



HOOD COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY

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TO Jeremy Glenn, Superintendent, Granbury ISD
Travis Stilwell, Superintendent, Tolar ISD
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SUBJECT COVID-19 Close Contact Definition for Hood County Schools - Revised

The Texas Education Association document dated August 4th, 2020; SY 20-21 Public Health Planning Guidance, states “close contact” with COVID-19 infected individuals is to be determined by an appropriate public health agency.

The latest version of the document is available at:

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/SY-20-21-Public-Health-Guidance.pdf>

As coordinated with Granbury ISD and Tolar ISD, I have updated my definition of “close contact” as direct exposure to infectious secretions or being within 6 feet of a confirmed COVID-19 infected individual for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes while not wearing a **mask or face covering without exhalation valves or vent**, if either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the individual was infectious.

This clarification of the definition of close contact does not negate the authority of the school superintendent or their designated representatives from making a determination that a student or staff member meet the criteria for being a close contact in situations which are not clearly defined.

Based upon CDC guidance, I do not recommend the use of face shields or masks with exhalation valves or vents, as they have not been shown to prevent the spread of respiratory droplets to others in the immediate area.

CDC guidance may be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

This does NOT prevent the wear of face shields or other face coverings while at school, as determined by school administration and as allowed by Texas Governor executive orders and TEA guidelines, but it does impact the definition of close contact and the need to take appropriate measures, including isolation of exposed students, teachers, and staff for an appropriate period of 14 days in the event of a COVID-19 contact if face masks without exhalation valves or vents are worn by the COVID positive individual at the time of close contact.

Please let me know if you have any questions or require further assistance.

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