

# Denison Independent School District 2022-2023 COVID-19 Response Plan

## Disclaimer:

The conditions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are continually evolving, and Denison Independent School District's *COVID-19 Response Plan* will be regularly evaluated to adapt to the continuing trends of the COVID-19 virus, especially in Denison and Grayson County. The details in this document are subject to change as directives are provided by governing authorities and/or health officials or as transmission levels increase.

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Denison ISD is committed to ensuring that all students, staff, and community members remain healthy and safe by adhering to best practices in the following areas:

- Virus Prevention Strategies
- Virus Response Protocols
- Virus Mitigation Tactics

## VIRUS PREVENTION STRATEGIES

**NOTE:** Student Exclusion and Re-Entry Criteria with Attendance Protocol is listed at the conclusion of this section.

### Employee, Student, and Visitor Screening Procedures:

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- Parents/guardians are expected to screen their students for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending their student to school. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if they suspect the student is infected with COVID-19. Student must remain off campus until he/she meets the criteria for re-entry.
- All visitors will be screened for COVID-19 (symptoms and close contact). Visitors that fail the screening must remain off-campus until the criteria for re-entry is met.
- The list below details possible symptoms of COVID-19:
  - *Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit*
  - *Loss of taste or smell*
  - *Cough*
  - *Difficulty breathing*
  - *Shortness of breath*
  - *Headache*
  - *Chills*
  - *Sore throat*
  - *Shaking or exaggerated shivering*
  - *Significant muscle pain or ache*
  - *Diarrhea*
  - *Nausea/Vomiting*
  - *Runny Nose/Congestion*

## **COVID-19 Positive Cases and Symptoms for Students:**

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- The school nurse will provide a clinical assessment for students that display symptoms of COVID-19 while at school.
- Students who are ill will be separated from their peers and should be picked up within 30 minutes of the parents being contacted. Student must remain off campus until the criteria for re-entry is met.
- Any student that is test-confirmed with COVID-19, must remain off campus until the criteria for re-entry is met.

## **Close Contact for Students:**

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- Denison ISD staff will not conduct close contact investigations. However, parents will be notified if the district has been made aware that their student has had potential exposure to COVID-19.
- Denison ISD will not require student exclusion for close contact exposure. However, any student who has had close contact with an individual who is test-confirmed with COVID-19 may report this information to the school system, and may remain off campus until the recommended criteria for re-entry is met. Students who choose to remain on campus are encouraged to wear a mask and closely monitor for symptoms for 14 days from exposure. Additionally, per CDC guidance, it is recommended individuals be tested 5 days after potential exposure.
- Close contact is defined as:
  - *Being directly exposed to infectious secretions, or*
  - *Being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes to an individual who is test confirmed to have COVID-19. Factors like social distancing, masks (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;*
  - *Either scenario above defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are test confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming test and continuing for 10 days following the test.*

## **COVID-19 Screening, Positive Cases and Symptoms for Staff:**

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- Denison ISD will require all employees to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to school each day. Staff must ensure they do not come to campus if they have symptoms causing suspicion that they are infected with COVID-19.
- Similar to students, any employee who has received a positive test for COVID-19, or who is suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, must adhere to district protocols and remain off campus until the criteria for re-entry is met.

## Required Exclusion and Re-Entry Criteria with Attendance Protocol

SCENARIO	EXCLUSION AND RE-ENTRY CRITERIA	ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL
<p><b>Positive COVID-19 test (symptomatic or asymptomatic)</b>  <b>Students</b> – contact campus nurse</p>	<p>Exclude for 5 days. May return at the end of 5-day period if there is improvement of symptoms and individual has been fever free for 24 hours. (No option to return sooner)</p>	<p>In order for absences to be excused the student must meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) COVID positive lab report provided</li> <li>2) Picture of positive at-home COVID test provided. <b>Test unit</b> must be labeled with the student's name and test date using a permanent marker.</li> <li>3) Physician note stating COVID positive diagnosis provided.</li> </ol> <p><i>If excused absence criteria is not met, exclusion will still be enforced, and absences will be marked as unexcused.</i></p>
<p><b>COVID-like symptom(s) (experienced in a way that is not normal)</b>  <b>Students</b> – contact campus nurse</p>	<p>Exclude for 5 days. May return at the end of 5-day period if there is improvement of symptoms and individual has been fever free for 24 hours.</p> <p>To return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual may either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, or (b) obtain an acute infection test that comes back negative for COVID-19, and have symptom improvement. At home tests must be labeled with the student's name and test date using a permanent marker.</p>	<p>In order for absences to be excused the student must meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Clinical assessment provided by campus nurse. This option is only available to students who become symptomatic while at school.</li> <li>2) COVID negative lab report provided.</li> <li>3) Picture of negative at-home COVID test provided. <b>Test unit</b> must be labeled with the student's name and test date using a permanent marker.</li> <li>4) Physician note stating alternative diagnosis provided.</li> </ol> <p><i>If excused absence criteria is not met, exclusion will still be enforced, and absences will be marked as unexcused.</i></p>

# VIRUS RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

## Denison ISD Action Protocols

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- Upon learning that a test-confirmed case (teacher, staff member, student, or visitor) has been in a school, Denison ISD will:
  - 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).
  - 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).
  - Notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a classroom, extracurricular activity, or after-school program cohort if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers, or staff who participated in those classrooms or cohorts.

## COVID-19 Tests

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- Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order 3 rounds of free at-home tests. Order yours today at <https://www.covid.gov/tests>. Each order now includes 8 rapid antigen COVID-19 tests. Shipping is free.

# VIRUS MITIGATION TACTICS

## Health and Hygiene Practices - General

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- Denison ISD will have hand sanitizer stations at the entrance of each campus and in every classroom.
- Employees and students will be encouraged to sanitize hands frequently.
- Students will be taught to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues will be thrown in the trash, and hands will be washed immediately, or hand sanitizer will be used.
- Denison ISD will employ cleaning staff who will be responsible for frequent cleaning practices.

## Health and Hygiene Practice – Face Coverings

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- In compliance with Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-36, students, staff, and visitors may wear face coverings if they choose, but they are not required while on campus or at school activities.
- The CDC encourages universal use of face masks for all teachers, staff, and students regardless of vaccination status.
- Face masks will be provided upon request to individuals who choose to wear a mask.

## Promoting Vaccination

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- CDC guidance states (*Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools*) that vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, people who are fully

vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection (*Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools*).

- Denison ISD will promote vaccination among teachers, staff, families, and eligible students by providing information about COVID-19 vaccination. CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccines for everyone 6 months and older and boosters for everyone 5 years and older, if eligible.
- When possible, Denison ISD will partner with local health authorities and providers to offer vaccination opportunities.

### **Denison ISD Staggered Start/End Times**

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- In an effort to maintain safer transportation for our bus students, Denison ISD will provide staggered start and end times. The following chart outlines campus start and end times for the 2022-23 school year.

<b>Campus:</b>	<b>First Bell:</b>	<b>Start Time:</b>	<b>End Time:</b>
All Elementary Campuses	7:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
B. McDaniel Intermediate	7:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
Scott Middle School	8:25 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
Denison High School	8:20 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	4:00 p.m.

- All campuses will still accept students beginning at 7:30 a.m. for Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade.
- Pre-Kindergarten/Head Start will accept students at 7:45 a.m.

### **Transportation Procedures**

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- For those using bus transportation, students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon boarding the bus.
- Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip. Great attention will be given to cleaning high-touch surfaces such as seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles.

### **Off-Campus Student Activities**

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- Denison ISD will adhere to all COVID-19 policies and procedures required for student participation by off-campus businesses and organizations.

### **COVID-19 Risk Levels**

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- This *COVID-19 Response Plan* will be evaluated on a continual basis and adjustments to the plan will be made based upon current COVID-19 transmission levels within the county and community.
- Denison ISD will continue to keep all stakeholders updated with the latest guidelines necessary to keep our students and staff safe.

### **Parent Communication**

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- Communication throughout the COVID-19 pandemic will be extremely important. Denison ISD will use the following channels for parent communication:
  - District Website
  - Parent letters/notes
  - Schoology
  - Email
  - Campus Newsletters
  - Social Media – District Twitter Account (@denisonisd) and Campus Facebook Pages
  - All Calls

