

July 14, 2020

Hudson ISD Parents,

RE: On-Campus Instruction

Good afternoon. Many of you have already heard news and some rumor about how school operations will be for 'on-campus' instruction this fall. As an 'optimistic realist', I can assure you that things will be fine, but there will be some challenges we must all be ready for. The reality is our educational system, as we have always known it, will pose some major hurdles and painful times. Our goal is to provide the best academic system we can with limitations beyond any of our control.

We must plan for public health considerations, while knowing it is impossible to for any of us to completely eliminate all risks associated with COVID-19. Any plan in place or procedure is always considered 'fluid', meaning changes should be expected. We will focus on prevention, response, and mitigation of any health concerns.

The Texas Education Agency released information for the first time yesterday on what might be expected this fall and provided some guidance/requirements for districts. I believe it is imperative to keep our community informed on what this will look like, knowing some things may change over time. Prior to school starting, we will post measures taken to mitigate COVID-19 spread.

I am providing a few known facts for Hudson ISD:

- Parents will have a choice to send students to school for instruction all day or keep students home for Asynchronous Remote Instruction (online work that is not 'live' feed for the most part). We are working to make decisions regarding a combination of the two, as many ask if students doing remote learning will be able to attend school for extracurricular, performance, or work-based instruction. The recent survey sent to parents yielded about 20% opting for remote instruction. We understand that with the recent spike in COVID-19 cases and new face mask requirements, these numbers may change substantially. Keep in mind, the survey was just inforamatory for our initial planning purposes. However, parents will be required to select a method two weeks prior to school starting. Those that do not select will be expected for on-campus instruction. We will inform you of when this document is available.
- When a student is placed in the remote instructional method, they must remain for the remainder of the grading period (9-weeks period). However, due to many unknown circumstances, students may change from on-campus to remote instruction at any time, but must remain there as stated. (Please note: This is different than the 'temporary' placement described in another section below)
- Although allowable, we do not see any reason for a temporary limit to on-campus instruction. You may have seen this publicized in the news as an option, but that is a local decision.
- Teachers and staff will be required to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms and check body temperature prior to coming onto the campus.
- Parents must be responsible and ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19. Instead, they should opt for approved 'temporary' remote instruction until conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their children receive approved 'temporary' 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. Regularly performing a forehead temperature check of otherwise asymptomatic students in school is not recommended. (*Close Contact includes being directly exposed to infectious secretions (being coughed on while not wearing a face mask) or being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes (without a face mask) with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19). Also note, 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.

- All visitors to the school must also be screened. Although details are forthcoming, please know that visitation will be very limited. We will be making changes to previously allowed practices. This will include significant changes regarding parents coming to eat with children, bringing lunches daily to the school, supplying cupcakes and other homeroom treats, etc.
- For students 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
 - at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - 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) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.
- A more thorough protocol has been established for staff that are confirmed or suspected with COVID-19 or who have been in close contact with others that are symptomatic or confirmed COVID-19 cases.
- If any individual has been in a school and is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the district will notify the local health department in accordance to applicable laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements. The area(s) that are heavily used by that individual will be disinfected as required.
- Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal **confidentiality** requirements, we will 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.

- To help mitigate the likelihood of COVID-19 spread inside the school:
 - Hand sanitizer will be provided, although it is suggested that students have their own as well. TEA has provided districts with a limited amount of supplies. Hudson ISD should be receiving 317 gallons of hand sanitizer, but at 1oz per day times 2000 students, this limited supply may only last about 20 days.
 - All persons should be encouraged to wash hands frequently.
 - More frequent cleaning will take place on each campus and school bus.
 - This will also include replacement of air filtration systems and the use of electrostatic handheld sprayers for disinfecting.
 - Safety glass barriers will be in place in some common areas of the campus (front desk, libraries, etc.)
 - Although we were previously told that students would not be required to wear face masks, schools are REQUIRED to comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks. Please refer to that order for details, as it does not apply to every age of child and has a few exceptions.
 - TEA will also be providing a limited number of face masks for districts. Hudson ISD should receive about 27,000 disposable masks (including about 8000 student/smaller size. We should also receive about 7000 reusable masks. Details regarding the exact type, life expectancy, etc. of masks are not known at this time.
 - While it is not feasible or required to position student desks six (6) feet apart, the district will do what is possible to spread individuals out.
 - We must plan for entry, exit, and transition of students to/from and around the campus.
 - This may very well mean some major changes to current practices with bus and car-rider lines, etc. Be prepared and have patience.
 - Other large group gatherings and assemblies may be eliminated.
 - Again, visitation to the campus will be restricted to those essential to school operations
 - School buses will be cleaned more frequently, though it is recommended that schools encourage families to drop students off, carpool, etc. Again, at this time, face masks will be required per governor orders.

Regarding face masks, there are many opinions on this subject. However we feel about it, whether they work or not, we do know one thing at this time: Wearing a mask will reduce the likelihood of 'close contact' with others (as defined), which will reduce required quarantine of individuals.

While this letter provides you with some of the known information at this time, we certainly have a long way to go to 'iron out' many details. It is our intent to keep each of you informed during this difficult process. We long for a return to normal operations and pray that each of you remain safe. Have a blessed week and we will remain in touch.

God Bless,

Donny Webb, Superintendent

