

Back-to-School Guidance 2021-2022

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), The Texas Health and Human Services, national experts, as well as the Office of the Governor have reinforced that access to in-person learning is a priority. We have experienced first-hand that in-person access to school is the best approach for students to be educated, have equitable and effective access to educational opportunities, access to necessary support, as well as engage in activities which promote social and emotional wellness.

Positive Solutions plans to operate with full in-person schooling for 2021-2022 school year. TEA and the Texas Legislature do not anticipate the need to mandate that schools provide a remote learning option for students and their families for 2021-22 school year. Therefore, the remote option will no longer be in place at Positive Solutions Charter effective 2021-2022 school year.

We will continue to use technology for innovative learning, including providing avenues for personalized learning and enrichment, and support learning acceleration.

We will also deploy layers of mitigation (mask-wearing, social distancing, hand-washing) as required and/or recommended depending upon COVID-19 circumstances as we return for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan is summarized below. Please email any feedback or comments on this plan to rtorres@positivesolutionsinc.net.

Health and Safety Strategies

Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks – Governor Greg Abbot issued an Executive Order (No. GA-36) which addresses government-mandated face coverings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Per GA-36, school systems cannot require students or staff to wear a mask. School systems must allow individuals to wear a mask if they choose to do so. While Positive Solutions cannot require any individual to wear masks, the school will continue to recommend mask wearing.

Per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance:

When teachers, staff, and students who are not fully vaccinated consistently and correctly wear a mask, they [protect others as well as themselves](#). Consistent and [correct mask use](#) by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

- **Indoors:** Mask use is recommended for people who are not fully vaccinated including students, teachers, and staff. [Children under 2 years of age](#) should not wear a mask.
- **Outdoors:** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, particularly in areas of [substantial to high transmission](#), CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated. (Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, July 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

Modifying Facilities to allow for Physical Distancing

Positive Solutions Charter School will maintain social distancing between individuals to reduce transmission of the virus per the public health guidance.

- **Classroom/Office Configurations** - To the extent possible, individuals will maintain social distancing of three feet. All classrooms tables and offices will be equipped with plexi-glass dividers to promote added measures of safety for all individuals in the classrooms/offices. While it may not be completely feasible to maintain three feet physical distancing, Positive Solutions will make every effort to strive to meet the three feet recommendations.
- **Restrooms and Water Fountains** – Students’ physical needs are extremely important. Social distancing and hand washing will remain the priorities during restroom breaks. Because water dispensers have shared surfaces, these will be disabled/turned off. Students will be provided with other options for hydration. Students will be provided with bottled water, if needed as they walk into the school.
- **Signs to Remind/Encourage Distancing** - There will be signs placed on the walls throughout the building to maintain social distancing when entering and exiting building, in hallways, in classroom to the extent possible, and when moving throughout the school.
- **Visitors** – All Visitors must report to office upon arrival. Sanitizing will occur after each parent/guardian meeting. Parent/guardian meetings/conferences will resume to be conducted in person, but there will continue to be the option to be conducted virtually, if needed.

Events/Assemblies - Traditional campus events such as Family Night and assemblies will resume in person attendance and will continue to strive to keep all students/staff/teachers/families safe. Campus events may move to virtual if there is a need. Notifications will be made if there is a change in how events are conducted.

Per CDC guidance:

Based on studies from 2020-2021 school year, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk. (Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jan 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Students, staff, and visitors are encouraged to use hand sanitizer when entering building, classroom, and/or office. Frequent sanitizing will also be incorporated in the daily schedules. Hand sanitizing stations are placed throughout the building and in each classroom to encourage hand sanitizing.

All restrooms are equipped with hand soap so that individuals engage in handwashing, as necessary. Signage will be utilized to continue to encourage and demonstrate the importance of handwashing and hand sanitizing.

Per CDC guidance:

People should practice handwashing and [respiratory etiquette](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html) (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19. Schools can monitor and reinforce these behaviors and provide adequate handwashing supplies. (Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jan 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

Each classroom has been provided with sanitation kits that will be used during transitions to clean area. Classrooms, offices, and other common areas within the school will be thoroughly disinfected daily and deep cleaning schedules will be regularly conducted. An electro-static portable sprayer is used to disinfect large areas and also kill airborne viruses. Restrooms are cleaned several times a day. High touch areas are cleaned throughout the day. Every effort to improve ventilation will be taken. Air filters are changed regularly to help with proper ventilation.

- **Materials and Supplies** – Students will be expected to use their own materials and supplies which will be kept in individually-assigned boxes. Sharing of materials will be minimized to the maximum extent possible. In instances where technology, books, calculators, etc., are used by multiple students, proper sanitation protocols will be enforced. Chromebooks will be assigned to students, but will be kept on campus. Students who would like to check out devices, must complete Checkout form. Chromebook/cases checked out to students by schools will be allowed on campus but will not be allowed to have additional items in the case other than the items assigned (Chromebook/laptop, mouse, and charger.) Cases are not to be used for personal items. These assigned items will need to be cleaned when arriving at school.
- **Backpack/bags/purses** - No backpacks and/or other bags will be allowed in the classroom Backpacks and bags will be kept in the front office in a designated space for the individuals. Purses are allowed, but may not be larger than 8.5 X 11.0 (size of a letter sized sheet of paper).

Per CDC guidance:

In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus that may be on surfaces. Disinfecting (using disinfectants on the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 list](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/active-ingredients-listing-disinfectants)[external icon](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/active-ingredients-listing-disinfectants)) removes any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection. (Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jan 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

If an individual is sick within the last 24 hours, the space the individual occupied must be cleaned and disinfected. As soon as the school receives notification of the positive COVID-19 case and prior to cleaning and disinfecting, school must close off the area that was occupied by the sick individual. The school will wait several hours before allowing the area to be cleaned. While cleaning the area, mask and gloves must be worn.

Per CDC guidance:

If less than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, clean and disinfect the space.

If more than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, cleaning is enough. You may choose to also disinfect depending on [certain conditions](#) or everyday practices required by your facility.

If more than 3 days have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, no additional cleaning (beyond regular cleaning practices) is needed. (Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility, Center for Disease and Prevention (CDC), Nov. 15, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)

- **Temperature Checks/Screening** – Initial monitoring of symptoms begins at home. Individuals who are feeling ill, including symptoms like fever or feeling feverish, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, abdominal pain, fatigue,

muscle aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, chills, shaking or exaggerated shivering, or diarrhea should stay at home and consult with a medical professional regarding school participation.

Positive Solutions Charter School may conduct screenings upon entering school, if needed. Screening is accomplished by asking questions by phone or other electronic methods and/or in person. Screening questions will also be asked of student's parents if parents are dropping off or picking up child from inside school.

Screening questions that may be asked of all individuals entering the building are as follows:

- Have you experienced any of the following symptoms (symptoms listed above) that may indicate a possible COVID-19 infection?
- Are you lab-confirmed with COVID-19?
- Have you had close contact with any individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- Is anyone in your household experiencing any symptoms that may indicate a possible COVID-19 infection?

Answering yes to any of these questions, will result in students/staff/teachers being sent home and will have to follow reentry requirements.

Temperatures may be taken for each student/staff/teacher upon entering building. If temperature is at or above 100.3°, the individual will not be allowed to stay in school and will be given a medical/safety informational form which, again, must be followed before he/she is allowed to return to school. Students will wait in an area away from other students, teachers, and staff to give parent/guardian confirmation of symptoms and determine how student will get home. Once parent/guardian is notified, then student will either wait to be picked up by parent or with parent permission be allowed to leave.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine

Contact tracing is done in conjunction with the local health department. Close contact will be notified as required by local department. Isolation and quarantines are used following current guidance from the CDC and TEA guidelines.

- **Isolation** – Isolation is defined as keeping someone who has been infected with virus away from others for a period of time.
 - **Quarantine** – Quarantine is define as keeping someone who may have been infected away from other for a period of time.
- In the case of an individual who was 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 ten 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 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 had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined at the end of this document, and, if so, must remain off campus for at least 10-days if never exhibited symptoms (asymptomatic). If become symptomatic, then must follow the re-entry requirements.

Below are the required actions, that must be taken per TEA:

1. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. Upon receipt of information that any teacher, staff member, student, or visitor at a school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must submit a report to the Texas Department of State Health Services via an online form. The report must be submitted each Monday for the prior seven days (Monday-Sunday)

Per CDC guidance:

Schools should continue to collaborate with state and local health departments, to the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws, to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19. This allows identifying which students, teachers, and staff with positive COVID-19 test results should [isolate](#), and which [close contacts](#) should [quarantine](#). See the added exception in the [close contact](#) definition for the exclusion of students in the K-12 indoor classroom who are within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student with masking.

Schools should report, to the extent allowable by applicable privacy laws, new diagnoses of COVID-19 to their state or local health department as soon as they are informed. School officials should notify, to the extent allowable by applicable privacy laws, teachers, staff, and families of students who were close contacts as soon as possible (within the same day if possible) after they are notified that someone in the school has tested positive. See the Department of Education's [Protecting Student Privacy FERPA and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 external icon](#) for more information. (Contact Tracing in Combination with Quarantine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jan 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

Diagnostic testing and screening

Testing is encouraged when a person has been identified as a close contact or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Positive Solutions may conduct screening as long as K-12 COVID 19 Project allows or other programs that provide COVID-19 tests. When the testing/screening program are no longer offered, Positive Solutions will continue encourage all individuals to take a COVID-19 test/screening. When screening, Positive Solutions will follow testing program guidelines and ensure to receive parental permission for students.

Per CDC guidance:

When considering which tests to use for screening testing, schools or their testing partners should choose tests that can be reliably supplied and provide results within 24 hours. If available, saliva tests and nasal tests that use a short swab may be more easily implemented and accepted in schools. A [viral test](#) tells a person if they have a current infection. Two types of viral tests can be used: [Nucleic acid amplification tests](#) (NAATs) and [antigen tests](#). Frequency of testing should be determined by the performance characteristics of the test being used. The intended use of each test, available in the Instructions for Use and in the Letter of Authorization for each test, defines the population in which the test is intended to be used, the acceptable specimen types, and how the results should be used. (Choosing a Test, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>)

Efforts to Provide Vaccination to Educators, Other Staff, and Students, if Eligible

Information (vaccine sites, vaccines offered, age groups, etc.) regarding Vaccinations will be provided to families. Families will be encouraged to speak to medical professionals regarding vaccine questions.

Continuity of Services

Social and Emotional Well-Being – Students’ social and emotional well-being are a top priority. Together, the school and families can support your child during this challenging time. Staff will continue to work closely with families and students to ease the stress and foster positive, safe, and supportive learning environment. Keeping routines predictable, sharing COVID facts that are age-appropriate, and reaching out to us for support are all important. Positive Solutions Charter School will continue to promote supportive adult-student and student-student relationships and a sense of belonging. The school will identify strategies to re-engage populations and specific students/families who may be disengaged.

Academics – Positive Solutions Charter School will continue to deliver in-person instruction aligned to Texas standards (TEKS). The school will provide grade level instruction and provide extended learning opportunities (summer school, afterschool, Saturday school) to students, as required. Diagnostic, benchmark, and/or screening assessments will continue to be utilized to identify strengths and next steps for students in need of intervention and enrichment. Data will be reviewed systematically and adjust instruction, as necessary. The school will continue to support professional learning opportunities for educators by providing professional development. All students will continue to have access to technology. Students will utilize Chromebooks while at school. As an option, students are free to check out the technology to utilize at home. In addition, students with disabilities will continue to have access to their specialized designed instruction, related services, modification/accommodations as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Meals - Even though Positive Solutions Charter School is not part of the School Lunch Program, the school does offer a light breakfast/snack Meals. Light Breakfast/snacks will be individually wrapped for students. Students will also be given bottled water or juice, if needed. No outside food or drinks will be permitted.