



**EPISD 2022-23**

**Safe Return to**

# INSTRUCTION *Plan*

*Revised 08-09-2022*

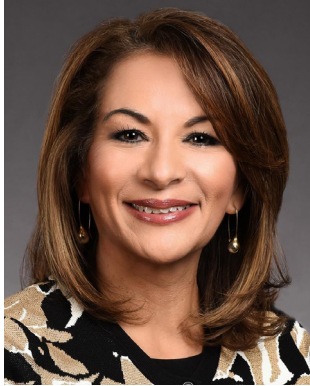
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## Letter from the Superintendent

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year! We are excited to begin this new year and embrace the many events and traditions that make El Paso ISD the district of choice.

While COVID-19 remains a concern in our community and worldwide, we have implemented measures over the course of the pandemic to mitigate its spread in our schools. We will continue to monitor and abide by guidelines set by local authorities, the Center for Disease Control and TEA.

The health and safety of our students and employees are a top priority. El Paso ISD will follow our updated COVID plan and continue to monitor our schools for potential concerns and act accordingly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diana Sayavedra".

Diana Sayavedra  
Superintendent of Schools

# Safe Return to Instruction Plan



## Department of Public Health



**MAYOR**  
Oscar Leeser

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### LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY COVID-19 UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS K-12 (ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023)

**UPDATED JULY 22, 2022**

Recommendations for area schools K-12 will continue to evolve as we move through the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations are based on careful analysis of the most current local data. Its focus is protecting the health and well-being of students, teachers, and school staff in general.

#### ***Vaccination:***

Vaccination against COVID-19 continues to be strongly recommended for all eligible individuals as the foundation and most effective of all public health preventive measures. All individuals are strongly recommended to be up to date with COVID-19 vaccination. Being up to date at this present time requires the completion of the primary series of vaccines along with all applicable booster doses if eligible.

#### ***Isolation and Quarantine:***

Prompt identification of COVID-19 cases within schools is vital to prevent school outbreaks and preserve school operations. It is recommended to identify students, teachers and other staff who are symptomatic, to properly separate them from the rest of the class or coworkers and refer them for evaluation.

Schools are required to follow current Isolation protocols which applies to individuals who have symptoms and test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. They should isolate for a minimum of 5 days and may end isolation if:

- At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed WITHOUT fever and the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
- Has shown improvement in symptoms.

Individuals who are sick with COVID-19 and continue to have fever or other symptoms without improvement after 5 days of isolation will need to continue in isolation until they meet the above criteria.

**Hector I. Ocaranza, MD, - Interim Director/Health Authority**  
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DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES



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Individuals who have NO symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 and have not been sick with COVID-19 within the last 90 days, should isolate for a minimum of 5-days from the date of the first positive specimen collected.

Quarantine is still recommended for 5 days for those who are unvaccinated and have not been sick with COVID-19 within the last 90 days; however, schools can keep exposed students within their classrooms if they are not exhibiting any symptoms. A strategy called cohorting is acceptable. It is applicable to congregate settings where immunizations rates are high.

#### **Masking:**

The use of a well-fitting mask consistently and correctly is another infection control layer that reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The use of face masks while indoors is recommended when the community risk level is High for those who want to continue wearing a mask. Anyone who chooses to wear a mask, regardless of current community level, should be supported in their decision.

The use of a well-fitting mask is also strongly recommended for the following 5 days after someone is released from Isolation from the COVID-19 disease.

#### **Distancing:**

Social Distancing is another layer within the prevention strategy that has become secondary and very difficult to follow due to inherent constraints of physical spaces within schools. When vaccination rates are high within the community, social distancing becomes less relevant and, in many instances, might not be applicable.

#### **Reporting:**

It is required for school districts to report to DPH the number of positive COVID-19 cases and absenteeism on a weekly basis. This will allow DPH to properly assess the COVID-19 situation within schools and to determine proper next steps should an outbreak be identified within a specific school.

Reporting procedures will be explained in detail to designated district nurse points of contact. Any unusual disease pattern or clusters can also be reported to [epireporting@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:epireporting@elpasotexas.gov).

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### ***Cleaning and Disinfection:***

Promote ventilation of classrooms and other indoor school areas. Continue with currently approved district policies and procedures regarding cleaning and disinfecting. Consider enhanced cleaning and disinfection of classrooms if COVID-19 cases have been reported.

Currently it is not recommended to block outdoor play areas or any other area due to a positive COVID-19 individual. Please follow your current policies and procedures regarding cleaning and disinfection.

### ***Testing:***

It is imperative that all symptomatic individuals be tested whether at school through a diagnostic testing program, any community testing program, or an FDA-approved at-home test

Schools may continue conducting screening and/or diagnostic testing should districts have available resources for a testing program at school. Testing performed at schools should be reported to DPH weekly to include the amount of testing performed and all positive results.

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## Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities have resumed, to include athletics, fine arts, UIL, clubs and other activities, in preparation for the 2022-2023 school year.



## Department of Public Health



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### Return to Play Guidelines for School Athletes (Grades <12) After COVID-19 Infection

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**Updated: February 8, 2022**

This protocol replaces the November 27, 2021 version to reflect changes to the isolation and quarantine period based on current scientific evidence.

While many young children infected with the COVID-19 virus have mild symptoms or remain asymptomatic, some develop moderate or severe disease that will impact the respiratory and cardiovascular systems by direct injury or initiation of the inflammatory response. Evidence on the prevalence and risks of these and other complications in children and adolescents who have had a milder form of the illness remains limited. While the incidence of myocarditis is lower in the pediatric population compared to the adult population, myocarditis is a complication of COVID-19 infection and is a well-known cause of sudden death during exercise in the young athlete.

#### Definitions:

Asymptomatic Disease: Patient Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 positive without exhibiting any symptoms for the duration of the isolation period (5 days).

Mild Disease: Patient Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 positive who exhibits fewer than 4 days of fever above 100.4°F, short duration of symptoms (<7 days) such as myalgia, chills and lethargy.

Moderate Disease: Patient Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 positive who exhibits ≥ 4 days fever >100.4°F, ≥ 7 days of myalgia, chills, or lethargy, or a non-ICU hospital stay and no evidence of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).

Severe Symptoms: Patient Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 positive who had ICU admission and/or intubation or MIS-C.

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### Guidance for Healthcare Providers:

All children diagnosed with COVID-19 should be evaluated by a healthcare provider and cleared to start return to play progression before they fully engage in competitive sports. Healthcare providers evaluating children for return to play after COVID-19 infection should abide by the following evidence-based recommendations depending on the severity of the disease.

Asymptomatic or mild illness in the pediatric population do not require cardiac testing during the acute infection and evaluation can be done by phone, telemedicine or in-person visit. These young athletes should refrain from physical activity and sports while actively sick or febrile and during isolation period.

Young athletes who experience moderate COVID-19 disease should have an EKG done before they are cleared to continue sports participation.

Youth Athletes may initiate **return to play progression\*** if any of the following situations are met:

- At least 5 days have passed from the date of positive COVID-19 test if asymptomatic, or
- At least 5 days have passed from the date of initial symptoms if mild disease, and  $\geq 24$  hrs. without fever and the use of fever reducing medications or
- At least 5 days have passed from the date of initial symptoms **AND** at least 5 days from resolution of symptoms for moderate disease **AND** should have a **NORMAL EKG.**

For young athletes who experience severe COVID-19 disease with evidence of myocarditis or were diagnosed with MIS-C, should **NOT** return to play for 3-6 months and they should be cleared by Primary Care Provider and Pediatric Cardiologist.

Return to play progression is a six-step process that includes a series of exercises that provides structure to guide an athlete who is recovering from COVID-19 in a gradual return to play (RTP) by allowing participation in increasingly difficult physical activities.

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It is important for an athlete's parent(s) and coach(es) to watch for cardiac symptoms such as: chest pain, shortness of breath out of proportion to URI symptoms, palpitations, lightheadedness, pre-syncope or syncope after each day's return to play progression activity. An athlete should only move to the next step if they do not have any new symptoms at the current step. If any of these symptoms develop, patient will not be allowed to continue the exercises and will be referred to the evaluating provider who signed the form.

Student-Athletes must complete the progression described on Return to Play form attached, monitored by school athletic trainer, without the development of cardiac-related symptoms before they are allowed to fully return to play competitive sports.

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## Instruction

### House Bill 4545 Implementation Overview

House Bill 4545 passed in the 87th Regular Legislative Session. The new statute is effective as of June 16, 2021.

HB 4545 establishes new requirements for accelerated instruction for students who do not pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®). At a high level, the legislation includes:

- Elimination of grade retention and retesting requirements in grades 5 and 8
- For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grade 3, 5, or 8 in math or reading, a new LEA requirement to establish an accelerated learning committee to develop an individual educational plan for the student and monitor progress
- For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grades 3–8 or STAAR (EOC) end-of-course assessments, clarification of prior accelerated instruction requirements, specifying that it must include either:
  - Being assigned a classroom teacher who is a certified master, exemplary, or recognized teacher or
  - Receiving supplemental instruction (tutoring) before or after school, or embedded in the school day

Each of these components of the legislation is described in greater detail below.

### For school year 2022-2023 and beyond

The above guidance for accelerated instruction continues to apply in subsequent school years. Accelerated Learning Committees in Future School Years:

Starting summer 2022, LEAs must establish ALCs and develop individual student plans after scores are received, which may take place before the end of that school year or during the summer and prior to the start of the school year, based on the latest STAAR results.

### Additional Statutory Highlights

#### Retention and Retesting Requirements

- A student in grade 5 or 8 is no longer required to be retained at the same grade level based on STAAR.
- Grade placement committees have been eliminated, though school systems still have the flexibility to retain students if deemed appropriate locally.
- In grades 5 and 8, there is now only one mathematics and reading testing opportunity. Prior law incorporated two retesting opportunities for students if the students did not perform satisfactorily on the initial assessment.

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## **Accelerated Learning Committees**

- The accelerated learning committee must be comprised of:
  - The principal or the principal's designee
  - The student's parent or guardian, and
  - The teacher of the subject of an assessment on which the student failed to pass.
- No later than the start of the subsequent school year, an accelerated learning committee must develop an educational plan for a student that provides the necessary accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the school year.
- The plan should detail the areas of accelerated instruction needed by the student, the plan for progress monitoring, assessment data, and the actions and tools that will be provided for the student.
- The plan must be documented in writing with a copy provided to the student's parent or guardian.
- If a student fails an assessment in the same subject in the subsequent school year, the superintendent or a designee must meet with the student's accelerated learning committee.

## **Supplemental Instruction Requirements**

- Deliver targeted Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-aligned instruction for the applicable grade level and subject areas.
- Be provided in addition to instruction normally provided to students in the grade level in which the student is enrolled.
- Be designed to assist the student in achieving satisfactory performance in the applicable grade level and subject area
- Not be scheduled such that a student is removed from any of the following:
  - Instruction in grade-level content for the foundation curriculum
  - Instruction in enrichment curriculum for the grade level in which the student is enrolled
  - Recess or physical activity that is available to other students enrolled in the same grade level.
- Be provided for no less than 30 hours total during the summer or subsequent school year. If provided during the subsequent school year, it should include instruction no less than once per week.
- If a student does not pass both math and reading STAAR tests, they will need to meet the 30-hour requirement for each of the two subject areas.
- Utilize effective instructional materials designed for supplemental instruction.
- Be delivered in a 1-on-1 or small group environment, with no more than 3 students in a small group.
- Be provided by an individual with training in aligned instructional materials and under the LEA's oversight. Ideally, the same individual provides tutoring continuously for the student's entire supplemental instruction period.



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## **Summary of Updates to Safe Return to School Plan 8/16/2022**

- On February 15, 2022, the Board of Trustees authorized Superintendent Sayavedra to make decisions related to COVID 19 policy and health care response
- The mask mandate is no longer in place, wearing of masks is strongly recommended when the community risk level is high
- Wearing of masks is strongly recommended for days 6-10 after a positive test and 5 days of isolation
- Testing is no longer mandated after an exposure, it is available to those exposed at school/work
- Isolation is required for 5 days after a COVID 19 positive test – was previously 10 days
- Campus/classroom evacuations are no longer required after a COVID 19 positive test
- Notifications for positive COVID 19 cases are streamlined through e-forms sent directly to the County Health Department
- Contact tracing: individuals in the same classroom or vicinity of a COVID 19 positive case will be provided an exposure letter

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## Social Well-Being

EPISD will continue to focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to provide holistic supports for students. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set, and achieve positive goals, feel, and show empathy for others, establish, and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL.org).

Our intent is to provide students with predictability, flexibility, and opportunities for connection and empowerment so that students feel emotionally secure in our schools. We will continue to build upon the practice of having common, clear, and positively framed schoolwide values and expectations.

The SEL Team will collaborate with school counselors to provide professional learning on social-emotional learning topics such as trauma-informed practices, establishing and maintaining positive learning environments, community circles, mindful practices, and restorative chats. In turn, counselors will facilitate monthly professional learning for faculty and staff on SEL strategies and practices. SEL coordinators will provide onsite technical support to school staff to sustain schoolwide SEL implementation.

Counselors will conduct regular classroom student wellness check-ins to provide timely support to students that may be struggling with emotional and mental health issues. Counselors will regularly communicate with school administrators to inform them of any emerging or critical student needs. Our goal is to provide students with timely and effective support. Additionally, counselors may refer students and families to social workers and/or local agencies to provide services to address identified needs.

SEL Competencies Wheel



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## **Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools from Centers for Disease Control**

As the 2022-2023 school year approaches, we want to share the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) updated Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools. The updated guidance focuses on helping administrators in K-12 schools, along with state and local health officials, safely support in-person learning as well as sports and other extracurricular activities. Based on the Covid-19 Community levels, this guidance provides flexibility so schools can adapt to changing local situations, including periods of increased community health impacts from COVID-19.

Though this guidance is written for COVID-19 prevention, many of the layered prevention strategies described in this guidance can help prevent the spread of the other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and Norovirus, and support health learning environments for all.

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to prevent severe disease. Promoting COVID-19 vaccination can help schools. Not only does it provide individual-level protection, but high vaccination coverage reduces the burden of COVID-19 on people, schools, healthcare systems, communities, and individuals who are not vaccinated or may not develop a strong immune response from the vaccines.

People with symptoms of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, Influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and gastrointestinal infections should stay home and get tested for COVID-19. People who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult with a healthcare provider right away for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild. Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19, to other people.

Washing hands can prevent the spread of infectious disease. Schools should teach and reinforce proper handwashing to lower the risk of spreading viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19. Schools should monitor and reinforce these behaviors, especially during key times in the day (for example, before and after eating and after recess) and should also provide adequate handwashing supplies, including soap and water.

Schools should clean surfaces at least once a day to reduce the risk of germs spreading by touching surfaces. If a facility has had a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, the space should be cleaned and disinfected.

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Wearing a well-fitting mask consistently and correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Universal indoor mask use is recommended at a high COVID-19 Community Level.

Schools should promote and offer diagnostic testing (PCR) for people with symptoms of COVID-19. If people who have COVID-19 are identified early and isolate at home, schools can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition to diagnostic testing offered by schools where feasible, people should be encouraged to test at home or in the community (for example, at a testing site or healthcare provider office) if they have symptoms or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Screening testing identifies people with COVID-19 who do not have symptoms or known suspected exposures, so that steps can be taken to prevent further spread of COVID-19. At medium and high COVID-19 Community Levels, consider implementing screening testing in schools and ECE programs. Maintaining screening testing infrastructure during a low COVID-19 Community Level, even at a reduced volume, will help by more easily allowing for testing to scale up when the COVID-19 Community Levels are medium or high. Schools can also consider implementing screening testing for high-risk activities such as indoor sports and extracurricular activities.

Schools can take additional steps to increase outdoor air intake and improve air filtration. For example, safely opening windows and doors, including on school buses and using portable air cleaners with HEPA filters.

## **Guidance for Students or Staff with COVID-19 Symptoms, Confirmed COVID-19 Symptoms, or Family Members with COVID-19 Symptoms**

### **COVID-19 Symptoms**

The virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons through respiratory droplets from those who have few symptoms, no symptoms or are mildly ill. Due to the contagious nature of the virus, all staff should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and good judgment.

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following question:



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Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0° F
- Sore throat.
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (or, for students with a chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline);
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain; or
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever.

## **Staff Who Report to Work ill or Who Become ill during the Workday**

Staff who are having Covid-19 symptoms should go home and contact their primary care provider.

## **Students who display COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival on campus or who become ill during the day**

If a student displays any of the following symptoms upon arrival at the campus or becomes ill during the day, should report to the nurse's office for a clinical assessment to determine when a student needs to be sent home.

Students who report feeling feverish should be sent immediately to the nurse's office and given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

If a student has fever of 100.0° F or higher and/or displays COVID-19 symptoms, they will be immediately separated from their peers, placed in a designated area (isolation room), and should be picked up within 30 minutes and no later than 1 hour from the time the campus contacted the student's parent/guardian.

The Attendance Clerk at the campus should be notified to track attendance and sign the student out of the campus.

## **Identifying Possible COVID-19 on Campus**

- Schools must immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Each campus will have a designated area where students can be isolated from others and still preserve the student's confidentiality and privacy.
- It is recommended that a parent or authorized person pick up the student within 30 minutes and no later than one hour from the time the campus contacted the student's parent/guardian.
- Schools shall follow the communication guidelines regarding COVID-19 situations.

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## **Response to COVID-19 Situation**

### **COVID-19 Campus Response**

Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, schools must notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if students or employees have been exposed to a test confirmed COVID-19 case at school or work.

### **COVID-19 Health Services Response**

These protocols will be used by the Health Services Department when a confirmed case of COVID-19 is reported to the district. If an individual who has been in a school is test confirmed to have COVID-19, the school administrator must submit the E-form from the Health Services website. The Health Services Director will notify the City/County Public Health Department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **COVID-19 Custodial Response**

The Head Custodian will use the EMIST system with the EPA registered disinfectant (Rejuvna - #16) at the end of the day. The Head Custodian will apply the disinfectant throughout the school as previously trained. No one should re-enter the area for at least 10 minutes after the disinfectant has been applied.

## **Protocols for Disinfecting and Hand Sanitizing**

Upon completion, the Head Custodian will notify the Principal/Administrator and the assigned Custodial Inspector to advise of status. Only upon clearance from the assigned Custodial Inspector will the building be cleared for use.

### **Stop the Spread of Germs**

In order to promote good respiratory hygiene in the workplace, the District will display posters promoting respiratory hygiene, instructing students and employees to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and issue regular communication encouraging individuals to dispose of tissue immediately after one use. Everyone can do his/her part to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases by following these guidelines:

In addition, hand sanitizer will be available for all at the front entrance of every building, in classrooms, and other common areas throughout the campus.

Doors in shared areas may need to remain open to avoid multiple persons touching the handles.

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Teachers will provide periodic reminders to students to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer. Students should practice good hygiene by washing hands after recess, before eating and following restroom breaks. Teachers should ensure that students wash their hands for at least 20 seconds at least twice per day in addition to after using the restroom and before eating.

Campus shall provide staff with access to disinfectant wipes, spray cleaners, and disposable towels to sanitize high-touch and working surfaces and shared objects regularly.

Staff will limit the use of shared supplies when possible.

Protocols for toys, books and supplies should be followed by staff to reduce exposure.

Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, covered with their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.

## **Enhanced Cleaning**

Custodial Operations has a high standard for cleanliness and safety and are committed to upholding those standards with our intensive cleaning process. Enhanced cleaning protocols have been put in place because of COVID-19 and are based on current local, state and federal health and government guidelines.

Protocols include the use of EPA registered chemical for disinfection, focus on proper dwell time (contact time) of 10 minutes for proper disinfection of chemicals and increased frequency of disinfecting high touch surfaces such as the following:

- Doorknobs
- Elevator buttons
- Countertops
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Restroom fixtures
- Desks
- Keyboards and mouse
- Phones

# Safe Return to Instruction Plan

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## Protocols for Disinfecting and Hand Sanitizing *(continued)*

Following are areas of enhanced focus:

- Restrooms
- Offices
- Elevators
- Kitchen and/or break areas
- Vending machines
- Copier/printers
- Front desk and lobby areas
- Equipment
- Water Fountains

Employees will assist in the following areas:

- Desks
- Computer keyboards and mouse
- Phone
- Remote control
- Chair arms
- File cabinet drawer handles

## Transportation

### General Guidelines

Transporting kids to school is a vital function for EPISD.

- Only yellow school buses can be used to transport students to and from school
- No modifications can be made to a school bus
- Activity buses do not meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) to transport students to and from school

### School Bus Operational Guidelines

- Hand sanitizer will be provided for all school buses
- All bus drivers and monitors may choose to wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (face mask or shield, gloves for school bus monitors)
- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected after each route
- Designated transportation employee will e-mist every school bus once a day.

### Boarding

- Students may choose to wear their mask while on the school bus
- Students must board the school bus one at a time
- Elementary student's 2nd grade and younger must have a parent present at the stop until student is allowed to board school bus
- Students must sit on first available seat towards the rear of the school bus

# ***Safe Return to Instruction*** *Plan*

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## **Unloading Guidelines**

- Students must follow bus driver instructions while unloading
- Students will unload from front to rear (back) of the school bus only
- Students must unload one by one
- Students must ensure to gather all personal belongings before exiting the school bus
- Students will not be allowed back onto the bus after exiting

## **Student and Parent Support**

### **Student Handbook**

The Student Handbook describes various procedures, programs, etc. for students and parents. It can be found at [episd.org](http://episd.org) under the parent and student tabs.

Transcripts, scholarship application requests and driver's license verification Transcripts, scholarship application requests and the driver's license verification of enrollment form may be requested at [episd.scriborder.com](http://episd.scriborder.com). Please be sure to include the correct information.

Official transcripts will not be sent to individuals. If the student is younger than 18 years of age, the parent will need to initial the request.

### **Enrollment and Withdrawals**

All enrollment and withdrawal questions may be directed to the campus registrar, or you may contact Student and Parent Services at Let's Talk or [sps@episd.org](mailto:sps@episd.org).

### **Discipline Questions**

Discipline questions may be answered by any campus administrator by contacting the campus through the Let's Talk Application. If there is a discipline issue which occurs during virtual learning, the classroom teacher and/or the campus administrator will reach out to the parent depending on the level of the infraction. The Student Code of Conduct is in force and may be found online at [episd.org](http://episd.org) under the parent or student tab.

### **Complaint Process**

The complaint process for the district is located under the parent's tab on the district's website. Complaints should be handled at the very lowest level possible. We ask you to contact the campus principal to address your concerns immediately. If you wish to discuss your concern with one of the Student and Parent Services administrators, please email us at [sps@episd.org](mailto:sps@episd.org) and someone will contact you.

Please also visit the website [www.episd.org](http://www.episd.org) for more information on EPISD activities and announcements.

# Safe Return to Instruction Plan

## Appendix A: 2022 - 23 EPISD School Calendar



### EPISD 2022 - 23 SCHOOL CALENDAR EL PASO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

JULY 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

AUGUST 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	<1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13*	14*	15*	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29*	30	

OCTOBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	<17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

NOVEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16*	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JANUARY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	<4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14*	15*	16*	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

MARCH 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	<21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

MAY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26*	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7*	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

#### JULY

4.....Independence Day (Holiday)  
25.....Staff Development (Half-day)/Teacher Workday (Half-day)  
26 - 28.....Staff Development Days  
29.....Teacher Workday

#### AUGUST

1.....1st Day for Students  
(Beginning of 1st Nine Week grading period)  
24.....Staff Development/No School for Students

#### SEPTEMBER

5.....Labor Day (Holiday)  
13.....P/T Conferences (ES) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for ES Students  
14.....P/T Conferences (HS) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for HS Students  
15.....P/T Conferences (MS) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for MS Students  
29.....End of 1st Nine Week grading period  
30.....Staff Development/No School for Students

#### OCTOBER

3-7.....Fall Intersession  
10-14.....Fall Break (Holiday)  
17.....Beginning of 2nd Nine Week grading period

#### NOVEMBER

11.....Veterans Day (Holiday)  
21-25.....Thanksgiving Break (Holiday)

#### DECEMBER

6-16.....State Testing Window  
16.....End of 2nd Nine Week grading period  
\*Early Release - Students & Staff  
19-30.....Winter Break (Holiday)

#### JANUARY

2.....Winter Break (Holiday)  
3.....Teacher Work Day/No School for Students  
4.....Beginning of 3rd Nine Week grading period  
16.....Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Holiday)

#### FEBRUARY

14.....P/T Conferences (ES) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for ES Students  
15.....P/T Conferences (HS) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for HS Students  
16.....P/T Conferences (MS) 1 pm - 6 pm  
\*Early Release for MS Students  
20.....President's Day (Holiday)  
21-28.....State Testing Window

#### MARCH

1-3.....State Testing Window  
3.....End of 3rd Nine Week grading period  
6-10.....Intersession  
13-17.....Spring Break (Holiday)  
20.....Teacher Staff Development/No School for Students  
21.....Beginning of 4th Nine Week grading period

#### APRIL

3-28.....State Testing Window  
7.....Spring Holiday

#### MAY

2-19.....State Testing Window  
26.....\*Early Release - Students & Staff  
29.....Memorial Day (Holiday)

#### JUNE

7.....Last Day of School  
End of 4th Nine Week grading period  
8.....Teacher Work Day/Last Day for Teachers  
19.....Juneteenth (Holiday)  
20-30.....State Testing Window

#### KEY

■ Staff Development  
■ Teacher Work Day  
■ Parent/Teacher Conferences  
■ Holiday/District Closed  
★ Early Release  
■ Intersession  
■ State Testing Window  
■ Semester Begins  
■ Semester Ends  
■ Beginning of Grading Period  
■ End of Grading Period  
■ Duty Days for 238 Day Staff  
★ Inclement Weather/Make Up Day

Approved by the EPISD Board of Trustees January 18, 2022. State Assessment Testing Dates subject to change by TEA. [www.tea.state.us](http://www.tea.state.us)



# ***Safe Return to Instruction*** *Plan*

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## **COVID-19 FAQs**

### **The following FAQs are included in the COVID-19 District Response Plan**

To ensure we are prepared for all situations, we have emergency procedures in place, including for infectious diseases. Per these procedures, we are working in partnership with the Department of Public Health, City of El Paso, and Texas Education Agency (TEA) as the lead agencies in our COVID-19 response. We will continue to follow the guidance of public health experts to ensure we are implementing the highest level of precaution and prevention.

### **Prevention**

Prevention measures include providing resources, supplies, and time for all students to wash their hands when they arrive at school, before lunch, and after using the restroom. Additionally, custodial staff have been directed to prioritize cleaning common and high traffic areas multiple times a day. In a normal situation, these areas would be cleaned once a day. Prioritized cleaning includes bathrooms, the lunchroom, common spaces, door handles, emergency bar on doors, etc.

### **How will EPISD be keeping families, staff, and students informed regarding COVID-19?**

EPISD has a dedicated webpage at [episd.org](http://episd.org) with all the pertinent and updated information. Information on prevention has been distributed to all staff via email and website. Information also has been shared publicly through our social media channels and weekly digital newsletter. EPISD will continue to send emails to families and staff to provide the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19. The district website and campus sites are updated regularly. This is an evolving situation. The district continues to follow the guidance of the CDC, Department of Public Health, City of El Paso, and the TEA in our response to COVID-19, including decisions to close schools and whether students or staff should be quarantined. Updated information will be provided as it becomes available.

### **What are the procedures and instructions for students to wash their hands?**

Hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to contain the spread of illness and disease, including COVID-19. We have posted videos from the CDC on proper handwashing techniques at [episd.org](http://episd.org) and on our social media channels. We are asking schools to prioritize student hand washing when students arrive at school, anytime they have used the restroom, and prior to lunch. These are always good habits and critical to the containment of the disease. Our school-based staff will be prioritizing hand washing, and custodial staff will keep soap fully stocked in bathrooms and classrooms to support these efforts. Staff will also reinforce good hygiene and remind students to not touch their face, nose, or mouth, sneeze into a tissue or elbow, and reduce physical hand contact (high fives, fist bumps, etc.). The district will work with

# Safe Return to Instruction Plan

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individual school leaders in implementation of district standards for hand washing.

## **How will EPISD be cleaning and disinfecting schools?**

Custodial staff have been directed to prioritize cleaning to common and high traffic areas multiple times a day. In a normal situation, these areas would be cleaned once a day. Prioritized cleaning includes bathrooms, the lunchroom, common spaces, door handles, emergency bar on doors, etc. All efforts will be made to keep students healthy and safe. Disinfecting systems will be utilized as well as the use of EPA registered, hospital-grade disinfectant on surfaces.

## **How is EPISD working to ensure buses are clean?**

EPISD buses are disinfected daily, as is our regular practice. We are prioritizing additional cleanings as an enhanced precaution to provide safe travel to and from school. Disinfecting systems will be utilized as well as the use of EPA registered, hospital-grade disinfectant on bus surfaces.

## **When should a student or staff member stay home?**

If students or staff experience fever of 100°F or higher, cough, and/or difficulty breathing, they should stay home from school and contact their health care provider immediately. If a student demonstrates these symptoms while at school, they will be immediately quarantined to another space in the school while continuing to be monitored by an adult, and a family member or emergency contact will be called to pick them up. We know this may cause anxiety and fear for our students and we will do our best to address any concerns. We are committed to ensuring students are supported with compassion and care. If a staff person exhibits symptoms, they will be asked to leave school and call their healthcare provider immediately. We will monitor the staff person's health conditions as appropriate. Students or staff presenting symptoms will need a doctor's release to return to work or school. For more information, please contact your healthcare provider.

## **If a student does need to stay home, how can they receive assignments?**

The district will return to our normal attendance procedures. Please remember to call in your student's absence or email the attendance clerk each day if your student is unable to attend. Teachers are being asked to prepare supplemental instructional materials for students who need to be out of the classroom and pre-plan weekly lessons in the event of a sudden prolonged absence. If an educator regularly uses Schoology, the EPISD learning management system, or other digital platform, lessons will be posted to that site for students in grades 6-12. If a student is unable to access Schoology from home, the school will work with the student and family to provide printed materials upon parent request.

## **Will high schools go back to open campuses for lunch?**

# ***Safe Return to Instruction*** *Plan*

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Yes. High schools are returning to open campuses for lunch (certain grade levels). Many high schools will return to one lunch as well.

## **Will there be disinfecting procedures for high traffic areas?**

There will be disinfecting procedures for high traffic areas. We encourage students to bring personal water bottles to fill instead of directly drinking from water fountains.

## **What are the options for high-risk children?**

Please contact your campus about 504 accommodations or homebound options (if eligible). Homebound services are available but are highly restrictive environments and will have special requirements.

## **Will there be any guidance for teachers and the use of technology during classroom time?**

We will continue to use devices with all students. Blended learning, Schoology and other technology resources will continue at all levels.

## **Can we purchase a face shield for our child?**

Yes, you may purchase a face shield. We have desk shields at a parent's request. Please contact your campus.

## **When will we start seeing our students schedule?**

Please continue to check parent portal. All campuses will be uploading schedules soon.

## **Will students and teachers be required to show proof of a COVID-19 vaccination?**

No. Students and teachers will not be required to show proof of the COVID-19 vaccination. Students will be required to show proof of the normal vaccinations before starting school. Parents will be encouraged to show proof of vaccinations for contact tracing purposes only. This is not a requirement.

## **Will teachers be required to be vaccinated?**

No. Vaccinations are a choice.

## **Will shields be available at student desks and at cafeteria tables during lunch for students that are considered high risk?**

Yes. Desk shields will be provided for any student with a parent's request. Please contact your campus about accommodations for lunch.

## **Will there be special protocols for high-risk students if exposed to COVID19?**

The district will follow students' IEP or 504 plan for accommodations for high risk students.

# Safe Return to Instruction *Plan*



EL PASO INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **Responsive Safety COVID Protocol Classroom Bubble (Elementary)**

### **Introduction**

In response to the current COVID-19 Positivity Rates, and the protection of all students, faculty, and staff; district personnel will adhere to the following proactive guidelines and protocols in the event that a classroom reaches 15% positivity rate:

***If City Health Department contacts the campus about classroom closure recommendations, refer them to EPISD Health Services Department and the appropriate Assistant Superintendent.***

Daily campus checks need to be held with Campus Administration and Campus Nurse. Use of contract tracing numbers and EPISD COVID-19 Dashboard need to be reviewed daily.

### **Assistant Superintendents Protocols**

- Request and communicate protocols for implementation of the deep cleaning processes and eating in classrooms with Nick Corona, Executive Director Operations and Support Services.
- Work with campus to identify the 15% positivity rate threshold for classrooms/grade levels or entire campus and determine the implementation of protocols.
- Communicate 3-day protocol period. Three school days will be the first phase. Weekends will count within the 3-day window. Additional phases will be implemented if warranted.

### **Principal Protocols**

- Communicate campus protocols to teachers/parents/staff
- Work with Assistant Superintendent and Food and Nutrition Services to determine if breakfast and lunch will be served in the classrooms. If it is determined that classes will eat in the classroom establish a plan to utilize non cafeteria staff to transport meals to the classroom(s). Ensure a 30 minute duty free lunch is adhered to.
- Tutoring should be grouped from the same room to minimize exposure to other students when being pulled.
- Special Education services will continue with students being distanced and in person to ensure IEPs are met.
- Virtual speech services can only be provided if the student IEP has a continuity plan in place.
- DRD services will continue virtually until further notice.
- PE will continue face to face, outdoors unless inclement weather arises. Students should be socially distanced as they transition to PE.

# Safe Return to Instruction Plan

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- Ensure PPE and disposable masks are available.
- Inventory amount of PPE and order as needed, with enough time to receive.
- Teachers should always observe social distance protocols.
- Teacher should maintain seating charts on a daily basis.
- Teachers will need to prepare lesson plans for substitute teachers to include District COVID safety protocols.
- Homeroom teachers will remain in place and students will not move about the campus except for P.E., tutoring, special education services,
- Departmentalized, Dual Language two teacher model and specialized instructors (Fine arts, library, counseling, etc.) will deliver in-person instruction in the homerooms.
- Students should remain in their assigned seats in classrooms using their student desk dividers.
- Students may participate in group work via their electronic devices and district approved platforms.
- If a parent chooses to keep their student home, absences are coded as Parent Request/ Excused absence. Student assignments will be available through Schoology.

## **Safety Protocols Reminders**

- Remind staff and students to practice safety protocols. Sanitize often to include wiping down of tables, doorknobs, high touch areas, during the school day. Use hand sanitizers and give many opportunities for hand washing.
- Continue contact tracing protocols.
- Maintain supplies of PPE. Utilize ordering procedures to secure items through the Warehouse. Have items available for students, staff, and visitors. Communicate location of PPE to all staff.
- Visitors – limit access, and clearly communicate check-in procedures.
- Secondary Bubble Protocol – implemented with clubs, teams, and organizations. Classrooms are notified through high and low risk letters to impacted students and staff.
- Field Trips and Co-Curricular Events – Limit activities that cannot ensure social distancing of students. Must have Assistant Superintendent approval for after school events.
- Virtual meetings are mandatory for Professional Development, to include but are not limited to PLCs and Faculty meetings, until further notice.