



July 15, 2020

Dear Orenda Public Charter School Families,

Thank you to all families who completed the recent survey. Your input is valuable in our 2020-21 planning. We know that there is a lot of uncertainty and questions around plans for the new school year. Last week, TEA released guidance on both on-campus and more clarification on remote instruction. We are developing an educational plan that is compliant with TEA mandates and Governor executive orders. As the situation is fluid, we are working to finalize our plan to provide strong, effective instruction while keeping students and staff safe.

**On-Campus and Remote Instruction Updates:** We know how important returning to school is for our students. We also know the increase in community spread of COVID this summer is presenting a challenge for on-campus instruction.

Texas public schools must offer on-campus instruction every day to all students in all grade levels. Schools have also been approved to offer remote instruction, either synchronous or asynchronous, or a combination of both, for the 2020-21 school year only. Parents will have the option to choose between on-campus or remote instruction.

In addition, schools are only able to offer 100% remote instruction (no on-campus instruction) under the following conditions:

- Any day a campus is ordered closed by an entity authorized to issue an order under state law.
- Any day the district closes a campus as a result of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, up to 5 consecutive days.
- As part of a start-of-school transition period, during the first three weeks of the school year, districts can limit access to on-campus instruction to facilitate a safe, effective return to on-campus instruction.

**First Three Weeks of School:** At this time, we have not made the decision to provide only remote instruction for the first three weeks of school. We are still discussing the start-of-school transition taking into account many factors including the current health situation. We know that Travis County has issued an order for no on-campus instruction until after September 7th. Counties where our campuses reside have not issued any orders yet. We are regularly monitoring communication and information from state and local health agencies.



**Face Coverings:** K-12 public schools are subject to the current face coverings order set forth by the State. Students under age 10 may not be required to wear face coverings. There are also a few exceptions including people with medical conditions or disabilities, during outdoor activities, and during athletics workouts.

**Parent Training:** Based on your survey feedback, we are working to develop Parent Information Sessions to help empower parents with the information and tools they need to support their students' learning. We expect to launch these during the second week of August.

**UIL Participation:** The University Interscholastic League announced Friday that students participating in remote learning may participate in UIL activities if they meet all other UIL eligibility requirements. More information on this will be included in our School Start Plan released next week.

**Instruction Commitment:** Families will be asked to make a commitment to a format of learning (on-campus or remote) for the start of the school year by August 5 (two weeks before the start of the school year). In most cases, families will be asked to commit to in-person or remote learning *by grading period*. Due to the health situation and current rise in cases, we are still discussing a shorter commitment period than a grading period. More information on this will be included in the 2020-21 School Start Plan.

**Daily Attendance:** We know that attendance will be recorded daily for all students which is different from Spring 2020. We also know that families will NOT need to submit instructional logs each week. Details will be provided on how we will record attendance for students who are participating in remote learning.

**Grading Policies:** Grading policies will be consistent for both in-person and remote learners and will follow the grading policy in effect in the 2019-20 school year prior to spring break. Grading policies can be found in our Student-Parent Handbooks located on each campus website.

We thought it would also be helpful to share when you can expect to receive future communications.

**Wednesday, July 22:**

We will be communicating our 2020-21 School Start Plan with information on on-campus and remote learning.

**Wednesday, July 29:**

We will be sending communication on updates to start the new school year.



**Wednesday, August 5:**

Deadline to enroll your child for on-campus or remote learning. More information on how to enroll will be coming soon.

We're working as quickly as we can to create plans that allow for delivering high-quality learning in the safest environment for everyone. Thank you for your patience and support as we adapt how we deliver education. Stay safe and take care!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Carla Silber'.

Carla Silber  
Superintendent/COO  
Orenda Public Charter School District