

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD continues proactive efforts to offer vaccinations, tests for COVID-19

Jan. 6, 2021 -- The Houston Independent School District continues its proactive efforts to protect the health and safety of its staff and students by providing new opportunities for employees who qualify to receive the COVID-19 vaccine this weekend and by providing ongoing testing for staff and students on its campuses.

On Saturday, Jan. 9, the district will partner with Kroger as a team of pharmacists from the supermarket chain will administer the COVID-19 vaccine to educators who are 65 or older or individuals with certain medical conditions (Phase 1B); police officers; and school nurses and clinical staff who fall under Phase 1A (healthcare personnel) in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

Media Availability Saturday, Jan. 9 at 10 a.m.

HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan and photo opportunities of vaccinations will be available at the Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center - 4400 W. 18th St., 77092. Masks must be worn and physical distancing must be practiced.

“We are extremely grateful to our community partners at Kroger for their assistance in helping us stay vigilant and take the necessary measures to keep our staff, students and their families safe as we continue to navigate this pandemic,” HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “It will take all of us working together to keep everyone as healthy as possible until this crisis has passed.”

Kroger’s team will administer the Moderna vaccine Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Vaccine recipients have been identified and pre-approved to receive their vaccinations. Approximately 300 doses will be administered.

“Our schools are the heart of our community, and we will continue to advocate for healthcare providers, teachers and frontline workers to have priority access to the COVID-19 vaccine,” said Marla Fielder, director of pharmacy for Kroger Houston. “We are committed to creating safe and healthy communities by partnering with local school districts to immunize the individuals who put their lives at risk on a daily basis to educate our children.”

Kroger expects to provide additional vaccines as they arrive in the coming weeks.

HISD is also working with the City of Houston Health Department on vaccine availability for priority groups. Additionally, HISD healthcare partner Next Level is a vaccine provider for eligible HISD employees.

The district continues to be a strong proponent for the prioritization of all educators to receive vaccinations as soon as possible. For updates, please visit <https://www.houstontx.gov/health/>.

To assist with ongoing efforts to support public health and safety, on Monday, Jan. 4, all HISD campuses began offering COVID-19 **BinaxNOW** Rapid Tests. The district received the resources to test campus-based staff, and a percentage of students whose parents have requested and permitted testing, through a statewide COVID-19 Rapid Testing program in conjunction with the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

Campus nurses received training to administer the shallow nasal swab tests, which yield results in 15 minutes.

All COVID-19 testing and vaccinations are optional. Both are provided at no cost.

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The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States, with 280 schools and more than 209,772 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

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