



Horizon Montessori Public Schools

"Tomorrow's Education Today"

2402 E. Business Hwy. 83 Weslaco, Texas 78596

DATE: January 17, 2022
TO: All Horizon Montessori Public School Staff and Students
FROM: Jenilee Farias, Human Resources Coordinator
SUBJECT: **COVID-19 Policies and Procedures**

In an effort to exercise caution, Horizon Montessori Public Schools (HMPS) expresses the necessity of implementing safety strategies and policies and procedures for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). HMPS reserves the right to implement such policies and reserves the right to modify, supersede, and/or render obsolete any such policy as needed.

Safety and Prevention Strategies

HMPS staff and students are to adhere to all Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and recommendations such as "Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools" which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>.

Guidance and recommendations given by various entities that may include the Texas Education Agency (TEA), federal, state and local health departments, as well as the district will also be adhered to.

As per CDC recommendations in conjunction with above entities, HMPS will adhere to the following prevention strategies to reduce transmission of COVID-19 within our schools.

Masks

As per TEA, mask provisions of GA-38 are not being enforced as the results of ongoing litigation. At this time, HMPS is following guidance provided by local health departments as well as guidance from CDC. CDC mask guidance can be found on:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html>

Physical Distancing

-CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing to reduce transmission risk.



Horizon Montessori Public Schools

"Tomorrow's Education Today"

2402 E. Business Hwy. 83 Weslaco, Texas 78596

- A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated.
- Cohorting will be implemented when necessary to limit the spread of COVID-19. In relation, self-contained classes for elementary will remain in effect to decrease transmission.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

HMPS will monitor and reinforce handwashing and respiratory etiquette such as:

- covering coughs and sneezes.
- teaching and reinforcing handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Reminding all to wash hands frequently and assist young children with handwashing when necessary.
- When handwashing is not possible, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Sanitation stations are available throughout the campuses/offices.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

HMPS will ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning settings are maximizing ventilation and filtering clean air. Regular cleaning of high touch surfaces such as faucets, door handles, copiers, monitors, keyboards, control panels, desks, chairs, etc. will be done so at least on a daily basis and as much between use as possible. Deep cleanings such as defogging will be executed upon need.

Displaying Symptoms of COVID-19 While At Work/School

As per CDC, students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illnesses, such as influenza or COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care, regardless of vaccination status. As per TEA and the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, school systems must exclude students and staff from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19. HMPS reserves the right to follow such guidelines, especially if the student or staff member is present on campus while exhibiting signs of COVID-19.

Public Health Guidance and Protocols

Any and all HMPS employees or students who know they have been exposed or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 should report such findings to immediate supervisor/principal and Human Resources immediately, but no later than 24 hours of exposure or results.

Upon receiving a confirmed case, HMPS will advise the covid positive individual of isolation recommendations as per local health departments and CDC and will inform them of readmission

Tel. (956) 969-3092

Fax (956) 969-8614



Horizon Montessori Public Schools

"Tomorrow's Education Today"

2402 E. Business Hwy. 83 Weslaco, Texas 78596

criteria as per DSHS. Close contacts will be identified and notified promptly and advised of quarantine recommendations as per local health departments and CDC.

HMPS will follow guidelines outlined by TEA for the following:

1. Required actions if individuals with test-confirmed cases have been in a school.
2. Students who have COVID-19.
3. Students who are close contacts.
4. Staff who have COVID-19 or who are close contacts.

Such guidelines were last published on January 7, 2022 and can be found at <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/SY-20-21-Public-Health-Guidance.pdf>

HMPS will collaborate with the appropriate health department to the extent allowable by privacy laws to confidentially provide information about individuals diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. At this time HMPS collaborates with the following health departments:

Hidalgo County Health and Human Services – McAllen Campus, Weslaco Campus, Central Office

Cameron County Public Health - Harlingen Campus

Brazoria County Health Department – Pearland Campus

HMPS will continually monitor international, federal, state and local public health communications about COVID-19 and make necessary changes or adjustments to existing policies as per guidance.

Vaccinations, Quarantine, Isolation

While vaccinations are not mandatory at this time, vaccinations are encouraged to help stop the COVID-19 pandemic. HMPS will continually work with local health departments and local pharmacies in allocating available vaccinations for those who meet eligibility requirements and wish to get vaccinated.

Quarantine is defined as when one might have to quarantine when they have been exposed to the virus and may or may not have been infected. Isolate is when one is sick or when one has been infected with the virus, even when they don't have symptoms.

Currently HMPS is following separate guidance for students and staff members as advised by TEA, DSHS, CDC and local counties.

Students Who are Close Contacts (Exposed) and ARE vaccinated:

Tel. (956) 969-3092
Fax (956) 969-8614



Horizon Montessori Public Schools

"Tomorrow's Education Today"

2402 E. Business Hwy. 83 Weslaco, Texas 78596

Students who are fully vaccinated (having received both vaccinations for Moderna and Pfizer within the last 6 months) do not need to quarantine but are advised to:

- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public.
- Watch for symptoms until 10 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results.

Students Who are Close Contacts (Exposed) and are NOT vaccinated:

A 10-day quarantine period *is highly advised* and can end for students experiencing no symptoms after day 10.

If parents choose to instead follow the guidance issued by CDC which advises for a 5-day quarantine, *the school will permit this request but will ask for a negative test prior to the student returning after day 5.*

If parents choose not to quarantine student at all (declines a 5- or 10-day quarantine), the following is *strongly advised*:

- Watch for symptoms until 10 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- Even if you don't develop symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results.
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public.

Students Who Are Positive with COVID-19:

Students who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19 or who have received a positive test for COVID-19 will be excluded from attending school in person until the conditions for re-entry are met which are:

- If symptomatic, student will be excluded until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free*, and other symptoms have improved.
- Students who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 10 days after the day they were tested.

*Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.



Horizon Montessori Public Schools

"Tomorrow's Education Today"

2402 E. Business Hwy. 83 Weslaco, Texas 78596

Staff members who were exposed to COVID-19 and are NOT up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations (past 6 months of vaccines, not boosted or unvaccinated):

- Stay home and quarantine for at least 5 full days.
- Wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others in your home.
- Even if you don't develop symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- After quarantine, watch for symptoms until 10 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- If symptoms develop, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. Wear a well-fitted mask around others.
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public.

Staff who were exposed to COVID-19 and ARE up-to-date with vaccination OR had confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days (tested positive using a viral test):

- You do not need to stay home unless you develop symptoms.
- Even if you don't develop symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- Watch for symptoms until 10 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. Wear a well-fitted mask around others.
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public.

Staff who tested positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms, regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home for 5 days and isolate from others in your home.
- Wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others in your home.
- End isolation after 5 full days if you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and your symptoms are improving.
- If you did NOT have symptoms, end isolation after at least 5 full days after your positive test.
- If you were severely ill with COVID-19, you should isolate for at least 10 days. Consult your doctor before ending isolation.
- Wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time you are around others inside your home or in public.

Diagnostic/Screening Testing

At this time, HMPS does not conduct diagnostic/screening testing. HMPS will coordinate with the appropriate public health officials/departments to help link students and their families, teachers and staff to opportunities for testing in their surrounding communities.

Tel. (956) 969-3092
Fax (956) 969-8614



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

HMPS will comply with ADA requirements and reasonably accommodate physical and mental impairments at all times. Appropriate accommodations will be made for students and employees with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

HMPS will comply with all OSHA requirements. HMPS will timely report to OSHA an employee's confirmed case of COVID-19 only if an employee dies or requires in-patient hospitalization as a result of contracting the virus while performing work-related duties.

Failure to Report

Any individual who fails to report they have been diagnosed with a communicable disease such as COVID-19 could be subject to legal repercussions. If an employee fails to report to their immediate supervisor, HR, or designated personnel that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and continues to report to work, they will be subject to disciplinary action as well as legal repercussions.

As per Texas Health and Safety Code:

Sec. 81.049 Failure To Report; Criminal Penalty

- (a) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly fails to report a reportable disease or health condition under this subchapter.
- (b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.

Sec. 81.006 Concealing Communicable Disease or Exposure To Communicable Disease; Criminal Penalty

- (a) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly conceals or attempts to conceal from the department, a health authority, or a peace officer, during the course of an investigation under this chapter, the fact that:
 - (1) The person has, has been exposed to, or is the carrier of a communicable disease that is a threat to the public health; or
 - (2) A minor child or incompetent adult of whom the person is a parent, managing conservator, or guardian has, has been exposed to, or is the carrier of a communicable disease that is a threat to the public health.
- (b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.

For a complete listing of the Texas Health and Safety Code, visit <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/HS/htm/HS.81.htm>