

February 26, 2021

Dear YES Prep Families,

We hope this message finds you well and returning to some sense of normalcy after last week's winter storm (Uri). We realize that many of you may still be dealing with challenges that the storm left behind. Please know that we are here and eager to support you and our students. Please take a moment to read details in this letter which include resources and support available to you. A huge shout out to our Student Support Counselors who have been working round the clock to support students and families during these challenging times and to our facilities teams for their extraordinary work protecting our buildings prior to the storm and getting them ready to open safely after it!

In this Family Update you'll find information, updates and reminders about post-winter storm and general resources for families, student lottery, SAT School Day, STAAR and TELPAS testing, and new Family Workshops available.

Important Dates Reminder

- **Wed. March 3** – SAT School Day for 11th graders
- **Fri. March 5** – Student Lottery Notifications
- **Various dates in March** – TELPAS Testing (see date details in TELPAS section below)

Community resources for those affected by winter storm

We have compiled a list of resources available to help families who were affected by the winter storm. Please visit this page if you are needing assistance: [Community resources for those affected by winter storm](#).

Additionally, we partner with community organizations to provide ongoing support and resources to help YES Prep families with anything that may affect a child's ability to return to school, whether in-person or online. You can see is a list of services for YES Prep families linking to community organizations that may be able to assist with current needs.

- [Food](#)
- [Housing and shelter](#)
- [Counseling](#)

How to Submit a Student Assistance Form (SAF)

We work with ProUnitas to ensure we are effectively identifying and intervening to assist students with non-academic needs. Teachers, students and parents can submit a Student Assistance Form (SAF) to alert your child's school of an issue that may be impacting them (death of a family member, living with relatives due to water damage etc). Only a small percentage of SAFs are submitted by parents so we want to be sure you are aware of this simple tool and how you can submit a SAF.

Please take a moment to learn more about SAFs and view the brief videos at www.Yesprep.org/saf



Student Lottery Notifications Update

Due to the inclement weather and closures last week, the YES Prep Lottery for the 2021-22 school year will take place TODAY Friday, February 26. Families can now expect lottery notifications on Friday, March 5. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at lottery@yesprep.org.

Haven't applied yet? YES Prep is still accepting applications, visit yesprep.org/enroll to apply for the 2021-21 school year.

STAAR Update

STAAR is an important data point for our students, campuses, and our school district. Passing STAAR EOCs is also a high school graduation requirement. To provide students the greatest opportunity for success and to protect student and staff health, we are creating effective, compliant, and safe testing environment for all students. Before Spring Break, we will be sharing more details about the STAAR administration and what all students and families can expect.

If you do not have a YES Prep issued device for your student, please contact your campus as soon as possible to be issued one for instruction and assessment, including STAAR testing.

SAT School Day – March 3

Our second SAT School Day administration will be on March 3 for 11th grade students and will be administered on their campuses. The SAT is still heavily used in the college admissions and financial aid process as a measure of college readiness. A strong and safe SAT School Day administration on our own campuses gives our students the best chance for success on their future college applications.

TELPAS Update

TELPAS stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System. It tests students' English proficiency in four domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. All students in the state of Texas identified as English Learners are required to take the TELPAS.

TELPAS allows school staff and families to see how a student is progressing in the English language. After taking TELPAS, each student receives a proficiency level in each of the four language domains: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High. This information allows YES Prep staff and your student's teachers to provide the right type of supports to help your student advance.

The state of Texas also requires that state-wide exams are delivered in-person and cannot be taken virtually. YES Prep students must come to campus to complete the TELPAS exam, STAAR test, and any other state-wide test.

In order to ensure in-person testing is conducted in a safe environment, we are limiting the number of grade levels coming to campus to test for TELPAS and following all health and safety protocols for staff & students.

Given the impact of the winter storm, we have updated testing dates to allow students time to transition back to school. Updated testing dates are below. You will receive communication from your campus regarding specific dates and times for your student.

- 8th grade: March 1
- 9th grade: March 5
- 6th grade: March 8

- 10th-12th grade: March 10
- 7th grade: March 12
- 2nd grade: Week of March 8

Family Workshops

We will restart our weekly Family Workshops on **TUESDAY, March 9** with a 4-week series provided by Dr. Crystal Collier. She is a therapist and educator who has been working with adolescents and adults suffering from mental illness, behavioral problems and substance use disorders since 1991. This informative series will be offered on Microsoft Teams live from 5 p.m. - 6 p.m. and will cover stress (March 9), substance abuse (March 23), technology (March 30) and behavior modification (April 6). To learn more about her story and her powerful message, please visit her [website](#).

We strongly encourage you to watch [The Science of High Risk Behavior](#) prior to the first session as we had to cut this foundational session due to the winter storm disruption. If you are watching on a laptop, you can view the video with subtitles in your preferred language by turning on captions then selecting your preferred language from the dropdown menu under the icon that looks like a gear.

2021 Black History Month campaign recap

As February comes to an end, we invite you to review a recap of our [2021 Black History Month campaign](#). From celebrating our Black voices at YES Prep to featuring prominent people and organizations, we hope you take this opportunity to celebrate with us. Plus, we invite our Black seniors and recent alumni to visit [this blog](#) to learn of current scholarship opportunities available for you. YES Prep embraces and honors cultural differences to advance equity and social justice.

At YES Prep, equity is essential to achieving educational and academic excellence, and we believe that students' learning experiences are enriched by the diversity of the curriculum, student body, and community.

Did you know?

Public charter schools like YES Prep work hard to make sure students of every demographic succeed. English learners at charter schools "master" reading on STAAR exams at nearly double the rate of their peers at traditional ISDs. [Learn more about the results of public charters here](#).

As always, thank you families for trusting us with the responsibility of educating your children and for your support and partnership as we continue our commitment to prioritize safety while also working tirelessly to provide the highest quality instruction, online and in-person. Our next Family Update will be Friday, March 5.

Thank you