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September 29, 2021

Dear Parents,

HESD is committed to student and staff safety and has been working diligently to keep our schools open. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience in following guidelines set for schools by both local and state health officials.

Our schools have had a significant number of confirmed COVID 19 cases. As such, HESD is making additions/changes in COVID protocols. The most noticeable change will be the addition of COVID 19 pooled testing. We believe adding pooled testing will not only assist with early detection of COVID 19, but it will also minimize disruptions to the schooling process, home routines, and student and staff anxiety. It would be helpful to the school if you provide consent to pooled testing prior to program implementation at: <https://testcenter.concentricbyginkgo.com/minor-consent/start>

The second change is in our notification process. Currently, we notify 1) parents of all confirmed cases and contacts; 2) Staff of all confirmed cases and contacts; 3) parents of all possible exposures; 4) Staff of all possible exposures; 5) Community Notice of confirmed cases; 6) Community Notice of possible exposure, and 7) mandatory CAL/OSHA required notifications of confirmed cases. This has increased anxiety, overburdened the required testing to keep kids in school, and added confusion. Effective October 1, we will notify staff and parents of confirmed cases and contacts as well as mandatory notifications of confirmed cases to staff. Precautionary Notices of possible exposures (not same as contact) will no longer be provided to the parent community. We appreciate your understanding that we now live in a world where exposure is always taking place in our environments.

**HESD requests your support and reminds you of the following safety protocols:**

**Masks: Students, Staff, and Visitors, whether they are vaccinated or not, are required to wear masks while on district premises.**

**Physical Distancing/Cohorting:** Both CDPH and the CDC address that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented.

**Staying Home When Student is Sick or displaying any COVID Symptom:**  
**Students must remain at home when they are sick and displaying any potential symptoms for COVID 19. Please do not ignore this protocol.**