



Terrell County Independent School District
PO Box 747
Sanderson, Texas 79848
432-345-2515
Fax (432) 345-2404

January 5, 2021

Dear Terrell County ISD parents and students,

Happy New Year! As everyone prepares to return to school on Thursday, it is important that everyone be reminded of the following requirements:

- Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms.
- Parents must not send their child to school if he/she is test-confirmed with COVID-19.
- Parents must ensure that they do not send a child to school if the student meets the definition of “close contact” with someone who has a positive test for COVID-19.

In any of the situations listed above, the parent/guardian is **required** to notify the school district **immediately**, if their child is symptomatic, tested positive for COVID-19 or if the student meets the definition of close contact. In this situation, the district and parent would make accommodations for the student to participate in remote learning for the 10-14 day required quarantine period.

PROTOCOLS FOR RETURNING TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

To ensure that everyone returns from the long break and remains safe, as a school district, it is important that we take some additional precautions when returning on Thursday. Our goal is to make sure all the students have the opportunity to attend classes in-person. The research has shown that students are more successful with school when they attend in-person vs. online. During our brief virtual schooling in December, it was evident that many of our students require the face-to-face instruction and the socialization that in-person instruction provides. In order to ensure that we are able to continue in-person and to ensure that we do not have to extend the school year into the summer due to additional closures, it is imperative that we all work together to ensure that we keep all students and staff members safe and healthy.

Upon returning to school on Thursday, January 7, 2021, the following protocols will be in place:

- Temperature checks will continue as they were during the 1st semester.
- Masks/face-coverings will be required for all staff members and students PreK-12.
- Students in grades 5th - 12th grade will be required to wear masks/face-coverings all day, for a minimum of 10 school days. This is an added precaution because of the potential risks that could have developed due to the Christmas Break. Teachers will provide the students with very brief opportunities to remove masks; however, the brief opportunity will not exceed 5 minutes. The only time that masks will not be required will be during PE and athletics (when actively participating). After 10 school days, the administration will determine if masks will be required all day or if the district will revert to the practices that were used during the first semester.
- All staff members will be required to wear their masks/face-coverings all day, for a minimum of 10 school days. The only time staff members are allowed to have their masks/face-coverings removed will be when they are alone in their classrooms/office. After 10 school days, the administration will determine if masks will be required all day or if the district will revert to the practices that were used during the first semester.



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- PreK-4th grade students will not be required to wear their masks all day, as long as they are social distancing within the classroom. The teachers can request that the students wear their masks for extended periods of time, due to the current COVID-19 situation.
- Hand sanitizing when entering and exiting the classrooms will be required.
- Desks and other surfaces will be sanitized after each class period.
- If a student has a cough, or other symptoms that are possible COVID-19 symptoms, the student will be asked to remain at home until they receive clearance from a medical professional. While this is not convenient for the students, teachers or parents, it is a measure that we must take to ensure that we reduce the risks of spreading COVID-19.

INDIVIDUAL CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED WITH COVID-19

Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are test-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 **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 is symptomatic and is diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
 - at least one day (24 hours) has 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 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- In the case of an individual that is asymptomatic but has received a positive COVID-19 test result, the individual may not return to the campus until 14 days have passed since a positive test.
- 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, though for health privacy reasons the note does not need to indicate what the alternative diagnosis is, or
 - (b) obtain an acute infection test (at a physician's office, approved testing location, or other site) that comes back negative for COVID-19.



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CLOSE CONTACT

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is test-confirmed to have COVID-19. In general, close contact is defined as:

- a) being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
- b) being within 6 feet for a total of approximately 15 minutes throughout the course of a day; 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.

STAY-AT-HOME PERIOD FOR CLOSE CONTACTS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO TESTED POSITIVE

For individuals who are close contacts to individuals who tested positive, a 14-day stay-at-home period was previously advised by the CDC based on the incubation period of the virus.

As of December 2, 2020, the CDC amended their guidance to allow two shorter options for the stay-at-home period. Based on current CDC guidance, the stay-at-home period can end for individuals experiencing no symptoms:

- On Day 10 after close contact exposure without testing,
- On Day 7 after close contact exposure and after receiving a negative test result.

If individuals return to school from these shorter stay-at-home windows, they should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., more consistent mask usage) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period.

We ask that parents and guardians do everything they can to ensure that sick students are NOT sent to school. While attendance is important, the health of our students, staff and community is our priority. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these return to school requirements, please notify me immediately at 432-345-2515 ext. 101 or at amagallan@terrell.esc18.net.

We want to provide our students with an exciting and educational environment that is safe. With your support we know that we can get through these challenging times. Thank you for what you do for our students, school and our community.

Sincerely,

Amanda A. Magallan
Sanderson Schools
Terrell County Independent School District