

Howard School

Ready to Achieve Plan

2021/2022

Louisiana Department of Hospital Guidelines and Louisiana Department of Education plans for reopening schools and providing educational services were used in planning for fully opening Howard School on the facility grounds of the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, Louisiana, located in Lincoln parish. Phase 3 was in effect during the planning for reopening; however, Howard School must comply with stricter requirements due to providing educational services to residential clients in a psychiatric residential treatment facility, Louisiana Methodist Children's Home.

Following discussion with the CEO and Clinical Department Directors overseeing the school and facility, it was determined that there would be a full reopening with face-to-face instruction from the beginning unless isolations occurred that were ordered by the Nursing Department due to COVID infections, and at that time a hybrid form of instruction primarily utilizing virtual technologies may be implemented at the decision of the Director of Education and the school leadership team.

2021-2022 Start Dates

August 19, 2020 – All students, grades 2-12, full day

School supplies are provided by Louisiana Methodist Children and Family Services along with donations by service organizations, churches, and private citizens.

School Facilities

- School facilities received a thorough cleaning over the summer months utilizing a custodian hired specifically for the purpose of ensuring increased

infection control at the school. This individual will continue to provide on-going sanitizing throughout the school day; this will be done prior to the students and teachers returning,

- High traffic areas and high touch areas in classrooms and facilities will be cleaned minimally three times each day.
- Since the school falls under the Louisiana Department of Hospitals guidance as a part of the Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, Louisiana Methodist Children and Family Services, access remains limited to only students, faculty, and staff of Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services.
- The Educational Facilities will have one entrance whereby individual temperature checks will be taken upon arrival. In addition, FACE MASKS are required as part of Louisiana Department of Hospitals requirements.
- The Nursing Department of Louisiana Methodist Children's Home or LUMCFS closely monitors youth and tests youth and staff who may display symptoms to limit the spread of the COVID virus. Also, the Nursing Department reports cases of infection to the State of Louisiana.
- Contact tracing continues with assistance of the educational staff under the direction of the Nursing Department. Youth and staff must report to the Nursing Department relative to contacts where infections may have occurred and with those where infections may have originated or possibly spread. Isolations of staff and youth by houses and buildings are determined SOLELY by the Nursing Department Director or designee.
- Field trips are limited to the Recreation Department or house unit and are not associated with the school or Education Department due to the nature of the pandemic.
- The campus is considered closed to visitors unless associated with clients served. This is not a decision of the Education Department.
- The school has no school-sponsored athletic events where masks must be controlled by the school or school personnel.

School Buses

- The facility does not own or operate any school buses; therefore, this is not applicable. Clients in this psychiatric residential treatment facility are by majority RESIDENTS. Currently there may be two non-resident youth from

the local parish who will be transported to school by parents or guardians for educational services.

Meals

- Food service at the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home is provided for by the Dietary Department. Food is generally prepared to the kitchens of two buildings; this is not under the control of the Education Department or the school.
- Due to the COVID pandemic, the cafeterias have remained closed to control infection outbreaks among the clients. Youth meals are transported to the buildings and units during the lunch periods. Residential youth leave the school to report to their houses or units for their lunch and other meals; only the non-resident youth will eat at the school. Youth (generally 1-3 youth during any academic year) will sit in desks outside the principal's office separated by at least six feet in cubicle rooms or open areas so as to prevent close contact and the spread of any infection.
- Areas of the school are cleaned immediately after youth eat their lunches. Desks are sanitized and all high touch surface areas are cleaned by the custodian, principal, or a designee.

Students

- Instruction will be in-person unless a student is placed on isolation or restriction by the Nursing Department or Clinical Department of the Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services agency. Information on services of the Education Department will be provided through the individual therapist assigned to the client. Contact with the principal or a designee, school counselor or coordinator of special services, may occur depending on the nature of the service related question.
- Masks are required as per Louisiana Department of Hospitals guidelines; this shall be enforced by the Education Department.
- Students will be required to wash their hands and sanitize often during the day.
- Social distancing to the greatest extent possible will be recommended and encouraged throughout the year.
- No masks are recommended when students are outside or participating in physical activity with the Recreation Department staff.

- Students may bring a water bottle with water to drink during the day; and, water from a cooler will be handed out to youth on request. Staff ONLY may dispense water into disposable cups handed to students when they do not have personal water bottles. In addition, water fountains may be used to refill students' water bottles.

Employees

- Employees are required to provide current vaccination information to the Nursing Department of LUMCFS. Eventually since this is a psychiatric residential treatment facility receiving federal aid, all employees are likely to be REQUIRED to have vaccinations to be employed OR work at this school. This information will remain confidential and used for contact tracing purposes and likely future employment criteria.
- Masks are REQUIRED for all employees, vaccinated or unvaccinated, due to being under the control of the Louisiana Department of Hospitals and Nursing Department of LUMCFS.
- Employees will be required to wash hands and sanitize often during the day.
- Social distancing to the greatest extent possible is recommended.

Visitors on Campus

- It is required for all visitors, vaccinated or unvaccinated, to wear masks while on campus or the facility in general. Essential visitors are defined as individuals on campus providing services to youth of any kind, mental health, or otherwise.
- Visitors are not permitted on campus to volunteer or visit with youth at the school unless approved by the Administration Department or Nursing Department of LUMCFS. Currently the school plans for no volunteers or non-essential visitors due to the on-going COVID virus.
- Again, the school and agency falls under the guidance of the Louisiana Department of Hospitals. Inquiries relative to visitors on campus may contact the Administration Office of the Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services agency at 318-255-5020.

When to State Home

- Students and employees who are ill should stay home regardless of symptoms of COVID.
- COVID-19 symptoms should be carefully checked and reported to appropriate school designees or the assigned supervisor.
- Fever of 100.4 requires students and school employees of stay home or return home from the school.

Quarantine Requirements for Students

- Close contacts are defined as youth who considered as unvaccinated and unmasked students who are exposed to a positive COVID-19 case of closer than 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period.
- Close contacts will be required to quarantine in their residences for 14 days as directed through the Nursing Department of LUMCFS and in compliance with CDC Guidelines as of 7/29/21.
- Close contacts will also be considered as any unvaccinated or vaccinated student living in a household, an on-campus building, unit, or house in which a COVID-19 case is confirmed or suspected without taking a test.

Isolation for Students with Positive COVID-19 Test

- Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate at home or on-campus residences for 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing med **AND** other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.
- Unvaccinated students who experience COVID-19 symptoms and do not get tested will be required to follow the same guidelines as if they were positive, and they may return to school after 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing meds **AND** other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.

Quarantine Requirements for Employees

- Close contacts will be considered as unvaccinated and unmasked employees who are exposed to a positive COVID-19 case of closer than 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period will be required to quarantine at home for 10 days, unless the employee receives a negative COVID-19 test on or after day 7 at which time the employee may return to work.

- Close contacts will also be considered any unvaccinated family member living in a household in which a positive COVID-19 case is confirmed or suspected without taking a test.

Isolation for Employees with Positive COVID-19 Test

- Employees who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate at home 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing meds **AND** other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving. **People who are severely ill (hospitalized) with COVID-19 may need to stay home longer than the 10 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appeared. This will be handled case by case.**