



Texas Association of Community Schools

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TACS Zoom Meeting Summary

Meeting with TACS and Sara Leon & Associates

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

11:00 AM

Commissioner's Calls 7/21

The Commissioner fielded a lot of questions during this call. He clarified that schools can be fully virtual if everyone has devices and no one wants to do in-person learning, but if a student DOES want to attend in-person, you have to provide a place for them.

The Commissioner also illustrated that you can find your local health authorities [here](#) if you're not sure who your county authority is.

They showed the results of the Operation Connectivity bulk order survey regarding the \$200 million from the state being given to TEA for e-learning. TEA plans to buy 900,000 devices and 400,000 hot spots. They also said that LEAs have already spent \$400 million themselves on e-learning. Economically disadvantaged families should be prioritized. The Commissioner did say he didn't know when the devices they ordered would be delivered to schools, but until they arrive, schools can use paper packets much like this spring.

There are now some sample exemplars posted if you navigate to the Waivers, Finance, and Grants card and click "[Remote Instruction Guide](#)." These exemplar plans are just examples; they're not what TEA is considering the "best" plans or what you should do; they are just to provide ideas for you. Hawkins ISD joined the call to talk more about their plans. They are offering lunch and learns for families to learn their LMS (they're using SeeSaw and Google Classroom), a "meet the teacher" for families (organized alphabetically), and breakouts with tech training and protocols for families.

You can also find a plan summary checklist, remote instruction requirements, "look-fors," and the synchronous attestation summary under this card. An asynchronous plan webinar will be posted tonight (7/22).

There were a few more questions from the end of the call that he answered. One district asked, "Can we dismiss Fridays at an earlier time with a hybrid plan?" He said he thinks so, but to make sure you get your minutes. He was assuming this question was for a high school, because if your calendar says you are meeting 5 days a week, you must meet all 5 days.

Another question clarified that inter-district transfers are no different, LEAs decide if they are accepting transfers.

Changes to the TEA COVID Website

Updates to the **Waivers, Finance, and Grants** card have been made. The [SY 20-21 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ](#) has new info added.

New questions in this document under "State Funding:"

Question 1: Will there be an ADA hold harmless for the 2020-2021 school year? Yes, and a clarification: For purposes of the hold harmless calculation, TEA will not consider each six weeks attendance period during the first two six weeks independent of each other. Additionally, they will allow districts to receive the higher of either the first twelve weeks of ADA this year OR the three-year average from 17-18,, 18-19, 19-20, like they did for Hurricane Harvey. Last week he said that districts would receive the three-year averages from them this week.

New questions in this document under "Attendance:"

Question 33: Will students who were enrolled in private school, including a home school, the prior year in Texas be eligible for funding through the remote synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods? Students who were enrolled in private schools last year, including home schools, will be eligible to earn funding for the on-campus method. Remote instruction does not earn funding unless:

- (a) students who transition from early education programs, where no entitlement to enroll in the public school existed, to public school;
- (b) students who transfer in from outside the state;
- (c) students whose prior year private school does not offer the appropriate grade level (e.g., a private school ends at 6th grade so students moving on to 7th grade would no longer be able to attend the private school);
- (d) students whose private schools are either no longer in operation or are not offering remote instruction for the 2020–2021 school year;
- (e) students who were enrolled in a public school in Texas for a portion of the 2019-20 school year, even though they were also enrolled in a private school, including a home school, for a portion of the 2019-20 school year; or
- (f) students who receive remote instruction for a portion of the 2020-21 school year (transition or during closure orders), but not the entire year.

Question 34: Can my LEA charge tuition for students who previously attended a private school, including homeschool, in Texas the prior year to participate in remote instruction? No.

New info in this document under "Class Size Exceptions:"

A district must submit a request for a class size exception for any class K-4 that exceeds 22 students and applies to on-campus and remote instruction.

A district seeking the exception must apply for it no later than the later of October 1st or the 30th day after the first school day the district exceeded the limit.

Districts should use the "Maximum Class Size Exception" waiver and should include a copy of the board agenda in which the waiver request was approved.

Transition Period Clarification

The four-week transition period begins on the first calendar school day. If health orders delay the first day, be sure to move the calendar start date.

If devices are available for all students (as well as adequate internet), full virtual is permitted. If not, on-campus instruction must be provided to all who want it (for first 4-week period). For the second 4-week period, some on-campus instruction must be provided.

Public Health Orders card

There are updates to the [SY 20-21 Reopening Guidance Summary](#).

Parents have the option to request a transfer to any school district to meet their child's education needs for remote instruction.

Question Child Nutrition Card

Don't forget that the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program deadline has been extended until July 31. The Commissioner has requested schools continue outreach to families in need by sending letters home, posting on social media, and doing robo calls. So far over \$800 million has been provided to families in need. If you have questions, call their hotline M-F from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM at (833) 613-6220.

PPE Update

If you received PPE from the state, you as a district are required to count that as revenue and expense it out. You are also expected to inventory it. Try not to intermingle the state-provided supplies with your own before you've done all this, to make it an easier process for yourself. This information was new to us, and we just heard about it today from a service center. Not all districts received the amount of PPE they were hoping for. They didn't provide information on HOW to apply this as revenue; TACS will reach out to TASBO for more answers and keep you posted. You might also check in with your ESC.

Other Announcements/Trainings

TACS has updated our website. If you now visit our COVID page, we have added some [school resources including sample plans and videos](#) James Groesbeck from Crowley shared how he is working with his stakeholders, and we also have a new plan from Midway ISD and some school process maps from Gunter ISD.

Sara Leon and Associates will be holding more trainings as well; a webinar on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act on July 23 (register [here](#)) and a 3-hour training on sexual harassment complaints under the new Title IX regulations on July 29 (register [here](#)).

TASBO will be holding a PEIMS academy on September 17-18; it will likely have both a virtual and in-person component.

Lastly, if your school is in need of sanitization services, please check out services offered by several of our partners, including our new Diamond partner [Germinator Mobile Sanitizing](#) for help!

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Disclaimer: This information is accurate as of July 22, 2020. It is intended for informational and educational purposes only, and is not a substitute for legal advice.