

Friday Beat

August 19, 2022, Back to School Edition

The newsletter that takes a [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#) approach.

Announcements

Reaching for Excellence Grant Webinar

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) invites public and charter schools to apply for the [Reaching for Excellence \(RFE\) in Texas School Health Grant](#). Two \$10,000 grants will be awarded for the 2023-2024 school year. The goal of the RFE grants is to fund projects that inspire students to live healthier lives. Projects must focus on at least one key component of the [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model](#). Attend [one of three informational webinars](#) in September to learn more about the application process. The application will open on September 1, 2022, and close November 14, 2022. Direct questions about the grant to schoolhealthawards@dshs.texas.gov or call 512-776-7279.

Claim \$15 Amazon Gift Code for School Health Profiles Submission

Principals and health educators from 515 randomly selected secondary schools still have time to complete the 2022 [Texas School Health Profiles](#) online survey. Participation helps DSHS collect valid statewide data. The survey asks about policies and practices that can impact student health and academic performance. If your school was selected, your school principal or health educators received an email invitation to the survey on August 15, 2022, from txprofiles@icfsurvey.com. In appreciation, you will receive a \$15 Amazon gift code when you submit the survey. If you have any questions, please email the DSHS survey coordinator, Amanda Ingram, at YRBSS@dshs.texas.gov.

DSHS Recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases in a Group-Care Setting

DSHS has updated the guidance on COVID-19 readmission criteria for Schools and Child-Care Centers. The updated [Communicable Disease Chart and Notes for Schools and Child Care Centers](#) is available for download. If you have any questions about COVID-19, please contact eaidu-coronavirus@dshs.texas.gov.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes [August as National Immunization Awareness month](#). Find resources to encourage routine childhood vaccination on their webpage. Toolkits for parents and health care professionals are also available.

Requirements

Spread the Word About Bacterial Meningitis

Each year, school personnel are required to inform students and parents about bacterial meningitis. This information should include disease symptoms, prevention information, transmission details, how it is diagnosed and the effectiveness of vaccination and treatment. Each school district should have notification procedures in its handbook. Read more about the state requirements in [Texas Education Code, Section 38.0025](#). See the [DSHS meningitis information for students and parents](#).

Review Immunization Requirements for Texas Students

Do you know the minimum state vaccine requirements? View the [Texas School Vaccine Requirements for Students Grades K-12 and Child-Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#) for details on required vaccines before students can attend schools in Texas. See the [Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for College Entry](#) for college and university students. If you have questions, please call the [Immunization Unit](#) at DSHS at (800) 252-9152 or send an email to schoolimm@dshs.texas.gov.

Ask About Food Allergies and Epinephrine Auto-Injector Policies

[Texas Education Code, Section 25.0022](#) requires public schools to ask parents or caregivers whether their child has a food allergy upon enrollment. [Section 30.0151](#) also requires school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to adopt and administer a policy for students with diagnosed food allergies at risk for anaphylaxis. Schools *may* also voluntarily adopt unassigned epinephrine auto-injector policies in accordance with [25 Texas Administrative Code, Subchapter U](#). Talk to your school about its allergy policies. If your school adopts an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector policy, view the DSHS [epinephrine auto-injector reporting form](#) for schools to report when epinephrine injections are administered.

Ask About Asthma and Unassigned Albuterol Policies

Schools can voluntarily adopt unassigned asthma medication policies in accordance with [Texas Education Code, Section 38.208](#). Talk to your school about its asthma policies. If your school adopts an unassigned asthma medication policy, use the DSHS [unassigned asthma medication reporting form](#) to report when asthma medicine is given. View [additional asthma resources](#).

Health Education

Vaping and E-Cigarettes: A toolkit for Working with Youth

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's [Tobacco Education Resource Library](#) has free toolkits for download. This toolkit provides information about e-cigarettes and vaping and their effects on youth. [Download the vaping and e-cigarette toolkit](#) to educate your students.

Health Services

Back to School Vaccine Outreach Toolkit

The [Texas Immunization Stakeholder Workgroup](#) has released a toolkit to support school vaccine outreach. The toolkit includes social media messages, frequently

asked questions, and newsletter templates. There is also information on required vaccines for schools and child-care facilities. [Download the full toolkit](#) to use with your school community (link will download a ZIP file).

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

Partners in Prevention Conference: Anchored in Purpose

The Texas Department of Family Protective Services is hosting their [Partners in Prevention conference](#) on September 13-15, 2022 in Corpus Christi, Texas. This conference is intended for youth development professionals and child and family well-being professionals. This year's theme focuses on staying anchored to vision, mission, and goals. Choose from over 30 sessions to attend on various topics. [Register for the conference](#) and view the [full conference agenda](#).

Family Engagement

Preventing Suicides: Supporting the Teens in Your Life

[Families for Depression Awareness](#) is hosting a webinar on September 15, 2022, from 6:00–7:30 PM CT. This webinar is intended for parents, caregivers, family members, youth workers, and caring adults interested in learning about teen mental health. The presenter will share how parents and caring adults can identify warning signs of mental health crisis and suicide. Participants will learn how to communicate with teens about suicide prevention and encourage teens to seek help. The webinar will be recorded and posted for viewing after the event. [Register for the webinar](#).

DSHS Back to School Reminders

DSHS has created a webpage of resources for back to school. Topics include vaccinations, Covid-19 guidance, and vision and dental screening reminders. [Share this resource](#) with school community members and parents to prepare for the school year.

Quote to Note

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined." - Henry David Thoreau

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The articles and hyperlinks to external websites appearing in *Friday Beat* are intended to be informational and do not represent an endorsement by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Other websites may not be accessible to people with disabilities or server restrictions. External email addresses may also be provided as a courtesy. If you choose to correspond, please be advised that DSHS policies may not apply. For information about any of the programs listed, contact the sponsoring organization directly. For comments or questions about *Friday Beat*, email the School Health Program at schoolhealth@dshs.texas.gov or call (512) 776-7279.

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