

# COVID-19 Health and Safety Q&A

## Texas

Academic Year 2021-2022

### Health and Safety

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Heritage Charter Schools is ready to meet the needs of students through on-campus instruction during the 2021-22 school year. Our team continues to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and we receive regular updates, guidance, and/or directives from Texas Governor Greg Abbott; Texas Education Agency Commissioner Mike Morath; and other local, state, and federal agencies regarding response, prevention, and mitigation efforts. This guidance has evolved and will continue to evolve based on COVID-19 conditions across the state and within the communities we serve.

Heritage Charter Schools has developed these operational guidelines in consultation with the following organizations:

- Texas Education Agency (TEA): [Public Health Orders](#), Updated 8/05/21
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [Considerations for Schools](#),
  - American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): [COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#),
  - Local Education Service Centers and School Districts<sup>1</sup>, and
  - Local County and City Health Departments.
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- [Will my student's campus require face coverings?](#)

In compliance with the [Governor of Texas' Executive Order \(GA-36\)](#), which prohibits government entities (including charter schools) from requiring facial coverings, effective 11:59 p.m., June 4, campuses will no longer be required or allowed to mandate students, staff, and visitors to wear facial coverings. This Executive Order supersedes any existing mandates; campus leaders and staff cannot require either students, staff, or visitors to wear a facial covering while on campus. Therefore, facial coverings are optional for students, staff and visitors. Campuses will work to ensure no person is treated differently as a result of their choice to wear or not wear a face covering.

*The [Texas Education Agency](#) and Heritage Charter Schools encourage students, staff, and visitors to wear face covers while indoors on campus.*

- [Will my student's campus require vaccination?](#)

In compliance with the [Governor of Texas' Executive Order \(GA-38\)](#), which prohibits government entities (including charter schools) from mandating vaccines, campus leaders and staff cannot require either students, staff or visitors to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Therefore, vaccinations are optional for students, staff and visitors. Campuses will work to ensure no person is treated differently as a result of their choice to vaccinate or not vaccinate.

The [Texas Education Agency](#) and Heritage Charter Schools encourage students and staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

- Will vaccination status impact the campus' face covering policy?

The [Governor of Texas' Executive Order \(GA-38\)](#) prohibits campuses from requiring facial coverings for students, staff or visitors, regardless of vaccination status.

- Where can my child get a COVID-19 vaccine?

The [COVID-19 vaccine](#) is available at many local pharmacies, doctor's offices and other locations. The [Food and Drug Administration](#) has expanded the emergency use authorization for the vaccinations to include all individuals age 12 and older.

- Should I screen my student before they arrive at the campus?

All staff, visitors and students should screen at home for COVID-19 symptoms using [screening questions](#) each day before arriving at the campus. All staff, visitors and students (with parental assistance) should monitor for symptoms of illness before campus arrival.

- What should I do if I suspect my child has COVID-19?

Keep your student home from campus until you can see a health care provider or they receive results from a [COVID-19](#) test.

- If my child tests positive for COVID, how long does my student have to isolate?

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate until:

- 10 days have passed since symptoms began;
- Symptoms have improved;
- Fever-free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.

- Will Heritage Charter Schools require parents to notify the campus if their child tests positive for COVID-19?

Parents are required to report to their campus as soon as possible if their student has tested positive for COVID-19. Parents should contact the campus nurse via email or phone call to report the student's COVID-19 case.

- How will students who have tested positive for COVID-19 access instruction during the isolation?

Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate until at least 10 days have passed since their symptom onset AND their symptoms have improved, or since their positive test if they have no symptoms. This time will be handled as any other absence due to illness. The campus staff will contact the parent to discuss options (as defined by the TEA).

- What will the procedure be if someone in my student's class is confirmed to have COVID-19?

Given the data from 2020-21 showing very low COVID-19 transmission rates on the campus and in a classroom setting, and data demonstrating lower transmission rates among children than adults, school systems are not required to conduct COVID-19 contact tracing. Parents of students who are determined to be close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may opt to keep their students at home during the recommended stay-at-home period.

- Will there be any practices to ensure a healthy campus?

Students and staff will be encouraged to wash and sanitize their hands frequently throughout the day. Campus janitorial staff will daily clean and sanitize the campuses.

- Where can I see the health of my student's campus?

Current COVID-19 numbers may be accessed through TEA at <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/schools/texas-education-agency>

<sup>1</sup>This document is subject to change as guidance and/or directives are provided by government officials and/or as COVID-19 conditions change.