



**Hughes Springs**  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

# District Health Guidelines

## 2020-2021 School Year

*August 3, 2020 Update – Updates are noted to the side of the text that has been updated*

We will release campus-specific documents closer to the start of school that will address guidelines and changes that are unique/specific to each campus.

This document is in line with current Texas Education Agency Public Health Planning Guidance as of **August 4, 2020**.

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the reopening of Hughes Springs ISD for the 2020-2021 school year.

The health, safety, and well-being of each student and staff member is paramount.

HSISD will follow the guidelines and suggestions provided by the Texas Education Agency and state health authorities. The use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing where possible, and in-depth cleaning and sanitizing procedures will be implemented.

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 significantly reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff and their families.

We must all remember that there will almost certainly be situations that necessitate temporary school closures due to COVID-19.

We realize we do not have all the answers to re-opening at this time. Like every other district in the state, HSISD will be pushing forward to try to have the best strategy specifically for our students, our district, and our community.

The 2020-2021 school year will call for teamwork and flexibility as we move forward in uncharted waters.

HSISD is committed to helping each student realize his or her full potential. As we navigate this new educational landscape together, we look forward to partnering with each of you in the creation of a culture focused on caring and safety.

Sarah Dildine  
HSISD Superintendent

Please note: The situation with COVID-19 is continuously changing, as are the protocols and measures needed to keep students and staff safe. Plans will remain flexible to accommodate potential change, and these guidelines may be modified as needed. We will post updates on our website, social media accounts and emails to parents.

# Screenings

For screenings, individuals will be asked if they have recently begun experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 in a way that is not normal for them.

## Signs & Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

Updated  
8-4-2020  
Per TEA  
Guidelines

## Close Contact

When considering screening question, individuals should also consider whether they have been in “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.

Close contact is defined as: Updated  
8-4-2020  
Per TEA  
Guidelines

a) being directly exposed to infectious secretions (Ex: Being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield), or

b) being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes while not wearing a mask or face shield, however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e., both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (a) or (b) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case,

defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test. Living in the same house with a lab-confirmed individual or caring for a lab-confirmed individual would also constitute close contact.

### Teachers & Staff

Our teachers and staff will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to work each day. This self-screen includes teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff are also required to report to the district: 1) if they have come into close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19; or 2) they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms.

### Visitors

Visitors are subject to current state, local and HSISD guidelines regarding masks.

All visitors who enter the buildings will be screened via a paper questionnaire or verbal questioning. Visitors are also subject to contactless temperature checks.

Visitors are *highly encouraged* to wear a mask when in HSISD buildings, even when there are no governor's executive orders in place.

### Students

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19.

Parents are required to self-screen their children **each day** prior to sending them to school. The self-screen needs to include taking the child's temperature. The self-screen also needs to consider if the child has recently begun experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 in a way that is not normal for them.

The school also has the right to screen students and students **may be** subject to contactless temperature checks.

Our staff will also be monitoring students and contact the nurse if symptoms are present.

If a student is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, the school nurse will complete a clinical assessment to determine if the student needs to be sent home.

If the nurse determines the child needs to be sent home, he/she will contact the parent. Someone will need to pick up the child within 30 minutes.

**Staff, Student & Visitors should NOT enter the building if any of the following apply. The individual is:**

- ✓ Sick or has been sick in the past 14 days with any of these symptoms – Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher), cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell
- ✓ Has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or has been in close contact with someone lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
- ✓ Has a household member who is awaiting COVID-19 test results or who is waiting on their own results
- ✓ Has traveled internationally or on a cruise in the past 14 days. These individuals must follow current CDC self-quarantine recommendations.

**Disclaimer:** Schools are permitted to refuse any individual who fails the screening criteria admission to the campus or bus until they meet the criteria for re-entry described later in this document.

# Visitors on Campus

In this document, the word visitor(s) refers to any person who does not work for Hughes Springs ISD or who is not an enrolled student.  
All parents/guardians are considered visitors.

Visitors will be restricted to those essential to school operations.

During visits, parents and other visitors must follow the virus prevention and mitigation requirements of the school.

All visitors who enter the buildings will be screened via a paper questionnaire or verbal questioning. Visitors are also subject to contactless temperature checks.

All visitors are *highly encouraged* to wear masks, even when there are no governor's executive orders in place.

Visitors are subject to all current state, local and HSISD guidelines regarding masks. If masks become a requirement, that information will be communicated and will be posted at our entrances.

## Visiting Your Child's Classroom

Classroom visits of any kind, including walking your child to the classroom door each morning, will not be permitted.

## Eating Lunch with Your Child

Visitors to the cafeteria during lunch will not be allowed for any reason, this includes parents.

See the "Cafeteria" section for more information regarding cafeteria related policies.

## Checking Your Child Out During the School Day

If you need to check your child out during the day, we will use the following procedures –

- 1) Arrive at the campus and park in the area designated below

- 2) Call the designated number and let them know you have arrived. The office will need the name of your child and the name of the person picking them up. You can call when you are in route if you would like.
- 3) An HSISD staff member will retrieve your child and bring them outside.
- 4) An HSISD staff member will verify your identity and have you sign a paper checking out your child.

Elementary	Elem Circle Drive	903-639-3881
Jr. High	JH Circle Drive at Front Entrance	903-639-3812
High School	Parking Lot Between JH & HS	903-639-3841

If everyone will follow this procedure it will cut down on the outside traffic in our buildings and save valuable time by avoiding the screening process that is required to enter the buildings.

Due to the very intricate end-of-day procedures that each campus will implement to ensure we get each child home safely, we ask that you check your child out **by 2:45 pm**, if you need them before the regular dismissal of school.

### **Setting Up A Conference with a Principal, Counselor, Teacher or Other School Employee**

If you need to have a conference or speak with an HSISD employee, we ask that you please call ahead of time and schedule an appointment. You can also email the employee or campus principal to schedule an appointment.

Once your appointment is scheduled, we ask that you arrive no more than 5 minutes ahead of time, this is ample time for us to complete the required screening process and we want to minimize wait time in offices.

To help mitigate the risk, we need to cut down on the traffic in our buildings and need to limit the amount of time visitors must sit in the office and wait to see our staff. If parents/guardians show up without an appointment, the person they are wanting to see may be absent, unavailable or in another meeting

We do understand at times there are emergency situations and an appointment is not possible. However, those situations are few and far between.

### **School Scheduled ARDs, LPACs, 504 & Other Required Meetings**

When it is necessary for us to conduct an ARD, LPAC, 504 or other required meeting, we will contact the parent/guardian and schedule an appointment.

Please arrive, no more than 5 minutes early, at the specified location. That is ample time for us to screen you and get you to the meeting.

### **Forgotten Items**

Apart from glasses and medication, we can provide students with any item they may have left at home or provide accommodations to help them get through the day without that item.

Therefore, we will not accept forgotten items, as these are not “essential to school operations,” and we are trying to limit visitors to our buildings for the safety of students and staff.

If your child forgets his/her lunch, just call the office and let us know. We will make sure he/she has something to eat. We will not accept food deliveries. See the “Cafeteria” section for more information.

**Our staff understands that kids forget things, but they also understand the importance of health & safety! We can make it work for one day without the item your child forgot!**

**If your child forgets glasses or medication, just call the office. We will arrange for a staff member to meet you in the parking lot & retrieve that item.**



## Sick Students / Staff Members

Any student **or** staff member that leaves our campuses because they are sick, must be screened by the nurse before going home.

Updated  
8-4-2020  
Per TEA  
Guidelines

## Individuals Confirmed, Suspected or Exposed to COVID-19

Any individual – teachers, staff, students, or other campus visitors – who **themselves**:

- A) Are lab confirmed to have COVID-19 or
- B) Experience the symptoms of COVID-19

Must stay at home throughout the infectious period and cannot return to school until HSISD screens the individual to determine if the conditions for re-entry have been met. The re-entry conditions are listed below –

In the case of an individual diagnosed with COVID-19, **all three criteria must be met**:

- At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medications).
- Improvement in symptoms (ex – cough, shortness of breath, etc.)
- At least 10 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:

- **All three criteria listed above must be met**

In the case of an individual who has symptoms that *could* be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period the individual must:

- Obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis; **or**
- Obtain an acute infection test at an approved COVID-19 testing location that comes back **negative** for COVID-19.

Approved COVID-19 testing locations are listed here: <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19>

In the case of individuals who have had close contact\* with someone who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19:

- Should stay at home through the 14-day incubation period & should not be allowed on campus
- The school will screen the individual after the 14-day period, if they exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 during that time, they must stay at home until they have met the criteria listed on the previous page. If they did not experience symptoms of COVID-19 during that time, they will be allowed back at school.

**\*see the definition of close contact at the beginning of this document**

### **Determination of Re-Entry**

Determination as to whether an individual has met the criteria will be made by the designated administrator & nurse who will present all the information to the superintendent.

**Final determination for re-entry in all cases lies with the superintendent.**

For Elementary Students, Staff & Visitors – Brenda Fincher & Brandi Pittman

For Jr. High Students, Staff & Visitors – Rusty Duke & Melissa Stonesifer

For High School Students, Staff & Visitors – Brian Nation & Melissa Stonesifer

For Staff Not Assigned to a Particular Campus – Immediate Supervisor & Brandi Pittman or Melissa Stonesifer

# **Suspected COVID-19 Cases on Campus**

The following steps will be taken if we have any individual on our campuses that we suspect of having COVID-19 due to showing symptoms:

## **Student Procedures**

- A student who is suspected will be immediately isolated from everyone (except the nurse) and asked to put on a mask. The nurse will provide a clinical assessment.
- If the nurse determines the child needs to be sent home, they will contact the parent. We ask that the child be picked up within 30 minutes.
- When the parent arrives to pick up the child, the nurse will provide the parent with a form that shows the symptoms the child is experiencing as well as a record of their temperature.
- The nurse will also provide the parent with a copy of the re-entry criteria described above in the section titled "**Individuals Confirmed, Suspected or Exposed to COVID-19**".
- We will clean the area(s) the individual was in as soon as feasible and safely remove all other individuals from that area.

## **Staff & Visitor Procedures**

- Staff & visitors who are suspected will be asked to leave immediately.
- Before they can return, they will be required to meet the re-entry criteria describe above in the section titled "**Individuals Confirmed, Suspected or Exposed to COVID-19**".
- We will clean the area(s) the individual was in as soon as feasible and safely remove all other individuals from that area

## Lab-Confirmed Case in the School

If a student is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the parent/guardian should immediately notify the campus principal and/or superintendent.

Elementary – Brenda Fincher, 903-639-3880 or [fincherb@hsisd.net](mailto:fincherb@hsisd.net)

Junior High – Rusty Duke, 903-639-3811 or [dukej@hsisd.net](mailto:dukej@hsisd.net)

High School – Brian Nation, 903-639-3840 or [nationb@hsisd.net](mailto:nationb@hsisd.net)

Superintendent – Sarah Dildine, 903-639-3802 or [dildines@hsisd.net](mailto:dildines@hsisd.net)

If a staff member is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, they should immediately notify their immediate supervisor – Campus Principal, Cafeteria Director, Technology Director, Maintenance/Transportation Director or Superintendent.

Once we are notified of a lab-confirmed case in our district, the following steps will be taken by the superintendent or their designee:

- 1) Notify the Cass County Health Department. **We are required to follow the guidance of our local health department.**
- 2) Close off areas that are/were heavily used by the individual until those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 7 days have passed since that person was on campus.
- 3) Consistent with school policies & legal confidentiality requirements, we will notify necessary staff & families of students that a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case has been identified in our district.

Updated  
8-4-2020  
Per TEA  
Guidelines

The notification will contain the following information –

- Age Range (*for example for a student = 10-12 year-old, for an adult = 20-29 year old*)
- Campus or Building
- End of the 14-day incubation period based on the last time our staff/students could have been exposed to person with lab-confirmed COVID-19.

## **Quarantines / School Closures**

If deemed necessary, we may close the entire campus / building temporarily to give it a thorough cleaning if there is a lab-confirmed case in that campus or building.

Quarantine of specific students/staff is a decision made in conjunction with the health department. HSISD will perform contact tracing on our campuses to help determine who all and infected individual came in close contact with.

We will use the “COVID-19” make up days that are designated on our school calendar to make up any days that are necessary for us to meet the required 75,600 minutes of instruction that the Texas Education Agency requires.

## **Standard Classroom Procedures**

- Hand sanitizing stations are in all classrooms.
- Whenever possible, students and staff will maintain consistent groupings of people to minimize the spread of the virus.
- Access to, and frequent use of, disinfecting products to sanitize commonly touched surfaces
- Social distancing to the maximum extent possible
- Frequent, scheduled hand washing / sanitizing when social distancing is not fully possible

# **Health & Hygiene Practices**

HSISD will implement the following practices to help mitigate the likelihood of a COVID-19 spread inside the school.

## **Hand Washing / Sanitizing**

Hand sanitizer will be available for use in all HSISD classrooms, offices, and other common areas. It will also be available at the main entrances to the campuses.

Students, staff, and visitors will be encouraged to wash & sanitize their hands frequently.

The proper handwashing techniques will be taught to all students at the start of the school year.

Recommended handwashing upon the return from outdoors, before eating, after eating, and following restroom breaks.

## **Cleaning/Sanitizing of Commonly Touched Surfaces**

Commonly touched surfaces include, but are not limited to doorknobs, desks, common tables, keyboards, etc.

Our custodial staff will increase their cleaning and sanitation of commonly touched surfaces.

Our cafeteria staff will increase their cleaning and sanitation of commonly touched surfaces.

In our classrooms, we will increase our cleaning/sanitizing as well.

### **Pre-Kindergarten – 2nd Grade Classrooms**

These classrooms are self-contained and have the same group of students in them all day long. Our teachers will sanitize commonly touched surfaces several times daily as well as encourage and provide time for frequent hand sanitizing.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5th Grade Classrooms

We will keep the homeroom group of students in a single classroom all day. We will have the teachers rotate from classroom to classroom to teach the various subjects.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Classrooms

These classrooms are used by different class groups through the day. In between each class group, the commonly touched surfaces will be disinfected.

Classroom and office staff will have easy access to disinfecting sprays and will frequently sanitize shared working surfaces and objects.

Where age appropriate, students will participate in the disinfecting process by helping wipe surfaces the teacher has sprayed with disinfectant. This has been a common practice in HSISD in years past, especially during flu season, so many of the students are used to it, and it has been effective for us.

## Masks / Face Coverings

HSISD is required to comply with all the governor's executive orders regarding the wearing of masks. Those orders supersede this document.

As it stands on July 20, 2020, everyone over the age of 10 would be required to wear a mask.

Individual needs regarding face coverings will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Requests for accommodations should be submitted to the campus principal.

For the purposes of this document, masks include non-medical grade disposable face coverings, homemade cloth masks, medical-grade masks, and face shields. For a mask to be an effective covering, it must cover the nose and mouth.

### **Staff**

Staff will be *highly encouraged* to wear masks or other face coverings at all times.

Staff will be *required* to wear mask or face shields when in close proximity to students. For example, a teacher sitting at a table with a child teaching them to read or an aide sitting close to a student providing oral administration on an assignment is close proximity.

Face shields are more conducive to teaching given the improved ability to see mouth movements and improved air circulation, so HSISD will provide face shields to all staff members. We will provide reusable masks to all staff members.

Staff will be *highly encouraged* to wear masks when congregating with other staff in close settings, such as staff meetings.

## Students

Students are *highly encouraged*, but not required, to wear masks when they will be in close proximity to other students for an extended period.

**The current governor's executive orders regarding masks, apply to everyone ten years of age and older.**

If your child is younger than 10, a mask may not be developmentally appropriate. Young children who are unable to adjust or remove masks properly should not be regarded as suitable candidates for wearing masks.

The determination of whether wearing a mask is developmentally appropriate for a child under 10 is up to the student's parent/guardian.

Some things to consider when deciding on whether your child should wear a mask:

- Does my child have asthma or difficulty breathing?
- Can my child take a mask on and off (properly) by themselves?
- Does wearing a mask cause my child to touch their face more frequently?
- Is my child comfortable wearing a mask for extended periods of time?

If parents/guardians want their child to wear a mask when it is optional that the child do so, it is the child's responsibility to wear the mask.

## Visitors

Visitors are *highly encouraged* to wear a mask when in HSISD buildings.

Visitors are subject to current state, local and HSISD guidelines regarding masks. If masks become a requirement, that information will be communicated and posted at our entrances. **As of July 20, 2020, masks are a requirement.**



## **Social Distancing**

Where feasible, without disrupting the educational experience, we will encourage students and staff to practice social distancing.

In classrooms that allow it we will place student desks, so they are socially distanced.

In classrooms that do not allow it, we plan for more frequent handwashing and sanitation practices.

Our teachers will also be adding other adjustments to classroom routines.

Congregating in the halls is discouraged. We are adjusting, as best we can, our passing periods at junior high and high school. More information will be in the campus-specific documents.

## **Use of HSISD Facilities by the Public During the School Day**

The HSISD Track will be closed to the public from 7:00 am – 4:00 pm each day that school is in session.

## **Increased Airflow / Fresh Air**

When practical and safe to do so, teachers are encouraged to open windows to improve airflow and bring in fresh air.

Weather permitting, physical education classes will be held outdoors, rather than inside.

Weather permitting, elementary and junior high students will have recess time outside.

## **Water Fountains**

Water fountains will not be available for student use.

All students are encouraged to bring bottled water or a reusable water bottle to school each day.

Drink refilling stations will be available in lieu of water fountains.

# Cafeteria

**All students are expected to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to entering the cafeteria.**

## Cleaning and Sanitation

Our cafeteria staff will increase their cleaning and sanitation of commonly touched surfaces.

Our cafeteria will continue to follow all SERV Safe and health department guidelines while preparing and serving meals.

## Increased Social Distancing

Students will socially distance as much as possible in the cafeteria.

We have installed plexiglass in the cafeteria to further protect the food in the serving lines and to separate our two serving lines so that students can socially distance to the maximum extent possible.

We have added additional tables in the old gym (adjacent to the cafeteria) and in the high school courtyard so that we can increase social distancing during junior high & high school lunches. High school students will be able to eat outdoor when the weather permits.

Elementary & junior high lunch schedules have been adjusted to allow for maximum social distancing and to keep students in homeroom groups when eating.

More information will be in the campus-specific documents.

## Visitors to the Cafeteria

Due to COVID-19, no visitors will be allowed in the cafeteria during lunch, including parents.

## Outside Food

If your child wants outside food (from home or a restaurant), they must bring it to school with them at the start of the school day.

Outside food cannot be brought to the student in the cafeteria, in the parking lot before

lunch or to the campus office. Deliveries from restaurants will also not be accepted.

If your child forgets his/her lunch, just call the campus office and let us know. We will make sure he/she is provided with a tray from the cafeteria.

Students **cannot** bring outside food to share with other students. For example – pizzas, cupcakes, birthday cake, etc.

# Transportation

## Entering Buildings in the Morning/ Afternoon Release of Students

These will be more regimented this year to allow for maximum social distancing and to avoid large crowds of students.

Detailed information will be in the campus-specific plans.

Please bear with us the first few weeks of school as we work out the “kinks” and get used to this new normal.

## Buses

Students will be required to use hand sanitizer upon entering the bus each morning and afternoon.

Students, for whom it is developmentally appropriate, are *highly encouraged* to wear masks while on the bus.

**As it stands on July 20, 2020, everyone over the age of 10 would be required to wear a mask.**

When possible, windows will be opened to allow for outside air to circulate in the bus.

Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each use.

Bus drivers will keep daily seating charts, as has been our practice for several years, that will help us in the event we need to do contact tracing.

## Car-Rider Lines

There will be slight changes made to the car-rider lines that allow for the maximum social distancing possible.

These changes will be addressed in the campus-specific plans.

We ask that you please remain in your vehicle when dropping off / picking up your student.

### Walk-Ups at Elementary

**Walk-ups will no longer be allowed at elementary.** Parents will **not** be permitted to stand at the entrances and along the sidewalks to pick up their kids in the afternoons.

We ask that you use our designated car rider lines.

## Changes for Pre-Kindergarten

In the past, we have moved the pre-kindergarten students, via bus, at lunch, from the HSISD campus to the Head Start campus. We will **not** do that during the 2020-2021 school year. The information below outlines how we will handle pre-kindergarten.

We will use a random process to assign pre-kindergarten students to either attend school at the Head Start campus located at 903 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street or the Hughes Springs Elementary Campus at 809 Russell Street.

The Head Start teacher and the HSISD teacher will switch locations at noon so the children can remain in one location all day.

Every child will have the benefit of being taught by both teachers.

Each facility is comparable in materials, manipulatives and play areas.

The teachers will be planning and working closely to give each child the best education possible.

## Other Information / Changes

These will be included in the campus-specific plans. The anticipated release date of the campus-specific plans is Tuesday, August 4, 2020.

**This page intentionally left blank.**