



SPiRiT
of
TOMBALL



PARENT AND STUDENT RETURN TO SCHOOL

HANDBOOK

Fall 2021



DISTRICT-WIDE INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

- In Tomball ISD, we believe that the best format for learning is face-to-face instruction. Student performance data and recognition as the Top School District in Region 4 (made up of 87 public and charter school districts in the Gulf Coast area) reinforce our belief.
- In order for Tomball ISD to offer both in person and virtual school options, we are dependent upon the State of Texas for funding.
- The Texas Education Agency is not funding virtual school options for school districts and students.
- Thus, Tomball ISD will not be offering the virtual school option as we did for the past academic year.

PREVENTION

Practices to prevent the virus from entering the school.

Know How the Virus Spreads

- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure.
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person who are in close contact with one another, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are asymptomatic (do not exhibit symptoms).

Preventative Actions to Decrease Risk

- Clean your hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Put distance between yourself and others.
- Clean and disinfect highly-touched and dirty surfaces.
- Monitor your health daily.
- Consider COVID-19 vaccination, if age approved.
 - [Vaccination information](#) can be found on our Health Services website.



Health Screening

Parents and/or students should self-screen daily (prior to entering a school bus or school) for symptoms of COVID-19 and should not report to school or work until symptoms resolve.

- Parents or guardians should screen their children at home to ensure they do not have the following:
 - [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
 - Lab-confirmed positive COVID-19 diagnosis
- If students meet any one of the exclusionary criteria, they should:
 - Stay home, and
 - Seek medical care and follow recommendations from their health provider.

Our Health Services team of campus nurses continues to monitor communicable diseases on campus and report these cases to Harris County Public Health (HCPH) Department.

Masks/Face Coverings

- The CDC recommends that masks should be worn indoors by all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools (age 2 and older) regardless of vaccination status. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- The use of face coverings is recommended if you have not been fully vaccinated or you have been exposed to a lab-confirmed case.
- ***Per State mandate, no governmental entity, school district or governmental official can require a person to wear a mask or face covering.***
- In Tomball ISD, we strongly encourage the use of face masks, but it will be optional for all students and staff.

Isolation and Readmission Criteria for a Positive Lab-Confirmed COVID-19 Student

Students who test positive for COVID-19 must enter isolation. Parents must notify the school nurse if their student is lab-confirmed positive via the District's [online reporting tool](#). In order for the student's absence during isolation to be exempted, a student must provide to the school a physician's note and a positive COVID-19 lab result. Individuals in isolation should meet the readmission criteria outlined below before returning to school.



- **Isolation:** Students must not come to school and should isolate themselves from others for a period of 10 days after symptom onset or a positive test date (whichever occurred first) in accordance with Texas Department of Safety Health Services (DSHS) Exclusion and Readmission criteria for Schools and Childcare Centers.
- **Return Criteria:** Per CDC guidance, students can return to school after 10 days of isolation if all symptoms are improving or resolved and fever has been absent for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.

Isolation and Readmission Criteria for a Symptomatic Student

Students who exhibit symptoms consistent with illness but who are not lab-confirmed positive for COVID-19 must enter symptomatic isolation. Individuals in symptomatic isolation should meet the readmission criteria outlined below before returning to school.

- **Symptomatic Isolation:** Students must not come to school, should isolate themselves from others, and should consult with a licensed healthcare provider for evaluation and/or testing.
- **Return Criteria:** Students may return to school with one of the following:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset AND all symptoms are improving or resolved and fever has been absent for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication; OR
 - All symptoms are improving or resolved and fever has been absent for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication AND student has a negative COVID-19 laboratory test; OR
 - All symptoms are improving or resolved and fever has been absent for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication AND the student has a physician note indicating an alternate diagnosis.

Guidance for Close Contacts to Individuals Who Tested Positive

Close contacts to individuals who tested positive should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., consider mask usage, maintain appropriate distance) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period. Students may stay in school if they are symptom-free.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated are not considered close contacts. Contact tracing will be done by Harris County Public Health (HCPH) after a lab-confirmed positive case is reported. If quarantining of students is necessary, HCPH will contact the student/family directly. Tomball ISD staff will not be involved in student case management or contact tracing.

MITIGATION

Practices to diminish the likelihood of COVID-19 spread inside the school.

Health and Hygiene Practices: General

- Campuses have soap dispensers in all restrooms and hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the building and cafeteria entrances.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer and wash hands frequently.
- Water fountains will be restricted from use as drinking fountains but may be used to fill water bottles. Water bottle filling stations have been installed at all schools.
 - We encourage all students to bring their own refillable water bottle to school each day.
- Students, staff and parents will be educated on health and safety protocols and good hygiene practices, including frequent and thorough handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and social distancing to the extent feasible, using the district and campus websites, social media, email, building signs and classroom lessons with videos.

Health and Hygiene Practices: Cleaning & Disinfection

- As a basis for keeping the environment safe and healthy for students and staff, TISD custodians will continue to execute our routine cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms, offices, and common areas within district facilities.
- TISD Environmental Services Department uses hospital grade cleaning solutions and practices to reduce likely spread inside the school.
- In addition to our routine cleaning, frequently touched objects like doorknobs, hand railings, and desks will be cleaned and disinfected multiple times throughout the day.

Transportation

- 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, windows will be opened to allow for additional ventilation and air flow.
- Parents are asked to [register their child\(ren\) for transportation service](#) by providing the necessary information using the link on the transportation website. If parents have any questions, please call Transportation at 281-357-3193.
- Arriving at the bus stop in the morning without registering for transportation services can have a potential impact on future ability to use transportation services.
- Students who have not registered for transportation services *will not* be transported in the afternoon and will remain on campus.

Visitors

Visitors will be allowed in District facilities under normal pre-COVID business operations. We do recommend that unvaccinated visitors wear a mask or face covering while in District facilities. However, masks are not required. Visitors will still be required to provide their driver's license for screening before being allowed to proceed into the campus.

Elementary campuses will be communicating information before the start of the school year regarding district-wide first day visitor procedures and modified lunch visitor procedures.

Rapid COVID Testing

As an additional layer of mitigating strategy, Tomball ISD Health Services Department will take a lead role in administering a rapid COVID test to individuals who present themselves to the clinic with symptoms.

- Rapid COVID testing will only be conducted with parental consent.
- Rapid tests will be administered by the school nurse or Health Services staff in our school clinics.
- The rapid test kits are being provided by TEA
 - Our rapid testing protocols will be contingent upon receiving sufficient testing kits from the State.

The ability to test students will allow students, parents and staff to identify COVID infected students more quickly to be isolated from the general student population to reduce the likelihood of viral spread. Additionally, students ill with something other than COVID will not be unnecessarily isolated or quarantined from attending school.

RESPONSE

Practices to react to a lab-confirmed case in the school.

Suspected or Notification of Lab-confirmed COVID-19 Positive Case

- If on campus, the student or staff member will be cared for and isolated from others.
- Parents, guardians, or staff members will be advised to seek the care of a licensed medical professional as needed.



- The campus nurse will complete an investigation form in order to be able to complete mandatory reporting with the Harris County Public Health Department and the Texas Education Agency.
 - Notification procedures are done 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).

COVID Dashboard & Notification

Tomball ISD will post on our website updated lab-confirmed COVID numbers for each campus, as well as district-wide numbers. Since contract tracing and quarantine decisions will be made by HCPH Department, Tomball ISD will not have access to nor will we report the number of students and staff on quarantine.

Tomball ISD will send parents and staff weekly notifications when there is a positive case at the campus and grade level.

****Tomball ISD administration will continue to consult with medical health officials, review available public health guidance, follow Texas Education Agency mandates, and monitor COVID-19 infection data within our local community and larger counties in order to make informed decisions that are in the best interest of our students and staff. Tomball ISD reserves the right to modify our health and safety protocols as needed.****