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September 10, 2021

To our HISD Family:

I realize that these times are difficult for parents who fear the possibility of their student(s) contracting COVID-19, but it is the opinion of state policy makers at all levels that kids learn best in schools. To that end, there is currently no remote learning that solely benefits those wanting to remain in seclusion because of COVID. In addition, the Texas Education Code Sec. 25.085 describes the perimeters of compulsory school attendance, and TEA has not offered any relief to either parents or school districts in the adherence to this statute. Because of these circumstances, in-person attendance here at school is the only option for learning currently available for students enrolled in HISD.

The school district wants to remind Hondo ISD parents of what measures we will continue to take to make your children as safe as possible. We have implemented protocols on our campuses based on the best science for preventing the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Asking all individuals to be mindful of distance from others when possible
- Encouraging everyone to wash their hands with soap frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Working with our custodial staff to ensure that we are thoroughly disinfecting all buses and building surfaces on a continual basis
- Taking temperatures of all students, staff, and visitors when entering a building or school bus

We will also now require all individuals within a household to stay at home if there is a COVID-19 positive individual residing in the home unless they themselves have had COVID within a three-month period. On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, TEA allowed for school districts to take this measure in order to decrease the exposure of COVID-19 in schools. HISD will continue to rapid test, with parent permission, students who are symptomatic for COVID-19. Students who do not wish to test but are symptomatic will be sent home, as per our non-COVID health protocols. Teachers who have been in close contact with a positive individual but have been vaccinated will be rapid tested periodically, while those who have not will be sent home until they can provide a negative COVID test.

I reiterate these protocols to inform parents that we will do our best to keep your children healthy while they are at school, but we will also strive to give our students the fullest academic experience that we can. I continue to urge that we personally do what it takes to rid ourselves from this virus. Please take personal precautions to avoid crowded events, wear masks if possible, test when you are symptomatic, and stay at home if you or someone in your home is COVID-19 positive. Please communicate with us if you should have any questions or need to report on your or your child's status.

I want to thank all of you for your understanding, patience, and support as we work through these difficult times. HISD will make announcements and provide direction to all concerned individuals as policies and guidance from governing entities continue to change. If we remain mindful, we will be able to keep our community safe while still allowing our students the fullest educational experience possible.

Sincerely,

A'Lann Truelock, Ed. D.