



**PRIORITY CHARTERS
SCHOOLS'
Safe Return to School
Plan**

2021 – 2022

www.prioritycharterschools.org/safe-return-to-school-plan

Adopted by PCS Board of Directors on – June 24, 2021

Last Revision – June 24, 2021

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The U.S. Department of Education has provided an additional \$121.9 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund). This legislation awarded \$11.2 billion to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), to be dispersed among public and open enrollment charter schools. These are federal funds provided to the state to cover the costs associated with learning loss due to COVID-19. These funds will support the improvement of facilities, technology, cleaning, and overall student achievement as it relates to the impact of COVID-19 had on elementary and secondary schools. The following Safe Return to School plan meets the requirements for school districts to receive the ESSER III grant.

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Safe Return Goals 2021 – 2022

The purpose of this plan is to aid in the safe return to in-person instruction that will allow for the assessment of academic gaps and provide accelerated opportunities for loss of learning due to the pandemic by establishing new learning initiatives for the students. Additionally, in-person instruction will support the evaluation of social and emotional needs. Through the safe practices of this plan, PCS will remain open to in-person instruction for the duration of the school year.

This plan extends to all Priority Charter Schools (PCS) campuses and facilities where employees, students, and families feel safe and reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to in-person instruction. The guidelines referenced in this plan take into consideration guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), local and state officials, input from parent, surveys, staff surveys, student surveys, Priority Charter Schools campuses, district administration, and Board of Directors. Due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, this plan is subject to change based on regulations by the Office of the Governor of Texas and TEA. Parents, staff, and students will be notified if changes are made to this plan.

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INSTRUCTIONAL SETTINGS AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

After careful review of the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, to include the distribution of vaccinations, PCS has decided to provide face to face, in-person instruction for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year. These services will expand to all activities and extracurricular programs. Alternative instruction for students with physician's verification documenting specific medical needs may qualify for remote instruction based on future guidance by TEA. Additionally, local community transmission and situational changes may justify asynchronous instruction at various times during the school year.

Due to the pandemic's impact on loss of learning, students will receive assessments to identify learning gaps and receive learning interventions that incorporate differentiated, continually-adapting learning platforms in support of student growth. Additionally, students will receive more instructional time through school-day tutorials, afterschool tutoring, Saturday school, summer school, partnerships, and credit recovery programs.

Rigorous instruction materials and teacher support systems will provide:

- Career and technology courses for the secondary level
- Renaissance learning
- Freckle Math for elementary
- Texas Resource System's researched based curriculum
- Frog Street curriculum for prekindergarten
- Extracurricular Programs

Mental, physical, and behavioral supports will be provided through:

- Partnerships with social workers
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) via Boys Town
- Implanted, youth-led programming
- Established Student Advisory Councils
- Continuity of food service programs
- Continued development of specialized instructional and recreational spaces

COVID-19 COMMUNICATION

All employees shall understand safety requirements, protocols, and expectations that have been implemented to ensure students and staff safety while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Updates pertinent to the evolving pandemic will be provided throughout the year via district and campus level email, School Messenger, and the PCS website.

VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

Priority Charter School campuses will reopen to in-person instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. Prior visitor restrictions will be lifted on July 1, 2021, allowing normal visitation to the PCS campuses. Visitor tracking to include visitor's name, location on campus, and time and date will be recorded through the Raptor Visitor Management System. Face coverings will be allowed once checked in. All visitors will be required to provide full, facial visibility for identity recognition when checking in and picking up students.

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

All travel restrictions will be lifted on July 1, 2021.

SCREENING – STUDENTS, STAFF MEMBERS, AND VISITORS

Campuses will return to normal non-screening operations on July 1, 2021. Unless local community transmissions change, campuses will not require screening of students and staff members prior to entry. Self-screening is strongly encouraged. Visitor screening requirements will be determined at the campus level, but will not be required by the district.

STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER DISPLAYS SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

If a staff member or student is on campus and develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or has a temperature **equal to or higher than 100.4 degrees**, the following will occur:

- The individual will be required to wear a face covering.
- The individual will be escorted or report to the front office or designated isolation area and will be monitored until parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.
- Employees displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home. The Human Resources reporting requirements, which exist at the time of the event, will be followed.
- Staff and students will only be allowed to return to Priority Charter School campuses or facilities after the requirements detailed in the Return to Work/Campus have been satisfied.

RETURN TO WORK / CAMPUS

Priority Charter Schools intends to comply with and implement the current guidance as provided by the Bell County Health District, Williamson County Health District, Coryell County Health District, Texas Education Agency, Texas Health and Human Services, and the Center for Disease Control. In the event, a conflict develops between this plan and current guidance provided by the organizations above, the Superintendent and

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Executive Director of Operations and Safety will consult with these sources and make the final determination.

Employees will refer to the PCS Human Resources Department for current return to work requirements. Student status will be reported to the student's campus office for guidance on returning to a campus.

Prior to returning to a PCS campus, a test-confirmed positive student or employee for COVID-19 must meet the following criteria:

- At least 24 hours have passed since recovery (i.e., resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications).
- The individual has improvement in symptoms.
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Close-contact students and staff members will no longer be required to quarantine. However, all close-contact cases should be reported to the campus office.

COVID-19 SELF-SCREEN SYMPTOMS LIST

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

ISOLATION ON CAMPUS

Those who are observed or report to have possible COVID-19 symptoms will be directed to the front office or designated isolation area. The campus principal will further assess the individual and determine if the symptoms warrant removal from the campus. If the campus principal determines the symptoms warrant removal, the principal will follow the "Student or Staff Member Displays Symptoms of Covid-19" guidelines.

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GENERAL PREVENTION ADVICE FOR PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND STAFF

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Follow with hand hygiene.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you do, wash your hands afterward.
- Wash hands with soap and water (20 seconds) FREQUENTLY.
- If you do not have soap, use hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol-based).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe daily.
- Promote non-contact methods of greetings.
- Practice self-screening.

FACE COVERINGS (MASKS AND FACE SHEILDS)

Masks and/or face shields will no longer be required by students, staff members, or visitors. Conversely, there are no restrictions on the proper wearing of these items.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Priority Charter Schools will continue the regular cleaning schedule for all workspaces to include frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces. Disinfectant products will be available to staff members.

TRANSPORTATION

Students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon boarding and exiting the bus. When possible, the windows should be open to allow outside air to circulate in the bus. Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles.

CAFETERIA

Priority Charter Schools cafeteria staff and food handlers shall follow all established protocols related to food safety. This includes, but not limited to: wearing gloves, hairnets, and regularly cleaning of food preparation surfaces. Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Non-disposable food service items will be washed with soap and hot water after every use. Meals will be served with disposable trays and utensils.

PLAYGROUND AND RECESS

Recess schedules will be staggered to limit the number of individuals in a single play area. Playgrounds will be open and accessible to students during play times. Students will follow the distancing plan noted in “SOCIAL DISTANCING”. Students will hand wash or hand sanitize before and after playground use.

ATHLETICS, STUDENT ACTIVITIES, AND FIELD TRIPS

All athletics, student activities, and field trips will resume normal scheduling for the 2021-2022 school year.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

When possible, students will be encouraged to practice safe distancing. Distancing will be based on location size, number of students, and activity in practice.

COVID IMMUNIZATIONS

PCS will continue to provide information to its communities on opportunities for COVID vaccines. However, neither students nor staff members will be required to participate in or show proof of the COVID vaccinations.

DISINFECTION PROTOCOL

Disinfection of a contaminated area is triggered when an active employee or student is identified through a positive test for COVID-19. This is a separate and localized treatment with particular protocols and measures and does not impact the general cleaning process.

COVID-19 CASE REPORTS

All positive cases involving students or staff members of PCS will be reported to both the local health department and the Texas Department of Health Services. Students and staff members are required to notify their school office if they have tested positive for COVID. The school office will notify the Director of Operations and Safety for state and local reporting.

EXTENDED DISTRICT OR CAMPUS CLOSURES

In the event Priority Charter Schools is ordered to close during the 2021-2022 school year, the district will publish, through its communication channels, more information regarding specific updates pertinent to the closure period.

APPENDICES

Document Sources:

Aiken County Public Schools: <https://www.acpsd.net/>

Center for Disease control - <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Killeen ISD: https://www.killeenisd.org/WebData/DocumentViewer/KISD_PHG.pdf

Region 12: <https://www.esc12.net/>