |
| • Loss of taste or smell | • Sore throat |
| • Cough | • Congestion or runny nose |
| • Difficulty breathing | • Shaking or exaggerated shivering |
| • Shortness of breath | • Significant muscle pain or ache |
| • Fatigue | • Diarrhea |
| • Headache | • Nausea or vomiting |

Information collected in these screenings will not be retained if the screening is passed. If information collected indicates that a staff member, visitor, or student is demonstrating COVID-19 symptoms, has tested positive for COVID-19, or has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person, the school will retain that information until the individual meets the criteria for return to school.

Response

In the event of a COVID-positive case on campus, the campus will take the following steps:

- Any student or staff member that develops COVID-19 symptoms while on campus will be immediately isolated.
- All areas that are heavily used by the individual with a lab-confirmed case will be closed off until disinfected.
- All teachers, staff, and families of all students in that school will be notified in writing of a positive case.
- The local health department will be notified.
- The parents/guardians of any student deemed to be in close contact with a person that tested positive for COVID-19 will be notified of close contact and quarantine measures.
- HISD will apply Employee and Student [Quarantine Protocols](#) for any individual that receives a COVID-19 positive test result, exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, or was deemed to be in close-contact with any person that has tested positive for the illness.

Criteria for Return to School

Staff, Students, or Visitors that have qualified close contact with a COVID-19 positive person must complete a 14-day quarantine starting the day of exposure.

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual cannot return until the following conditions are met:

- 24 hours with no fever, without the use of fever reducing medication; and
- Symptoms improved; and
- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the quarantine period, the individual must provide either:

- An acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19

Or:

- A doctor's note indicating an alternate diagnosis.

Mitigation

Our district will be taking the following steps across each of our campuses to mitigate the spread of COVID-19:

- All adults in the building will wear masks and/or face shields.
- All students will be required to wear masks, particularly when they are within six feet of one another, except when participating in activities that cannot be conducted with a mask on, such as eating, or unless it is not developmentally appropriate for the student to wear a mask.
- Each campus has developed logistical plans for entry, exit, and transition procedures that reduce large group gatherings of students and/or adults in close proximity.
- Where feasible, without disrupting the educational experience, students and staff will practice social distancing. Classrooms have been reorganized to maximize space between students and campuses have developed additional plans to address student visits to offices, libraries, cafeterias, and restrooms.

We hope that this information gives you confidence in our systems and our ability to stop the spread of COVID-19 on our campuses. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the appropriate campus principal or visit our website at <https://www.hondoisd.net/returntoschool>.

While this will be a challenging year, we believe it can also be a great one, and we look forward to supporting your student in his/her learning journey.

Sincerely,

A'Lann Truelock Ed. D.
HISD Superintendent