



March 17, 2020

Dear Nolan Creek, Kingsland, and New Horizons Schools Families,

At this time, Nolan Creek, Kingsland, and New Horizons Schools will open next week, March 23 – March 27. We continue to closely monitor COVID-19 locally and are following guidance provided by governmental agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Understandably, it is an issue about which we are all concerned and are following closely.

The decision to close schools is a difficult one. School is a place of learning, growth, and enrichment. And for many of our families, school provides services well beyond education. But keeping our families and staff safe and healthy is always our number one concern.

It is important to understand that the situation is changing rapidly. COVID-19 is spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes or otherwise spread droplets containing the virus, either directly on a nearby uninfected person or the droplets land on a surface that is later touched by another person who then becomes infected by touching their mouth, nose or eyes. Our duty as a community is to do everything feasible to delay the progress of COVID-19. When we do that, we help protect everyone, including our students, parents, and staff.

There is currently some reported community spread in Texas. Community spread means people have been infected with COVID-19 in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. Should there be indications of increasing community spread, Orenda Public Charter School District will communicate our next steps, including the possibility of closure of those campuses.

Similarly, we also have no reports from parents or staff that they have been exposed to COVID-19 in a way that would indicate that others have been exposed, even if undiagnosed. In the event someone has traveled to a location with community spread or otherwise has been risk of exposure, we ask that you notify us so that we can consider that in any decision to possibly close the school.

Orenda Public Charter School District already has been taking precautions to help prevent the spread of illness, and also making preparations in the event of any illness spreading:

- This week, all campuses are being deep-cleaned and disinfected.
- All students will receive instruction on the importance of healthy hand-washing habits, and teachers and principals will allow extra time for students to wash their hands throughout the day.
- Our schools will work to keep a safe distance between students to help decrease any potential spread of COVID-19
- School administration will be monitoring students and staff for illness on the campus.
- We are cancelling all extracurricular activities where more than 50 people are involved.

Additionally, Orenda Public Charter School District asks the broader community to take the following reasonable precautions to prevent the spread of the illness:

- Don't shake hands
- Wash your hands regularly
- Limit movement within the community, especially avoiding crowded places and maintaining 3 to 6 ft of distance between people (at least an arm's length)
- If you are moving around in the community, don't congregate in large groups
- For those who have traveled to areas with known COVID-19 cases – both inside and outside of the country – we ask that you self-quarantine and monitor for symptoms. Students who have traveled should plan to stay home for two weeks after arriving home. Please contact your campus to let them know, and this will be considered an excused absence.
- If you suspect you have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, call your health care provider for medical advice .
- Keep your child at home if he/she feels ill, even if you think it is just a cold.
- Do not leave the house if you are ill, except to access medical care.

You can find further good advice on the Texas Department of State Health Services website: dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus. You can also find an up-to-date list of areas with confirmed COVID-19 cases on the [DSHS website](#).

Finally, the district is waiving all attendance requirements at this time. If you would prefer to keep your child at home, please feel free to do so.

Please notify us of that decision, so that we can provide you with classwork and instructional resources to support your student while at home along with procedures for us to properly code those absences. COVID-19 related absences will count as excused once documentation is received.

We all have a civic duty to follow these reasonable precautions at this time. It will allow us to continue our critical work supporting the education of your children, while also delaying the spread of the COVID-19 in our community as long as possible. This is a quickly changing situation, and we will continue to notify you with updates and guidance as we learn more.

Thank you for your cooperation as we ensure that all members of the community in Orenda Public Charter School District stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



Carla Silber
Superintendent/COO
Orenda Public Charter School District