



March 18, 2022

Dear Kehal Kodesh School Families,

You should have just received a congregational communication regarding Rockdale's updated health safety policies as related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As noted, procedures for Kehal Kodesh will differ slightly from the general guidelines.

In line with the updated Rockdale Temple guidelines, we will no longer require proof of COVID-19 vaccination or vaccination itself, though our Health Safety Team strongly recommends vaccination for all eligible individuals. **However, we will deviate from the new congregational guidelines in requiring masks for all participants in our Religious School community.** Please note that this specific policy was approved by the Board of Directors.

We write to explain further the decision to keep masking during Kehal Kodesh. We recognize transmission numbers are trending favorably low, and that many of your children's public and private schools have already transitioned to mask-optional environments. We also know that many members of our community are uneasy about unmasking, especially as we have unvaccinated children as a part of our population. We are proud of the extremely high rate of vaccination among Kehal Kodesh families and staff.

The decision to maintain the current mask policy also considered the importance of routine and knowing what to expect when students come for a Sunday morning or occasional Tuesday afternoon. After Spring Break, we only have three Sunday sessions and one Yom Ivrit program remaining in our school year. With this in mind, we believe continuity is best. We are committed to the health and safety of our community, as well as the values of compassion and inclusivity. This Kehal Kodesh policy is only for the remainder of the 2021-2022 year. We are encouraged by the data trends and are planning to gather "normally" for the coming school year.

We truly are a *Kehal Kodesh*, a sacred community, and we are very grateful for your partnership. If you have any questions or want to speak further about this decision, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Rabbi Erin Binder
Assistant Rabbi & Educator

Rabbi Meredith Kahan
Senior Rabbi

If you have any questions about Kehal Kodesh, contact us!

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