



Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Austin Independent School District

[Let's Talk](#)

<https://www.austinisd.org/>

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WORKING DRAFT

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A Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Austin ISD,

I am excited to welcome you to the new school year. It is a privilege and honor to serve as your superintendent.

One of the many things that has impressed me in joining Austin ISD is how involved our entire community is in the Safe Return to School Plan for the 2021–22 school year. Your participation and input have been critical as we prepared for a safe return to school.

Your safety and the safety of your children is always one of our top priorities. As the COVID situation continues to change, we will continue to work with you and to follow health guidance from local, state and federal authorities to make the best decisions. We will continue to communicate these changes to you as they occur. I invite you to read this plan carefully and take note of the details that will help answer questions for you and for everyone in our community. For the most current information, please visit our Back-to-School webpage, www.austinisd.org/reconnect.



We are eager to welcome all students back to campus. We encourage students, families and staff to follow the recommended strategies from the CDC that are proven to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 (wash your hands, keep your distance and get vaccinated). Starting Wednesday, August 11, students, staff, and visitors will need to wear face masks at all Austin ISD schools and facilities. I am responsible for the safety, health, and welfare of students and staff and want to ensure a safe start to the school year.

We are committed to providing every student with equitable, rigorous and engaging learning experiences each day. We also commit to maintaining open communication with our community, and keeping the health and safety of our Austin ISD family at the forefront of everything we do.

Thank you for being a part of the Austin ISD family. #WeAreAISD #SomosAISD #AISDproud

Teaching & Learning

Continuity of Services & Supports and Accelerated Learning

Austin ISD will ensure that we are ready to smoothly transition from summer to on-campus learning on August 17th. To keep students and staff safe while at school, social distancing and other mitigation measures will be put in place. This will include a culture of mask-wearing and supporting social distancing whenever possible.

We are committed to ensuring that all students receive the support and services they need. The instructional models are designed based on the current guidance for safety, and best practices in blended and personalized learning. We offer robust and engaging instruction in a supportive and learner-centered environment, and commit to understanding where students are in their learning process to design exactly what they need to master content and language goals, and remain on track to graduate and pursue their dreams.

Austin ISD will engage in a robust accelerated learning approach in which teachers and students will partner to set learning goals based to support student progress toward what in Austin ISD we call “high leverage TEKS.” The combination of the best first-teach in the classroom through blended learning approaches, an amplified social and emotional wellness approach, and targeted tutoring (as required by HB 4545) for student academic performance will be at the core of student-centered support.

The districts’ curriculum has been redesigned to support newly bundled and focused TEKS for the greatest impact and continuity of learning with multiple opportunities to customize the learning experience to ensure all students can access the content. The newly adopted instructional framework (Teaching for Robust Understanding, or www.truframework.org) provides the basis for decision-making at the written curriculum level as well as at the classroom delivery level. The curriculum includes a focus on blended learning models to increase small group instruction and one-on-one time with the teacher. Additionally, a curated and streamlined suite of adaptive technology tools have been embedded in the curriculum to support individual areas of growth for all of our students.

Each student has a unique and personal data story, complete with assets and areas for growth that will be captured through the eCST (electronic Child Study Team) system. This system allows teachers to access and add to a student’s learning inventory from year to year and ensure that necessary supports transition and grow as additional teachers become a part of the student’s

experience. This digital system reflects the more human-centered system by which a team of adults support the needs of every student at a campus. Student intervention supports, including targeted tutoring will be tracked and reflected in eCST.

Additionally, a virtual school option for the fall of 2021 will align to the district curriculum and support structures for continuity as the year progresses.

Student Programs

Gifted and Talented (GT)

Advanced academics will continue to support all our learners, including our high-ability students. Students already identified as gifted will continue to receive instructional support. The GT nomination window will open in the fall, and all testing will be conducted online, as administered by individual campuses. GT training is available to all elementary and secondary teachers.

Multilingual Education

AISD's Multilingual Education Team will continue to support students' academic achievement and language development through Dual Language, ESL (English as a Second Language), and World Language programs. Acquiring language is a social process that occurs best through interaction among students and between students and the teacher. In-person learning is the best learning environment for these to occur. The virtual option will include Spanish/English Dual Language for Kindergarten-5th grade students enrolled in One-Way or Two-Way Dual Language and appropriately certified teachers for Emergent Bilingual students receiving ESL support.

Pre-Kindergarten

Austin ISD Pre-K offers a nurturing, challenging environment to help children develop the skills they need to succeed throughout their school career. Pre-K years are a period of rapid growth for a child, and the key concepts they develop in the Pre-K classroom directly correlate to their future academic success.

Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies and Practices

Each student's special education case manager and service provider(s) will carefully review the student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) which is developed considering the individual needs and present levels of academic and functional performance. This will include consideration of each student's goals, accommodations/modifications, supports, services, and as appropriate

the regular education remote learning activities.

Special Education teachers, speech therapists, and service providers are required to offer support and services in accordance with each student's IEP. Each student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee, which includes the parents/guardians as integral members, will have the ability to modify the student's IEP as appropriate for the virtual instructional context. Changes to a student's IEP must be made through an IEP meeting or IEP Amendment, with the ARD Committee.

The district has provided special educators with evidence-based instructional materials and online instructional curriculum to meet the unique needs of students. Also, teachers will use a variety of strategies and approaches to meet the individualized needs of students with disabilities to implement the IEP.

The Special Education department is committed to ensure the continual implementation of federally mandated Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) responsibilities related to evaluation and instructional programming. Thus the District will provide the necessary PPE that will ensure the safety of the students, staff, and families we serve.

Students Identified with Dyslexia

The Dyslexia team is committed to ensuring the implementation of high-quality dyslexia services, including instruction, intervention, and the provision of accommodations and/or modifications as determined by a student's IEP or Section 504 plan across campuses. The district provides training, intervention, and materials in Spanish and English for teachers and interventionists serving students with dyslexia aligned with state and federal guidelines. Teachers and interventionists providing services to students with dyslexia will be provided with PPE to ensure safety of students and staff.

Section 504

The Section 504 team is committed to ensuring compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, a civil rights law which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. To learn more about Section 504 services, please review the [Section 504 Resource Document for Families and Staff in Spanish](#) or [English](#). Campus teams holding Section 504 meetings are required to offer in-person and virtual meeting options for families to increase access.

Social-Emotional Learning and Cultural Proficiency & Inclusiveness and Counseling Support for Students and Families Returning to In-Person Learning

Social and Emotional Learning and Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness

It's important to stay socially connected! Now, more than ever, adults and students alike need to lean on our social and emotional skills to manage stress and continue to relate to and support one another. Supporting teachers, students, and families in building and using those competencies to ensure equity in learning for all students is the goal of the SEL and CP&I Department.

The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Culturally Proficiency & Inclusiveness (CP&I) team is engaging in proactive processes and services to support campuses in opening the new school year. These include:

- Supporting campuses with setting intentional SEL and CP&I goals
- Continuing to support SEL and CP&I campus facilitator funding
- Collaborating with the AISD Academics team and cooperating teachers to integrate SEL and CP&I into lessons and provide reopening homeroom/advisory activities to build community and engage with students in PK-12
- Assigning a district SEL and CP&I Specialist to a group of campuses for ongoing support

Students and their families who are navigating new ways of learning inevitably have many questions about how best to prepare for the changes. There are many resources to aid in creating space for learning in the home, understanding how Blended learning works, how to add enrichment to teacher-planned social and emotional learning activities, and how to manage the stressors that accompany change of any kind. These resources include:

- [Reopening SEL and CP&I homeroom/advisory activities](#)
- [SEL Enrichment Activities for Families](#) / [Actividades de enriquecimiento de SEL](#)
- Managing stress (for caregivers and students)
 - [Mindfulness Practices](#) / [Principios de conciencia plena](#)
 - [Greater Good's Guide to Well-Being During Coronavirus](#)



- [CDC's Website on Managing Stress and Anxiety](#)

Social and Emotional Learning and Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness During the School Day

SEL and CP&I is built into the academic school day and provides educators the opportunity to use social and emotional and culturally responsive lenses to inform their practice.

Additionally, Morning Meeting Circles are a part of classroom instruction from PreK-5th grade. This is a time to check in with students, assess their emotional well-being, and build community with their classmates and their teachers.

At the 6-12th grade levels, teacher-created activities of various types (circles, small group breakouts, etc.) will be embedded into a portion of the school day, again, to check in with students, assess their emotional well-being, and build community with their classmates and their teachers.

These activities incorporate the [3 Signature SEL Practices](#):

- Welcoming Ritual (or greeting)
- Engagement Strategies and / or Brain Breaks
- Optimistic Closing

Professional School Counseling

Professional School Counselors are committed to creating safe, supportive, inclusive learning environments through the implementation of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Please connect with the school counselor(s) assigned to your campus for academic, social and emotional and mental wellness support. The following services are available:

- “Check-ins”: During 2021-22, every AISD student will have access to a professional school counselor. Counselors support student needs, remove obstacles to learning, and connect students with resources
- Counseling and SEL-Aligned Lessons and Resources: For example, some common topics include Coping Skills, Welcoming and Belonging, Tools for Academic Success, and Blended Learning support for scheduling/structure
- For Crisis support please follow the enclosed [link](#)

Virtual School Option

We believe that the best place for children to learn and to thrive is in school, and we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment so that we can welcome each and every student back to our classrooms.

Austin ISD will continue to implement [health and safety protocols](#) for the new school year at all of our schools. Aligned with the [CDC's recommendation](#) that “**children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place,**” Austin ISD is ready to welcome children back to school.

However, we recognize that our K-6 students cannot get vaccinated yet, so while we have taken every precaution to ensure our schools are safe, for students who need additional options outside of our safe campuses, we will now offer a virtual learning option.

- This will be a temporary option that will be available for students in Kindergarten through 6th grade during the Fall 2021 (August 24 - December 17, 2021) semester.
- Families need to complete the [virtual application](#) by **Thursday, August 5 at 11:59 pm**.
- Support for the application process will be provided to families in the following ways:
 - The Parent Engagement Support Office (PESO) team will be available at the Austin ISD Central Office (4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Rd., Austin, TX 78704) from 9:00 am - 6:00 pm, Monday, August 2 - Thursday, August 5, 2021.
 - Families may call the Parent Engagement Support Office helpline at 512-414-0726 for English or Spanish support with the application form beginning Monday, August 2 at 9:00 am and continuing through Thursday, August 5 at 6:00 pm.
 - Families may utilize our Let's Talk communications platform by texting 512-886-6434 or visiting <https://www.austinisd.org/letstalk>.
 - Families may call their home or neighborhood school office.

Student Support from the Austin ISD 2021 Virtual School:

- Students will engage in virtual learning via the BLEND platform and receive direct virtual teacher-led instruction.
- In keeping with the reason families are requesting virtual school, students opting for virtual learning will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Students will remain enrolled at their home campus, and will be served by Austin ISD teachers and staff. Teachers providing virtual instruction will be dedicated solely to students learning virtually.
- Core student services will be provided through both live interaction and independent work.

- Examples of core student services: Academic instruction in math, reading/language arts, science, social studies and necessary intervention and targeted tutoring services.
- For teacher planning and support, a minimum commitment for the fall semester from families is necessary. Students will be able to choose to return to in-person learning at the end of the second nine-week period (December 17, 2021).
- The plan is for students participating in virtual learning will be welcomed back to their home schools on January 4, 2022 and virtual school will no longer be necessary
- As an added support to our Austin community, we want to make this virtual option available for families not currently attending an Austin ISD school, if spots are available. All non-Austin ISD families submitting an application will automatically be placed on a waitlist and only contacted should a spot become available.
- To learn more, see our [FAQs](#)

Virtual learning will not be available to the following:

- Students eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine (ages 12 and up)
- PK and 7th - 12th grade students
- Students who qualify for [homebound services](#)

Student Registration

Returning Students

For families registering students returning to Austin ISD, a Portal account must be created before you can access the online registration system. To create a Portal account, visit portal.austinisd.org.

Only parent/guardian contacts are able to use the online registration system. If you have any questions or need assistance with the Portal or [online registration](#), please contact your child’s campus or call the Family Support line at 512-414-9187.

All returning students who have had a recent change of address should submit proof of residency to the campus when returning to school. Please note that additional documentation may be requested by the campus to complete enrollment if those documents are not attached electronically during this online registration process.

PreK 3 & PreK 4 Registration

For families that are interested in registering students for the PreK 3 and PreK 4 programs they will need to begin with the screener on the Early Learning website <https://access.austinisd.org/DMPrekScreenerVueApp/#/>. Once the screener is completed students will be determined as being eligible either for income, language or tuition and the parent

will be contacted and asked to register their child for their school of choice. If you have questions or need further clarification please contact us at 512-414-PreK (7735).

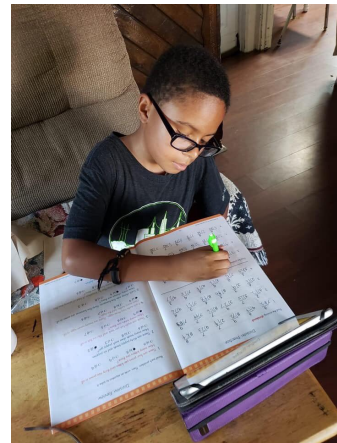
New Students

For families registering students new to Austin ISD, students can be registered online or by a paper packet submission by using our Curbside service. For online, a Portal account must be created, portal.austinisd.org.

Only parent/guardian contacts are able to use the online registration system. If you have any questions or need assistance with a Portal account or Online Registration, please contact your student's campus or call the Family Support line at 512-414-9187.

Families registering students new to Austin ISD will need to provide the following documentation at the child's campus:

- Child's birth certificate
- Child's social security card (optional)
- Child's immunization records
- Child's withdrawal form/last report card (if applicable)
- Parent/guardian photo ID
- Proof of guardianship (if applicable)
- Proof of residency



Please note that additional documentation may be requested by the campus to complete enrollment if those documents are not attached electronically during this online registration process.

Physical Environment - Safety Protocols

Austin ISD is working to ensure we maintain the health, wellness, and safety of the entire school community. Our operations team is working with campus and district leaders to ensure that compliance with social distancing recommendations, PPE, and campus safety is aligned, and we are prepared to respond to local, state and federal orders. Each campus will continue to:

- Train all Austin ISD employees to follow health and safety protocols.
- Ensure all campuses have allotment of PPE and cleaning material on-site each week.

- Maintain a steady inventory of necessary PPE to support the district.
- Provide each classroom with a HEPA filtration unit, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.
- Provide all campuses with no-touch thermometers.
- Modify daily cleaning schedules to ensure each space is sanitized and disinfected multiple times a day; and deep cleaning of campuses once a week.
- Disable all water fountains at all Austin ISD campuses and facilities until further notice.
- Install large air scrubbers to promote air circulation in large corridors.
- Install small HEPA air filters in campus administrative spaces and health rooms.
- Replace filters in all HVAC systems across all schools.



Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Please check campus websites or call the campus office for specific information about how the campus will be addressing arrival and dismissal of students.

A few general guidelines include:

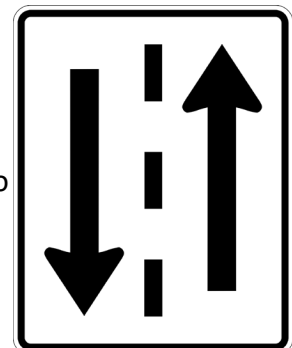
- Possible staggered start and end times
- Implementation of social distancing practices



Transitions

Transition between classes will vary among levels (elementary, middle, and high school) and by campus. Size of campus and number of students will determine the number of transitions students experience. Campus plans should be reviewed together by families so that everyone understands what it will look like when moving around the campus. Protocols for transitions could include the following:

- Use of visual signage in the hallways to ensure social distancing
- Avoid close contact; students and staff are to keep their hands to themselves and to not touch other people, walls, floor, etc.
- Do not linger in hallways
- Sanitize hands upon entering classrooms



Outdoor Spaces

The use of outdoor learning environments is encouraged to support social distancing

recommendations, reduce COVID-19 transmission risk, enhance academic outcomes, provide hands-on learning opportunities, and improve mental health/stress management. For every age group from PreK to secondary, health authority guidance recommends that schools utilize outdoor spaces when possible as a high priority strategy for returning students to schools with social distancing measures in place. In addition, the use of outdoor areas with social distancing for any small-group activities such as lunches, breaks, and meetings is encouraged. Whenever possible, teachers and staff are encouraged to use outdoor learning spaces.

Protocols for Cleaning and Disinfecting

Austin ISD will implement and follow robust cleaning procedures:

- Clean high touch surfaces multiple times a day to include door knobs, push bars, front office countertops, desk tops, classroom student desk, tables, sink areas, countertops, cafeteria tables, hand washing areas, restrooms, shower locker areas, gym matting, weight rooms, stairway rails, bleacher rails, drinking fountains, computer keyboards, library countertops, book return areas, tables and all other touch points
- Clean the entire campus daily
- Deep clean entire campus weekly
- Provide disinfection stations to be located at campus entry points
- Wipe down of all areas before and after use utilizing an all purpose cleaner
- Disinfect shared computer keyboards, telephone receivers, and other devices frequently
- Install signage communicating effective sanitation measures
- Empty waste receptacles, thoroughly clean/disinfect and reline.
- Develop a thorough HVAC routine maintenance assessment and testing process to ensure our buildings are prepared to receive students and staff safely.

Health and Safety Protocols

Austin ISD continues to focus on the health and safety of our school community. We are designing health and safety protocols to minimize the exposure and spread of COVID-19 to students and staff, such as managing maintaining safe Physical distancing and encouraging partially vaccinated/unvaccinated students and staff to wear face masks.

Physical Distancing Measures

Aligned with [CDC recommendations](#) for physical distancing as a strategy for slowing the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Austin ISD will continue to implement physical distancing measures at all schools and district facilities. Austin ISD intends to follow the CDC recommendations regarding physical distancing listed below:

- All students and staff should maintain at least 3 feet apart when feasible from each other.
- Six feet of distance is recommended in the following circumstances when **feasible**:
 - When masks can't be worn, such as when eating.
 - During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band, or sports and exercise. Move these activities outdoors or to large, well-ventilated spaces
 - In common areas
 - In any outdoor setting when students, teachers, staff, and visitors are stationary (e.g. waiting in line for transportation, sitting in a group)
 - During Risk Stage 5 per Austin Travis County (all levels - elementary, middle, high)

Per CDC guidance, our goal is to maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, and six feet between students and staff whenever feasible. Physical distancing measures implemented at each campus will be dependent on the number of students that return for on-campus learning and the size of the classroom(s). Assigned seating charts will be implemented at each campus classroom to assist with contact tracing.

We know that physical distancing measures will help to keep our students and staff safe while at school and work. The following physical distancing measures will be implemented:

- Place visual reminders in classrooms and throughout common areas to maintain physical distancing, where possible
- Place floor markers at all entrances to ensure distancing is maintained
- Space seating with desks at least 3 feet apart, when feasible
- Turn desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart, or use physical barriers when desks face each other

Visitors on Campus

School campus visitation policy will be determined based on current Travis County COVID-19 risk based stage guidelines. People may visit campus for purposes related to student instruction, enrollment, tours, and orientation.

Visitors must follow all required safety protocols. These include, but are not limited to:

- Registration
- Parent conferences/meetings related to academic or social emotional needs of a student
- Grade-level orientation sessions
- School tours

School Campus Visitation Policy	
STAGE	POLICY
1	All visitors welcome
2	All visitors welcome
3	Essential visitors (educational purposes only)
4	Essential visitors (educational purposes only)
5	Case-by-case basis (approval needed by campus administration)

This does not include parents/guardians having breakfast/lunch with students or visiting classrooms during the school day.

Additional Measures:

- While wearing a face mask is not a requirement per [Governor Abbott’s Executive Order](#), all students, staff and visitors will need to wear a face mask while on AISD school and facility properties (including outdoor activities).
- If visitors have COVID-19 symptoms, or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for returning to a school building or other district facility

On- and Off-Campus Activities and School-Wide Events

At the onset of on-campus instruction, Austin ISD will implement temporary guidelines regarding on-campus and off-campus activities, as well as school-wide events. As our local health conditions improve and relevant guidance is received, we will adjust our plans. For now, the following guidelines are in place.

<p>On-Campus Activities with Recommended Health & Safety Protocols Strongly Encouraged</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet the teacher, back-to-school night, and parent/guardians conferences will be held in-person and/or remotely ● After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities may continue ● PTA events and CAC meetings held on-campus ● Instructional planning and social-emotional support
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	meetings with parents/guardians may be held in-person; unless remote participation is requested by the parent
Off-Campus Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student may participate in academic contests and events, as well as fine arts and athletic competitions • In-person, off-campus field trips that require transportation must be pre-approved through the Office of School Leadership • Only high school seniors may leave during lunch
School-Wide Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person, school-wide events that include inviting guests onto school grounds and field trips, must be pre-approved through the Office of School Leadership in collaboration with the Health and Safety Team.

Face Masks

We know that masking is the number one way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Starting Wednesday, August 11, students, staff and visitors will need to wear face masks when on school properties (including outdoor activities). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended universal indoor [masking in schools](#) as a way to slow or stop the spread of COVID-19, especially when paired with other safety measures such as vaccines, social distancing, rapid tests and increasing ventilation. Austin ISD required masks throughout all of last school year and saw a lower positivity rate inside its schools than in the community at large.



Correct Use of Face Masks

Austin Public Health and the CDC recommend that students and staff are aware of the correct use of cloth face masks, including wearing cloth face masks over the nose and mouth and securely around the face. Austin ISD will ensure that students, teachers, and staff are aware that they should:

- Wash or sanitize their hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before putting on a cloth face mask
- Not touch their cloth face masks while wearing them and, if they do, they should wash their hands before and after with soap and water or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol)
- Not wear cloth face masks if they are wet; a wet cloth face mask may make it difficult to breathe
- Never share or swap cloth face masks
- Encourage students' cloth face masks to be clearly identified with their names or initials to avoid confusion or swapping (Students' face masks may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back)
- Wash cloth face masks after every day of use and/or before being used again

Washing Hands and Use of Hand Sanitizer

Keeping our hands clean is one of the simplest and most important ways we can prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. The [CDC](#) recommends that everyone wash their hands frequently throughout the day. All Austin ISD campuses and facilities will:

- Promote frequent 20-second hand washing practices among students and staff
- Ensure that all students and staff wash their hands
 - before and after meal service
 - after handling his/her face mask
 - after blowing his/her nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - after touching a door handle
 - after using the restroom
 - after touching objects with bare hands that have been handled by other individuals
 - when hands are visibly soiled



- between activities
- Have hand sanitizer available at campus entrances, in classrooms, in the office area, and in common areas throughout the campus

When soap and water is not available, students and staff will use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Additional Health and Safety Protocols

- Student-friendly graphics with reminders will be displayed throughout the school for:
 - Noticing symptoms
 - Maintaining social distance
 - Frequent and thorough hand-washing

Vaccinations and Rapid Testing Opportunities

Austin ISD is partnering with local organizations to provide COVID-19 vaccine opportunities to students, staff, families, and the community on Austin ISD campuses and facilities. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is not required, but strongly encouraged. Our vaccine clinic opportunities are available online on Austin ISD Health Services [webpage](#). We also have voluntary rapid COVID-19 testing available in the campus health rooms for students and staff.



Responding to a Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Austin ISD is committed to putting health and safety protocols in place that will prevent the occurrence and/or spread of COVID-19. However, we must be prepared to quickly and effectively respond to a lab-confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 at a school or other Austin ISD facility. Each campus will be asked to identify a COVID Designee (administrator preferred) and an alternate, must not be the nurse. All positive COVID cases will be reported through our internal COVID responses system.

Responding to a Possible COVID-19 Case at a School

- Any students who show symptoms (whether unvaccinated or vaccinated), while at school, will immediately be sent to the campus health room to be evaluated by health room staff. If it is determined that the symptoms could possibly be associated with COVID-19, the students will then be separated in an identified isolation space from others until they are picked up or are able to return home. Any staff who shows COVID-19 symptoms (whether unvaccinated or vaccinated), while at school/work, will immediately be separated in an identified isolation space from others, until they are picked up or are able to return home.

- All areas used by the student or staff who show COVID-19 symptoms while at school will be thoroughly disinfected as soon as is feasible.
- Students and staff who report feeling feverish will be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

Responding to a Lab-Confirmed Case at a School

In accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, if an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local health department. If an individual that is lab-confirmed positive has been in an area within the last 24 hours, the school may close off areas or the entire school, if all areas have been exposed, until the non-porous surfaces in those areas are thoroughly sanitized and disinfected.

Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, Austin ISD will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school that are learning/working in-person if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers, or staff who participate in any on campus activities. **Unvaccinated** students and staff that have had close contact or primary exposure (see diagram below) with the affected school member up to 48 hours prior to the affected school member showing COVID-19 symptoms, before entering isolation (or up to 48 hours prior to the affected school member testing positive for COVID-19 before entering isolation, even if they are not showing any COVID-19-related symptoms), will need to quarantine for 10-days. This includes students and staff who have been a part of the affected school member's:

- Classroom
- Bus route
- Extracurricular activities
- Household members of the affected school member that attend school/work at AISD

If quarantined students/staff have no symptoms that arise during the 10-day quarantine period, they can return at the end of the 10-day period. If quarantined students/staff have symptoms arise during the 10-day quarantine period or they receive a positive COVID-19 test result, they will need to meet the CDC criteria listed below for those that are confirmed positive before returning to school. If individuals test negative in the 10-day quarantine period, they will still be expected to quarantine for the full 10-days, since it could take 2-14 days before symptoms present.

Per [CDC recommendations](#), if an individual has received both doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or the one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and it has been over two weeks since they completed their vaccine series, they **will not** be required to quarantine if they have close contact/exposure to a confirmed positive, but will be advised to monitor symptoms for 14-days. If two weeks have not passed since an individual has completed their vaccine series, they will need to quarantine for 10-days if there has been close contact/exposure to a confirmed positive. Please note that Human Capital and/or Health Services may ask for vaccine documentation.

While the quarantine period has been shortened to 10-days, in some instances, a 14-day quarantine may be required for individuals at increased risk for serious illness.

Close Contact (Primary Exposure)

(Based on information from Austin Public Health Interim Guidance)

Close Contact (primary exposure): Between Adults & Between Adults and Children

- You were within 6 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period within 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until the sick person goes into isolation.
- You were sneezed or coughed on or somehow got the infected person's respiratory drops on you.
- You cared for an infected person at home.
- You shared eating or drinking utensils with an infected person.
- You had direct contact (touched, hugged, or kissed) with the infected person.

- You were within 6 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hr period in a classroom within 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until they go in isolation.
- You were within 6 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period on a bus within the 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until they go into isolation.
- You were within 6 feet of an infected asymptomatic (no symptoms) person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period within the 48 hours prior getting tested until they go into isolation.

Close Contact (primary exposure): Between Children

- You were within 3 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period within 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until the sick person goes into isolation.
- You were sneezed or coughed on or somehow got the infected person's respiratory drops on you.
- You cared for an infected person at home.
- You shared eating or drinking utensils with an infected person.
- You had direct contact (touched, hugged, or kissed) with the infected person.
- You were within 3 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hr period in a classroom within 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until they go in isolation.



- You were within 3 feet of an infected person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period on a bus within the 48 hours prior to the person feeling sick until they go into isolation.
- You were within 3 feet of an infected asymptomatic (no symptoms) person for over 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period within the 48 hours prior getting tested until they go into isolation.

Criteria for Returning to School or Work After a Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID-19

Any individual who is either lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 or experiencing the symptoms that could be COVID-19 (listed above) must stay home (isolate) throughout the infection period (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic). An individual that is symptomatic, but has not yet tested positive may return to school from the isolation period by meeting the 10-day isolation or PCR testing-based criteria. If students are positive, they will need to isolate for 10 days and have overall improvement of symptoms before returning, and staff will need to isolate for 10 days and provide documentation to leave office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org to be cleared by leave office before returning to work.

Understanding the Difference Between Isolation and Quarantine

Isolation and quarantine help protect the public by preventing exposure to people who are or may have a contagious disease.

ISOLATION	QUARANTINE
<p>Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. Isolation keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.</p> 	<p>Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. It keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others.</p> 

Lab-Confirmed Case Symptomatic Return Criteria

Student: 10 days have passed since symptoms started, and improvement in overall symptoms, and 24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication

Staff: 10 days have passed since symptoms started, and improvement in overall symptoms, and 24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication, and a doctor's note provided to the Leave Office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org.

Symptomatic (Tested Negative) Return Criteria

Students: Provide negative PCR test results to campus health rooms staff* and there is improvement in overall symptoms, and 24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication; **OR** Provide doctor's note to campus health room staff with alternative diagnosis clearing a student to return to school.

Staff: Provide negative PCR test results to the Leave Office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org and there is improvement in overall symptoms, and 24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication; **OR** Provide a doctor's note with alternative diagnosis to the Leave office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org clearing employee to return to work.

Presumed Positive/Symptomatic (No Testing) Return Criteria

Student: 10 days have passed since symptoms started, and improvement in overall symptoms, and

24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication; **OR** Provide doctor's note to campus health room staff stating that symptoms are not COVID-19-related and student can return to school.

Staff: 10 days have passed since symptoms started, and improvement in overall symptoms, and 24 hours have passed without fever and use of fever-reducing medication; **OR** Provide doctor's note to the Leave Office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org stating that symptoms are not COVID-19-related and employee can return to work.

Lab-Confirmed Case Asymptomatic Return Criteria

Additionally, any individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, but is asymptomatic (has not experienced any symptoms), may return to school or work when the following criteria are met:

Student: 10 days after receiving Covid-19 positive test result.

Staff: 10 days after receiving a positive test result and provide a doctor's note to the Leave Office at leaveoffice@austinisd.org clearing the employee to return.

Any individual wanting to access COVID-19 testing sites can find them on the [approved COVID-19 testing locations](#).

Abbott Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Testing

Austin ISD remains committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for our students, staff and community. We also know that on-campus is most effective, and in order to ensure a safer transition, Austin ISD will continue to offer rapid testing to its on-campus students and staff. Consent to obtain a rapid COVID-19 test is required for all students and staff before having a test administered. The test will be administered by campus health room staff, via a nose swab, just inside the nostril, and will be less intrusive than other COVID-19 tests. Students in grades seven and up and adults can also self-administer the cotton swab with a test administrator present. Results will be delivered in as little time as 15-30 minutes and will be communicated in person, by email, or by phone, as indicated on the consent form.

Whom do I talk to if I feel I need to get tested?

- On-campus students or campus staff members on a campus showing symptoms: Talk to your campus health room staff for evaluation and to receive a COVID-19 test.
- On-campus students or campus staff who are having symptoms that start while off-campus: Contact your campus to schedule a testing time with health room staff.
- On-campus students or campus staff who have had close contact with someone with a

confirmed positive: Contact your campus to schedule a testing time with health room staff.

How will I know when to get tested?

- If an on-campus student or staff member becomes symptomatic while on-campus, the campus will be able to administer a free, rapid COVID-19 test on the student or staff member and connect them to their primary care physician.
- If an on-campus student or staff member becomes symptomatic and fails their pre-health screening, they will need to contact their physician, and they are able to schedule a free, rapid COVID-19 test at their campus.
- New health guidelines recommend that testing after close contact should occur 3-5 days after symptoms begin. If an on-campus student or staff member comes into contact with someone with a confirmed positive case, they must quarantine for 10-days, and they may schedule a test at a campus for the third or fifth day after exposure.
- If an on-campus student or staff member comes into contact with someone with a confirmed positive case on AISD grounds, they will receive a letter stating when to take the test from the district.

Can I return from quarantine or self-isolation early with a negative COVID-19 test?

- Because the incubation period for COVID-19 is between 2-14 days, those who have come into contact with a confirmed positive COVID-19 case must quarantine for the entire 10-day period, regardless of a negative test result.
- Those who displayed COVID-19 symptoms but did not come into contact with a presumed or confirmed positive may return to school or work with a negative PCR test, as long as symptoms have improved and they are fever-free without using fever-reducing medications for at least 24 hours.

Transportation Protocols

Austin ISD's transportation scheduling team will collaborate with campuses to determine family transportation needs and coordinate bus routes. Safety remains at the forefront of this effort. Bus procedures will:

- Buses will go back to operating at full capacity.
- Seating charts will be required.
- Students in the same household will sit together.
- Hand sanitizer will be readily available and daily cleaning will continue.

- We require all students and employees to wear masks while on the bus.
- Bus windows will be lowered as much as possible.
- We encourage families to drop off, carpool, or walk with their students to school, as much as possible.
- Buses will not transport sick students back home. Parents/guardians will be responsible for transporting the students home.
- Thoroughly clean buses after each bus trip, focusing on high touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles; during cleaning, windows will be opened to allow for additional ventilation and air flow



Meal Service Support

Breakfast & Lunch Service Options: *(All Food will be served on open trays)*

- Students get food by entering the serving line and then eat in the cafeteria or alternative location, following district social distancing guidelines.
- or***
- Students get food by entering the serving line and return to classrooms to eat.

*Only schools offering breakfast in the classroom(BIC), Pre Pandemic, will continue this service model.

Other measures for safe eating:

- Ensure hand washing with soap and water for 20 seconds by students and staff before and after meal service (hand sanitizer may be used when soap and water is not available).
- Sanitize the serving line tray slide in between each class student group.
- Sanitize the food eating table prior to, during, and after each meal service.
- Allow classes to eat outdoors when facilities and weather permit.

Communication and Engagement

Sustaining open two-way communication with the Austin ISD community is one of our guiding principles, and hearing from multiple viewpoints is a priority.

ESSER Community Survey

Beginning last June, we engaged community members about the use of ESSER III funds in a variety of ways. Primarily, we invited families, students, staff and community members to complete a survey, which was offered in English and Spanish. The survey was distributed via mass email, social media, web announcements, newsletters and text messages for those families who do not have an email address on file. We also sent targeted outreach materials to highly involved community groups, distributed flyers at vaccine events, and hosted information sessions for district advisory bodies and partner organizations.

ESSER Family and Student Engagement

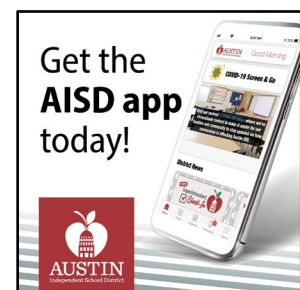
In addition to the survey, we held two virtual Conversation Circles in English and Spanish to hear directly from families about their experiences. We also visited two high schools and one middle school to hear from students..

In light of the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation, the district hosted a series of engagement events in late July to gather input on campus health and safety protocols and a virtual learning option.

AISD Mobile App

Austin ISD has a new mobile app that allows community members to stay connected. The AISD mobile application will allow all AISD community members to stay current by receiving notifications from the district and campuses for which they wish to subscribe. , In addition, the app allows for quick access to the district calendar.

Locate the free, Austin ISD Mobile App, in the digital store for your mobile device by searching for Austin ISD. Simply choose the option to download to install and begin using this new engagement tool offered by Austin ISD.



Additional Ways to Stay Connected

Our [Let's Talk](#) platform continues to be available to receive your questions and feedback. Families can also send a Let's Talk! Text to (512) 886-6434 or call the Family Support line at (512) 414-9187. Support is available Monday - Thursday from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. We are updating our social media pages daily with information and videos to help break down our reopening plans for

families. Finally, we have completely revised our COVID-19 page and rebranded it as Safe Return to School Plan.

Again, thank you for your participation and flexibility during our COVID-19 environment. As the virus and guidelines change, we will adjust to keep our community safe. For the most updated information, please refer to our Safe Return to School Plan webpage.

Public Input plan

The American Rescue Plan Act requires that school districts make their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan available to the public online. The plans must be in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, and written in a language that parents can understand. Alternatively, the plan may be orally translated or provided in an alternative accessible format upon request.

Before making its plan publicly available, school districts must seek public comment on the plan and develop the plan after taking into account public comment.

The plan will be publicly available no later than 30 days after receiving the ESSER allocation from TEA.

Periodic Review

Finally, our Austin ISD teams (Office of School Leadership, Academics, Office of Equity, Human Capital, Department of Communications and Community Engagement and Office of the Superintendent) continue to work collaboratively to review and refine our systems throughout the year. Since March of 2020 our practice on how we assess and monitor our safety and academic systems has strengthened and we are skilled at making the necessary adjustments to ensure a positive learning environment that is engaging for all students under a variety of external conditions.

Our Chief Officers meet weekly with our Superintendent to review the recommendations from our frontline teams.

In addition to our collaboration among our teams, our partnership with our community, especially students and families, is our number one priority. We rely on you to keep us informed of what we are doing well and what needs further exploration. The plan will be reviewed, revised, and reposted if revisions are necessary at least every 6 months, as required by ARP Act.