

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 originated in Wuhan, Hubei Province China. It is being closely monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Are there any confirmed cases of COVID-19 in HISD?

HISD currently has no confirmed cases of COVID-19. However, acting out of an abundance of caution, the district issued a 14-day self-quarantine for several individuals, all of whom recently returned from a country on the CDC travel warning list or are closely related to someone who did. Schools will be identified if cases are confirmed, as recommended by health officials.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

How is the virus spread? Is there a vaccine?

COVID-19 is spread between people who are in close contact with one another (within about six feet) through coughing and sneezing. The virus also may be transmitted by touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands. There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19.

What can I do to prevent the spread of the virus?

- Wash hands with soap and water frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Use alcohol-based sanitizers when soap and water are not available
- Use disposable tissues when coughing and sneezing, and dispose of them carefully and promptly
- If tissues are not available, direct your cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm/sleeve
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect “high-touch” objects and surfaces
- Stay home when you are sick, and remain home until you have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms
- Maintain healthy habits that support your immune system

Is HISD going to close due to COVID-19?

We are committed to keeping you updated and providing you with information as soon as we have it. Please know that the health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority and all decisions are being made with that in mind. We are continuing to closely monitor the situation and staying in contact with city, state, and national health and education officials. If any cases are confirmed in HISD, we will notify you and let you know what actions are being taken as a result. Please visit houstonisd.org/HealthAlerts for the latest updates.

Where can I find the latest information and updates about the impact of COVID-19 on HISD?

For ongoing updates and information, visit HoustonISD.org/HealthAlerts.

HISD ENHANCED CLEANING PROCEDURES

How are you keeping schools clean?

HISD is enhancing standard procedures for cleaning and disinfection of schools. In addition to routine cleaning, custodial crews are regularly disinfecting tables, chairs, desks, cabinets, door handles, restrooms, sinks, water fountains, and other frequently touched areas, as suggested by local and state health officials and the Texas Education Agency. Additionally, the district uses antimicrobial floor wax as standard practice.

HISD has contracted with two commercial cleaning companies to assist with deep cleaning and sanitization efforts, as needed. This includes fogging all rooms with CDC-recommended disinfectant and cleaning all air ducts, a common practice for potential cases of airborne viruses.

Does HISD have enough supplies?

Custodial teams also are making sure all schools and buildings are properly stocked with needed supplies, including soap, paper towels, and toilet paper. Surplus supplies also have been ordered and are on-hand, should schools need to be quickly restocked.

Campus staff should continue to follow the standard procedure for re-ordering supplies, as needed. If a campus is completely out of supplies, the plant operator should contact his or her supervisor for an immediate delivery, which also is standard process.

Why doesn't my teacher or classroom have cleaning supplies?

All school cleaning is done by in-house and contract custodial crews. Any additional cleaning and disinfecting supplies for teachers to have on hand in their classrooms must be ordered at the campus level.

Are HISD custodians trained?

HISD custodians and plant operators undergo extensive, ongoing training related to proper cleaning and sanitization. Like all HISD employees, they also must complete the district's annual required online training for health-related issues.

How is my bus being cleaned?

Daily bus sanitization is taking place. Custodial managers are training transportation staff on proper cleaning and sanitization methods, and custodial crews are providing bus cleaning assistance, as needed.

CAMPUS VISITATION — CHILDCARE, TUTORING, STUDENT WORK PROGRAMS, MEETINGS

Can I still visit a school?

Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, and lasting through Friday, April 3, 2020, HISD will temporarily limit **ALL** campus visitors, including parents and volunteers. Parents will only be allowed on campus to pick up or drop off their child. If a parent meeting is scheduled, they will be required to complete check in and check out at the school office or campus clinic.

Afterschool childcare will remain open. Tutoring and Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) and Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) meetings also will continue as scheduled. However, participants will be subject to screening.

Note: All tutors, student teachers, substitutes, hourly lecturers, vendors, and contract employees must be screened by an HISD nurse before they will be allowed access to the campus. This includes mandatory temperature screenings, as well as questions regarding recent travel and health-related symptoms.

Will this impact students involved in work-based learning opportunities?

HISD is in communication with business partners that provide our students work-based learning opportunities. HISD students who work off campus will continue to do so unless the worksite closes or cancels student participation.

Can union representatives come onto campus during this time?

Union representatives will be allowed on campus for grievance meetings only after they have been screened by an HISD nurse. Teleconferencing is strongly encouraged during this time.

REQUIRED TRAVEL REPORTING

What if I'm going on vacation during Spring Break?

All HISD employees, students, and families who have traveled or are planning to must register their travel plans using the **HISD Travel Reporting Form**. This form must be completed no later than Friday, March 27, 2020. (Printable version: www.houstonisd.org/HealthAlerts.) All HISD students, families, and employees should take extra precautions when traveling and follow travel guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travel website](#).

CAMPUS & DISTRICT EVENTS

Are any district or campus events canceled?

Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, and lasting through Friday, April 3, 2020, all afterschool activities and large campus gatherings will be **CANCELED**. The Parent University scheduled for March 24, 2020, also is canceled.

Note: UIL-sponsored events taking place at stadiums will continue as scheduled. UIL-sponsored events will continue after spring break as scheduled.

Will Spring Break camps still be held at my campus?

HISD Spring Break camps will be limited to three days — Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday — to allow time for thorough cleaning before students return to school.

UPDATED ABSENCE & ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Are there any updates to the student attendance policy due to COVID-19 concerns?

HISD will continue to accept a written excuse from parents for student absences that may be related to precautions taken around COVID-19.

Are there any updates to the student attendance policy due to COVID-19 concerns?

Perfect attendance guidelines will be suspended for the remainder of the semester, with perfect attendance for the 2019-2020 school year recognized through March 6, 2020. Additionally, attendance criteria for high school final exam exemptions will be suspended for Spring 2020.