



CHESTER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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This guidance document is being provided based on the public health situation as we understand it today and takes effect immediately.

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.” 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.

There will almost certainly be situations that necessitate temporary school closure due to positive COVID-19 cases in schools. Chester ISD will be prepared for this in the event that it occurs, while actively working to prevent it through prevention and mitigation practices.

Plan for On-Campus Activities and Instruction

Teachers and Administrators will prepare for the return of the students August 3rd-7th. To facilitate an effective back-to-school transition, the Texas Education Agency has given schools the option to temporarily limit access to on-campus instruction. Chester ISD will provide a 3-week phase in process. Students who are not in the first phase will be required to pick up a packet in the car rider line, August 7, 2020 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm.

A phase in of the return of students is as follows:

- August 10th-14th 4th, 5th, 8th, 11th, 12th grades
- August 17th-21st 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 10th grades (plus above grade levels)
- August 24th-28th All Students

Attendance and Enrollment

1. 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.

2. Given the public health situation, student attendance may be earned through the delivery of virtual instruction. Engagement will determine whether students are present each day. Engagement is defined in the following ways:

- Daily progress via student/teacher interaction
- Completion/Turn-in of assignments from student to teacher through Canvas, Chester ISD's online learning management system which will be used in the event of school closure

3. Any parent may request that their student be offered virtual instruction. However, parents may elect to transition at the end of the 6-week grading period. Any student exhibiting COVID 19 symptoms has the option to request a change to virtual instruction; furthermore, any student with a lab-confirmed COVID 19 result will be required to begin virtual instruction.

Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School

- Chester ISD will require teachers and staff to self-screen for symptoms each day.
- Parents must ensure that they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms.
- Visitors on campus during school hours will not be allowed. If visitors need to leave items for students, they may leave the items in the front office.
- Chester ISD will immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Chester ISD will clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school as soon as is feasible.
- Students who report feeling feverish will be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case at Chester ISD

- If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school will notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- School systems must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have passed since that person was on campus.
- An individual who has had a lab confirmed case may return after a continuous self quarantine of two weeks
- 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:
 - i. at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);

- ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - iii. 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) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19

Health and Hygiene Practices

- Chester ISD will have hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water at each entrance and will provide hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water in every classroom.
- Chester ISD will institute more frequent cleaning practices.
- Chester ISD will provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices.
- Chester ISD will comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.

Transportation

- Chester ISD encourages families to drop off/pick-up students to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.