

## **2020 – 2021 School Year FAQ**

### **REMOTE INSTRUCTION**

#### **Will Remote Learning curriculum be consistent with the curriculum used in the face-to-face environment?**

Teachers will utilize curriculum just as with students who attend face-to-face instruction and will design strategies for learning in the remote environment. However, remote learning does not have the same academic benefits as face-to-face instruction. Also, students will be required to engage with teachers daily. Early ISD will not be providing devices or at home internet services to those who choose remote instruction.

#### **Will lessons be taught live or via pre-recorded video?**

Lessons will be taught via an online learning system. Early ISD will utilize google classroom as their online learning system. Asynchronous learning (students engage in the learning materials on their own time) will be used for remote learning. However, students will have to engage at some point with each teacher via assignment completion, email, phone call, or any other method deemed necessary.

#### **Will assignments be due every day or every week?**

Assignments will be assigned and due on the same schedule as the face-to-face option.

#### **What is asynchronous learning?**

Remote Asynchronous Learning is a curricular experience where students engage in the learning materials on their own time, interacting intermittently with the teacher via the computer or other electronic devices. In this setting, EISD will provide instruction, learning resources and support through the use of EISD Technology platforms. Early ISD student expectations for *asynchronous* learning:

- Students will complete asynchronous activities assigned each day and will make contact with his/her teacher(s) on a daily basis.
- Students show proof of participation in daily virtual instruction by satisfactorily completing assignments to demonstrate evidence of student learning, e.g., video, picture or activities submitted as lessons and/or completing assignments.
- Students and parents will communicate with the teacher when needing additional assistance, tutoring, etc.
- Asynchronous instruction will require high level of parent support.

#### **How will remote learning courses be graded?**

Grading for all remote courses will follow the same grading policy as the courses in the face-to-face model. EISD Remote Learning courses that earn high school credit will count in a student's GPA calculation. Some exams and tests are required to be completed in a proctored environment at school (contact your campus about this).

### **How will attendance be taken for Remote Learning?**

Students who login to the Early ISD Technology platform, etc. each day and engage in teacher-assigned learning apps and connect with his/her teacher daily, are considered “present” and will not be marked absent. Students who have not made such contact each school day will be marked absent.

Parents and students will receive absence notifications via normal methods and will be reminded of the requirement for his/her student to engage in learning each day.

If a student is engaged in asynchronous learning and completes the entire week’s worth of learning activities on Monday and does not log in for the remainder of the week, he/she will be marked “present” on Monday only and counted “absent” for Tuesday-Friday. Remote Learning students are still required to meet the compulsory attendance laws and 90% seat time rules. Thus, students and parents can be filed on for truancy if compulsory attendance is not met and secondary students can lose class credit if they do not engage in all classes daily. These are requirements of TEA.

### **If a child participates in remote learning, can they still participate in campus-based clubs, organizations, and athletics?**

We urge all students wishing to participate in campus-based clubs and organizations to attend face-to-face instruction. If you wish to discuss this option you will need to meet with the campus principal and the sponsor/athletic director.

### **Will remote learning students need to purchase school supplies for the new school year?**

Yes. They will be expected to purchase any supplies in order to be successful in the courses they are enrolled in.

### **If I choose remote learning can I participate in fine arts/PE?**

Yes.

### **If a student does not enroll in remote learning, but then has to quarantine, do they move to remote learning?**

Yes, they will immediately transition to remote learning for the duration of their quarantine time. Once they are cleared to return to campus, they may do so at that time.

## **FACE-TO-FACE INSTRUCTION**

### **What is the process when a student gets sick or develops COVID-19 related symptoms during the school day?**

The following procedures have been developed by our Executive Staff and are subject to change as we learn more about best practices related to COVID-19.

For students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling feverish:

1. The student will be separated from their peers and should be picked up within 30 minutes and no later than 1 hour from the time the campus has contacted the parent/guardian.
2. Remaining students will be removed from the classroom and taken to an alternate location on campus (go on a walk outside, move to a different classroom, etc.) so that the classroom can be disinfected.
3. If an individual who has been in a school is lab confirmed to have COVID-19, the school should notify its local 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).
4. Schools will close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected.
5. District communication will be provided to the students who came in contact with a student or staff member displaying COVID-19 symptoms.
6. Staff members displaying COVID-19 symptoms will follow district protocols including isolation from students and other staff members.
  - a. They are 3 days (72 hours) fever-free without using fever-reducing medication;
  - b. Improved symptoms (cough, difficulty breathing, etc.);
  - c. 10 days have passed since symptoms began.

Will my child's temperature be taken at school each day?

No, students' temperature will not be checked at school for COVID-19 related screening at the beginning of the day. Per TEA guidance, "Regularly performing a forehead temperature check of otherwise asymptomatic students in school is not recommended, but the practice is also not prohibited by this guidance."

However, we do require parents or guardians attest to a daily screening on their children at home to ensure they do not have one of the following exclusionary criteria for going to school:

- Experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- Lab-confirmed positive COVID-19 diagnosis
- Close contact with an individual with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis

If students meet any one of the exclusionary criteria, they must stay home from school. Cooperation from parents and students will be critical to ensure we limit possible viral exposure. If students do not meet the exclusionary criteria, students should report to school for face to face instruction. It will be implied that if a student arrives at school or at a bus stop that they attest they are free from the exclusionary criteria listed above.

## How do I know when my child can return to school?

Please contact your campus administrator and they will help you through this process. Per TEA guidance, any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

- - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  - The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  - At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay-at-home period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.

The school administration and nurse at each school will manage this process and will be a key person in working with parents and students through this process.

What is close contact?

On their website, the CDC offers the following definition for close contact:

*Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.*

Data is limited to precisely define the "prolonged exposure" to determine "close contact", however 15 minutes of close exposure can be used as an operational definition for contact investigation. Factors to consider when defining close contact include:

- Proximity
- The duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk)
- Whether the individual has symptoms (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk) and
- Whether either the case patient or contact were wearing an N95 respirator (which can efficiently block respiratory secretions from contaminating others and the environment). At this time, differential determination of close contact for those using fabric face coverings is not recommended.

This definition of close contact will be important for investigation into contact tracing for a positive COVID-19 case in our classes or schools.

### **What is contact tracing?**

Contact tracing helps us understand who a positive COVID-19 patient has been in contact with to allow us to communicate and take follow up actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

From the CDC website, they define contact tracing as:

*Fundamental activities that involve working with a patient who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease to identify and provide support to people (contacts) who may have been infected through exposure to the patient. This process prevents further transmission of disease by separating people who have (or may have) an infectious disease from people who do not.*

Contact tracing is important to identify those that are more likely to be exposed and those that are not as likely at risk of exposure.

### **My child is sick and must quarantine for COVID-like symptoms and there are siblings in the house that are district students in the household, do they need to quarantine and stay out of school?**

CDC recommends that anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 should quarantine. Individuals who are sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available) while at home.

We expect parents/caregivers to keep sick children at home. If a student is exposed to COVID-19 through a close contact, a parent/caregiver must call the school to report. The student should not report to campus. After review by the school nurse, the student may be required to remain off-campus for up to a 14-day incubation period.

Every campus will have a nurse/administrator who will receive reports of COVID-19 cases/exposures and then work with the families and staff to determine the next steps based on guidance from the TEA, CDC, and local health officials. Please contact your school and discuss each situation.

What are the COVID-19 related symptoms?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell

- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

**Will I be notified if anyone in my child’s school or class tests positive for COVID-19?**

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 a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate in any on-campus activities. Understand that the school has to be notified in order for us to know. Given our processes for contact tracing, students or classes may receive a more specific notification letting them know of a confirmed case in their class. Having a confirmed case in your child’s class will not necessarily require your child to quarantine if it was determined your child did not have close contact with the person who has COVID-19. If you have questions during a situation like this please contact your campus administrator.

**Will face coverings be required for students? At what age are students exempt from wearing a face covering?**

Schools are required to comply with the governor’s executive order regarding the wearing of masks. Students and staff are expected to wear face coverings during school hours. This requirement is subject to change at any time.

Masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose, and mouth.

Staff and students will appropriately wear face coverings unless distanced greater than 3 feet apart; eating/drinking, or participating outside, etc.

Students in Pre-K through Third grade may wear face coverings in hallways, common areas and during arrival and dismissal, but are not required to do so.

Students in Fourth through 12th grades will wear face coverings while at school unless distanced greater than 3 feet apart.

It is impractical for students to wear masks or face shields while participating in some non-UIL athletic or other extracurricular activities.

Students will not be required to wear face coverings while eating but will maintain proper distance as permissible by seating arrangements, etc.

**If a student arrives at school without a mask, what will the consequence be?**

Given the executive orders at the state and local level, it is the expectation that all students within the specified age range have a mask on when in public. In order to limit the exposure to COVID-19, we are asking all parents and students to take this expectation seriously. Understand that we are public entity and have to follow the guidelines. With many new protocols and procedures in place to keep students and staff safe, we cannot do our job effectively if individuals are purposefully disregarding public health precautions that will take time away from instruction and keeping our EISD school community safe. Please wear a mask or face covering every day. If you do not agree with wearing a mask or following the necessary precautions to keep everyone safe, please consider the virtual learning option for your child.

**What are campus administrators doing to limit the interactions between students and the possibility of viral spread during the school day?**

Understand that social distancing all the time in a school is not a feasible expectation. However, campus administrators are creating plans to increase safety by limiting possible exposure, including staggering transition times between classes, designating traffic flow for specific hallways, social distancing 3-6 feet in the classroom, creating alternate lunch period plans, constantly promoting masks and social distancing. These strategies will continue to be developed as we learn more about COVID-19 and as we see the need to adjust as students return.

**BUS TRANSPORTATION**

**What will riding the bus look like?**

As schools reopen, students using school bus transportation services will follow revised protocols. Starting at the time when students arrive at their designated bus stop and board the school bus, the new safety and sanitizing protocols will need to be followed.

The Early ISD Transportation Department offers the following guidance to parents and caregivers regarding school bus transportation for daily bus routes, field trips, and extracurricular activities. Bus routes will run at regular capacity. Although the district is implementing the safety protocols and disinfecting efforts, families are encouraged to drop students off, carpool or walk with their student to school to reduce possible exposure on buses. **We are expecting all of our drivers and students to wear masks while on the school bus. TEA has stated that students are required to have a mask while being transported to and from school. Please ensure your student has a mask.**