

**Cayuga Independent School District**  
**Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services (RIPICS) Plan**  
**Revised August 4, 2022**

**Attendance and Enrollment**

Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend at least 90% of the days a course is offered (with some exceptions) in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in effect during the 2021-22 school year.

Students who are absent from school because they have COVID-19 or a family member in their home has COVID-19 may be excused for days in excess of the 90% rule if they complete all assignments provided by their teachers before they return to school.

**PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School**

Screening for COVID-19 Before Campus Access

1. Each school day, all Cayuga ISD Employees must self-screen for COVID-19 before coming to the school or prior to entering district transportation. All employees must inform their immediate supervisors if they have COVID-19.
2. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has COVID-19.
3. During student drop-off and pick-up, parents will need to remain inside their vehicles.

Individuals Confirmed with COVID-19

Any individuals who are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until one of the following conditions for campus re-entry has been met:

1. they have been cleared to return to school by a medical professional or
2. they have met all three of the following criteria:
  - at least 24 hours have 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 five days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus

Students suspected of having COVID-19 while at school should be picked up by a parent or guardian in a timely manner. The district will clean the areas used by the individual who is suspected of having COVID-19.

## **RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School**

### Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School

1. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the district will close off areas that were heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than seven days have already passed since that person was on campus.
2. Consistent with school notification requirements and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, the district will notify teachers, staff, and families of students on the campus if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified.

## **MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School**

### Health and Hygiene Practices: General

1. Masks will be required only when the Governor or other legitimate authorities issue relevant orders. Individuals may wear a mask regardless of the Governor's orders.
2. The district will have hand sanitizer at each entrance and in every classroom.
3. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.
  - a. Students will be encouraged to practice handwashing for at least 20 seconds at least two times each day in addition to being encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom and before eating.
  - b. Students will be taught good handwashing techniques.
  - c. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, covered in their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.
4. Campuses will institute effective cleaning practices including frequent cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are often touched throughout the day.
5. On the first day a student attends school on campus, the district will provide instruction on appropriate hygiene practices and other mitigation practices adopted by the school.

### Student-Teacher Groupings

Where feasible without disrupting the educational experience, the district may encourage students to practice social distancing.

### School Transportation

1. The district will encourage students and staff to use hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus.
2. Buses will be sanitized daily or more frequently, as needed.

### Staffing

1. Employees of the district must continue to meet the work expectations set by Cayuga ISD subject to any applicable employment contract terms.
2. School teachers and staff will be trained specifically on the protocols outlined in this document and the practices adopted by the district.

### Stay at Home Protocol

If an individual has a person in their home who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19, the individual is strongly encouraged to stay at home unless they have been vaccinated, have recently recovered from COVID-19, or have proof of COVID-19 antibodies. Staying home allows individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 to monitor their symptoms during the period in which they may be infectious. These individuals should separate themselves from others outside their home, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health entity. The stay at-home period is as follows:

Five days after the last close contact, as long as they continue to monitor themselves daily for symptoms and take appropriate precautions.

### Self-Isolation Protocol

Self-isolation is used to separate people infected with COVID19 (including those who are sick with the virus and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom, if available.

### Close Contact Protocol

Cayuga ISD's close contact protocol will be consistent with the Governor's relevant orders and with the contents of the Texas Education Agency's most recent "Public Health Guidance."

**TEA's relevant guidance may be accessed from the Agency's website, [www.tea.texas.gov](http://www.tea.texas.gov), specifically the "Public Health Orders" link on TEA's "Coronavirus Support and Guidance" page. The Texas Education Agency's current guidance is attached to this RIPICS plan.**



# Public Health Guidance

August 1, 2022

Executive Order GA-38 (GA-38), which has the effect of state law under Section 418.012 of the Texas Government Code, requires Texas public school systems to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic in compliance with the published guidance of the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This document constitutes TEA's guidance under GA-38 and takes effect immediately, replacing all prior guidance.

**Public school systems are to operate in compliance with existing state laws and regulations, including all executive orders issued by the governor of Texas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that are currently in effect.**

The following are examples of existing state laws and regulations applicable to the operations of Texas public school systems during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- If an individual who has been in a school is test-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).
- Per GA-38, school systems cannot require students or staff to wear a mask. GA-38 addresses government-mandated face coverings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- As provided in this Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, school systems must exclude students from attending school in person who have or are suspected of having COVID-19, and must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on campus. As noted in the rule, exclusion shall continue until the conditions for re-entry are met:
  - For children with symptoms, at least 5 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free, and other symptoms have improved.
  - Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 5 days after the day they were tested.
- Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met.

TEA recommends that public school systems consult with their local public health authorities and local legal counsel before making final decisions regarding implementation of the state requirements referenced by this guidance.

This guidance is subject to change as new information becomes available.



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