

**REVISED & UPDATED: August 2, 2020**  
**Poolville Independent School District**  
**Parental & Public Health Notice**

**Public Health Considerations**

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages, and school system leaders should do everything feasible to keep students, teachers, staff, and our communities safe. 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. Furthermore, the American Academy of Pediatrics notes that COVID-19 risks must be balanced with the need for children to attend school in person, given that lack of physical access to school leads to a number of negative consequences, placing “children and adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity, and in some case, mortality.”

This guidance document contains information on four sets of practices that minimize the likelihood of viral spread:

- PROVIDE NOTICE: Requirements for parental and public notices
- PREVENT: Required practices to prevent the virus from entering the school
- RESPOND: Required practices to respond to a lab-confirmed case in the school
- MITIGATE: Recommended and required practices to reduce likely spread inside the school

**PROVIDE NOTICE: Parental and Public Notices**

**Developing a Plan for On-Campus Activities and Instruction**

School systems must post for parents and the general public, one week prior to the start of on-campus activities and instruction, a summary of the plan they will follow to mitigate COVID-19 spread in their schools based on the Texas Education Agency requirements and recommendations. This summary document must be posted on the school system homepage or another easily found area on the system website.

**Attendance and Enrollment**

Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in force during the 2020-21 school year.

Given the public health situation, student attendance may be earned through the delivery of virtual instruction.

Any parent may request that their student be offered virtual instruction from a school system that offers such instruction. If a parent who chooses virtual instruction wants their child to switch to an on-campus instructional setting, they can do so, but school systems are permitted to limit these transitions to occur only at the end of a grading period.

School systems must provide daily on-campus attendance for students otherwise entitled to attend school who follow this document’s required public health procedures and whose parents wish them to attend on campus each day, subject to school closure and the exceptions listed in this document.

School systems are required to provide parents a notice of their public education enrollment and attendance rights and responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic using a document published by TEA.

## **PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School**

### *Screening Questions for COVID-19 Before Campus Access*

School systems must require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Symptoms are listed at the end of this document. The self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must report to the school system if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below. Additionally, they must report to the school system if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined at the end of this document, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and instead should opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

Excluding parental drop-off and pick-up, before visitors are allowed onto campuses, school systems must screen all visitors to determine if the visitors have COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below.

Additionally, school systems must screen to determine if visitors have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed. When practical, screening questions could be supplemented with temperature checks of adults.

### *Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19*

Any individuals who **themselves** either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

- In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
  - at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  - the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  - provide signed clearance from a medical professional indicating it is safe for the individual to return to school.
- In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
- If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical

professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.) that comes back negative for COVID-19.

#### *Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus*

- Schools must immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Schools should clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) as soon as is feasible.
- Students who report feeling feverish should be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

### **RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School**

#### *Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School*

- If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Schools must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 7 days have already passed since that person was on campus.
- Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, schools must notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities.

### **MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School**

#### **Operational Considerations:**

##### *Health and Hygiene Practices: General*

- Schools should attempt to have hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water at each entrance. They should also attempt to provide hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water in every classroom.
- Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.
- School systems are encouraged to have students engage in supervised handwashing for at least 20 seconds at least two times each day, in addition to being encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom and before eating.
- School systems are encouraged to teach students good handwashing techniques.
- Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, covered in their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.
- Campuses should institute more frequent cleaning practices, including additional cleaning by janitorial

- staff.
- Schools should arrange for additional cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in common throughout the day. This would include objects such as door handles, common tables/desks, shared supplies such as art supplies, and high touch devices such as shared laptops or tablets.
  - Schools should arrange for cleaning of commonly-touched surfaces in classrooms between different class groups, if the same room will be used by multiple classgroups.
  - Schools should ensure these products are stored safely, including storing harmful products where children cannot access them, and ensuring that harmful cleaning products are not used near children.
  - On the first day a student attends school on campus, school systems must provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices and other mitigation practices adopted in the local school system.

#### *Health and Hygiene Practices: Masks*

- For the purposes of this document, masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose, and mouth. Face shields may be superior to cloth face coverings in many circumstances, given improved ability to see mouth movements and improved air circulation.
- Schools are required to comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.
- Schools must require students, teachers, staff, and visitors to wear masks or face shields when entering and exiting facilities and practice areas and when not actively engaging in those activities.

#### *Student-Teacher Groupings*

Where feasible without disrupting the educational experience, encourage students to practice social distancing.

- In classroom spaces that allow it, consider placing student desks a minimum of six feet apart when possible.
- In classrooms where students are regularly within six feet of one another, schools should plan for more frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing

#### *Use of Non-Classroom Spaces*

- When feasible and appropriate (for example, in physical education classes as weather permits), it is preferable for students to gather outside, rather than inside, because of likely reduced risk of virus spread outdoors.
- Schools may continue to offer extracurricular activities, at their discretion and consistent with the guidance in this document, for non-UIL extracurricular activities and with the guidance found on the UIL website for all UIL activities.
- Campuses must plan for entry, exit, and transition procedures that reduce large group gatherings (of students and/or adults) in close proximity by providing guidance to students to enter one at a time and wait six feet apart outside the entrance, and, where appropriate, encouraging parents to remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.
- School systems should consider practices that reduce the likelihood that students meet the close contact definition (defined below) at lunch, including the use of seats that are spaced at least 6 feet apart. For meal service itself, consider individually plated meals with disposable food service items for students who do not bring their own lunch.

### *Transportation Recommendations*

- School systems should consider requiring students and staff to use hand sanitizer upon boarding the bus.
- When possible, schools should open windows to allow outside air to circulate in the bus.
- School systems should encourage families to drop students off, carpool, or walk with their student to school to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.
- Buses should be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles. During cleaning, open windows to allow for additional ventilation and air flow.

### *Visits to Schools*

- Parents and other adults can visit schools, as permitted by local school system policies. During these visits, parents and other visitors must follow virus prevention and mitigation requirements of the school.
- Schools systems should restrict visits in schools to only those essential to school operations.

### *Staffing*

- School teachers and staff should be trained specifically on the protocols outlined in this document and the practices adopted by their school system.
- When school staff meetings are necessary and cannot be done via electronic means, everyone must follow the mask protocols in this guidance, remain at least 6 feet apart where feasible.

### **COVID-19 Symptoms**

Any of the following symptoms indicate a possible COVID-19 infection:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth
- Sore throat
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (or, for students with a chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain or
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

### **Close Contact**

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:

- being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
- being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes;

If either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

### *Screening Questionnaire Information*

- When asking individuals if they have symptoms for COVID-19, school systems must only require the individual to provide a “Yes” or “No” to the overall statement that they are symptomatic for COVID-19, as opposed to asking the individual for specific symptom confirmation. School systems are not entitled to collect information during screening on the specific health information of an individual

beyond that they are symptomatic.

- Once it is determined that individuals who responded “Yes” to either of these questions have met the criteria for re-entry, school systems must destroy those individuals’ responses.

