



**Era ISD**

**Student & Staff Safety Protocols**

**2020-2021**

*Last edited March 25, 2021  
(Changes made March 25, 2021 are noted in blue font.)*

*The details in this document are subject to change as directives are provided by governing authorities and/or health officials or as environmental conditions change.*

Era ISD will hold on-campus instruction with safety prevention measures in place as well as offer families a high-quality, engaging online experience through Virtual Learning.

Although there are no strategies to completely eliminate transmission risk of COVID-19 at schools, we are committed to keeping transmission as low as possible in order to safely continue school. On-campus instruction will reopen on August 20, 2020 for students unless otherwise determined by state or county authorities. To address safety concerns, EISD has developed a set of health and prevention measures for all staff, students, and visitors.

The school day has been extended to allow students and staff additional time to properly wash their hands and follow important health protocols:

**School Hours:            7:55 am - 3:35 pm**

- Doors will remain locked and students will not be allowed to enter the academic buildings prior to 7:30 am. Exceptions made for students arriving early for athletic (or other) practices prior to that time.
- School buses will generally depart the campus at 3:40pm

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## PREVENTION

### *Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School*

#### **Screening for COVID-19 Before Campus Access**

1. EISD will require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Symptoms are listed at the end of this section. Teachers and staff will have their temperatures taken prior to entering the school each day. Teachers and staff must report to the school nurse and their immediate supervisor if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below. Additionally, they must report to the school nurse and their immediate supervisor if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.
2. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school [in any of the following circumstances](#):
  - a. [the child has COVID-19 symptoms \(as listed at the end of this section\)](#)
  - b. [the child is lab-confirmed with COVID-19](#)
  - c. [any member of the household has symptoms or is suspected of having Covid-19](#)
  - d. [any member of the household is awaiting results from testing for Covid-19](#)

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If any of the scenarios apply, students should opt to <sup>1</sup>receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had “close contact” (see explanation on next page) with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 14-day incubation period has passed. Schools may consider screening students for COVID-19 by taking a forehead temperature check as well.

3. **At this time visitors are not allowed on campus. Exceptions will be made for meetings that require face to face attendance. These will be scheduled by campus administration.** Before visitors are allowed on campuses, EISD will screen all visitors to determine if the visitors have COVID-19 symptoms (as listed at the end of this section) or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below. Additionally, if visitors have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, they must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed. Adult visitors will have their temperatures taken prior to entering the school.

## COVID-19 Symptoms

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

*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 degrees Fahrenheit
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

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<sup>1</sup>

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## Close Contact

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. The definition of close contact is evolving with the understanding of COVID-19, and individual scenarios should be determined by an appropriate public health agency. In general, close contact is defined as:

1. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
2. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes; however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e., **both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked**), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (1) or (2) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test.

## Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19

1. Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed above) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school nurse screens the individual to determine if any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:
  - a. 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:
    - i. at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
    - ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
    - iii. at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
2. In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
3. 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 either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location.

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## Isolation Protocols

### ***Student or Staff Displaying COVID-19 Symptoms***

1. The school will immediately separate any student or staff who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the individual can be picked up by a parent or guardian (or sent home).
2. Schools will clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) as soon as is feasible.
3. Students who report feeling feverish will be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

### ***If Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School***

1. The school will close off areas that were heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas have been disinfected, unless more than 7 days have already passed since that person was on campus.
2. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, schools will 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.

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## MITIGATION

### ***Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School***

#### **Health and Hygiene Practices**

1. Schools will have hand sanitizer at each entrance, in classrooms, in the cafeteria and in common areas throughout the campus.
2. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.
  - a. Students will have the opportunity for handwashing for at least 20 seconds at least two times each day, in addition to being encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom and before eating.
  - b. EISD staff will teach students good handwashing techniques.
  - c. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, covered in 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.

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3. Campuses will institute more frequent cleaning practices, including additional cleaning by janitorial staff, as well as provide the opportunity for children to clean their own spaces before and after they are used, in ways that are safe and developmentally appropriate.
4. Schools will arrange for additional cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in common throughout the day. This would include objects such as door handles, common tables/desks, shared supplies such as art supplies, and high touch devices such as shared computers or calculators.
5. Schools will arrange for cleaning of commonly-touched surfaces in classrooms between different class groups, if the same room will be used by multiple class groups.
6. Staff will have access to disinfectant wipes to sanitize high touch surfaces and shared objects regularly.
7. Whenever possible, schools will open windows or otherwise work to improve air flow by allowing outside air to circulate in the building.
8. On the first day a student attends school on campus, school systems must provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices and other mitigation practices adopted in the local school system.

## **Masks and Face Coverings**

**Face Coverings – As of March 23, 2021, masks and face coverings are optional for students, staff and visitors in district facilities, school buses and school events.** We would encourage students & staff to take whatever precautions they feel comfortable with in light of Covid. Please note, however, that if the number of cases in EISD increases past a certain threshold (greater than 10 active COVID cases in the district), masks and face coverings will be required for all staff and students until the number of cases falls below the threshold and remains below the threshold for a period of 14 consecutive days. If the mask requirement is reinstated due to EISD reaching the threshold set above, the following guidelines will be followed.

## **Reinstating Mask Requirement**

1. For the purposes of this document, masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). Full-face shields may be used in place of a mask to protect eyes, nose, and mouth whenever a mask is not feasible or whenever the educational context may benefit from the ability to see an individual's full face.
2. In the event of reinstated mask requirement:
  - a. Students in K through third grade will wear face coverings in hallways, common areas, and during arrival and dismissal, and may be required at other times when social distancing is not possible.

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- b. Students in fourth and fifth grades will wear face coverings in the classroom, hallways, and common areas when social distancing is not possible.
  - c. Students in sixth through twelfth grade will wear face coverings in the classroom, hallways, and common areas when social distancing is not possible.
  - d. Students' individual needs will be addressed on a case by case basis. Requests for accommodation should be submitted to campus administration.
  - e. Students will be expected to wear a mask during the entirety of the time they are riding a school bus.
3. In addition to the executive order regarding the wearing of masks, school systems may require the use of masks or face shields for adults or students for whom it is developmentally appropriate.
4. It may be impractical for students to wear masks or face shields while participating in some non-UIL athletic or other extracurricular activities. When it is impractical for students to wear masks or face shields during those activities, schools must require students, teachers, staff, and visitors to wear masks or face shields when entering and exiting facilities and practice areas and when not actively engaging in those activities. Schools may allow students who are actively exercising to remove masks or face shields, as long as they maintain at least six feet of distance from other students, teachers, and staff who are not wearing masks or face shields. However, schools must require students, teachers, and staff to wear masks or face shields as they arrange themselves in positions that will allow them to maintain safe distancing.

## **Student-Teacher Groupings**

Where feasible and without disrupting the educational experience, students will be required to practice social distancing:

1. In classroom spaces that allow it, student desks will be placed a minimum of six feet apart.
2. In classrooms where students are regularly within six feet of one another or space does not allow for desks/tables to be moved, schools will plan for more frequent hand washing.
3. When possible, teachers will eliminate communal supplies. Each student will have dedicated books, pencils, scissors, etc. Shared supplies will be sanitized between uses.
4. Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes will follow industry-based safety guidelines as appropriate to the equipment and course content.
5. Special education classrooms and service locations may have additional protective barriers in place to support a safe environment for our students.
6. Whenever possible, physical education classes will be held outside to allow for maximum physical distance between students. Generally, PE classes will follow similar guidelines as set forth by the UIL for extracurricular sporting activities.

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## **Secondary Elective/Extracurricular Courses**

### ***Elective Courses***

Electives at the middle school and high school will be offered to both on-campus and Virtual Learning students to the extent possible. Students will be responsible for engaging in online work at the direction of their teacher in order to complete classroom assignments at home and be counted present each day. Certain classes will require Virtual Learning students to complete a lab or project at school. These lab times will be scheduled by the campus administrators to limit the number of students on campus. The following courses may require students to attend campus and complete labs or projects:

- Agricultural Mechanics
- Drone
- Horticulture/Plant Science and Floral Design

### ***Extracurricular Activities***

Virtual Learning students will be allowed to participate in and attend extracurricular activities like athletics, fine arts, and FFA, etc. They will also be able to attend Career and Technical Education (CTE) certification courses. Students must provide their own transportation for these activities.

All extracurricular practices and contests will be conducted following safety protocols provided by guidance from UIL and TEA. This will include COVID-19 screening, group sizes, sharing & sanitizing of equipment, locker room usage, etc.

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## **MODIFIED OPERATIONS**

### ***Practices to Enhance Safe Operations and Clean Learning Environments***

#### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Campuses will plan for entry, exit, and transition procedures that reduce large group gatherings of students and adults in close proximity. Campus administrators will share specific information regarding traffic patterns and entry/exit doors. Parents are required to remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.

- Entry and exit doors will be designated to facilitate social distancing.
- Designated entry doors will be propped open for no touch entry. Any open doors will be continuously monitored by staff to stop unauthorized access and to monitor for threats.
- Sanitizer stations will be placed at each entrance and students will sanitize hands upon entry.
- Students will go directly to the first period class or designated location upon arrival.
- Lockers will not be assigned or used, and students will carry all needed materials and lunch

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with them - they will need to bring a backpack or bag for such purposes.

- Parents may not accompany students into the building. We request that parents do not exit their vehicles when dropping students off.
- Early students' arrivals are strongly discouraged. Any exceptions will need to be specifically arranged with campus administration.
- All staff will be utilized for duty to maintain a line of sight in hallways and distancing of hallway cohorts.
- Dismissal times will be staggered to limit the number of students in hallways and exit areas at any given time. Sanitizer stations will be placed at each exit and students will be encouraged to sanitize hands prior to exit.

#### **MORNINGS:**

- Main entrances will be unlocked at 7:30 am. Please do not arrive or drop off students prior to 7:30 am.
- If students plan to eat breakfast at school, they should plan to arrive at 7:35 am.
- If students do not plan to eat breakfast at school, they should plan to arrive at 7:45 am, and report directly to their first period classroom.
- Students riding school buses will arrive at school at approximately 7:35 am.
- Classes will begin at 7:55 am.

#### **AFTERNOONS:**

- School buses will be scheduled to depart promptly at 3:40 pm.
- Parent pick-up students will begin loading students at 3:35pm. Parents should follow the instructions provided by the campus principals related to afternoon pick-ups.

### **Visitors to Schools**

- Outside visitors to school will be limited in order to mitigate the likelihood of contact with positive cases of COVID-19.
- Parents and guardians can visit schools in order to participate in parent/teacher conferences, ARD meetings, or other scheduled meetings with school personnel. During these visits, parents and other visitors must follow virus prevention and mitigation requirements of the school.
- Schools will restrict adult visitors from walking children to class or visiting classrooms.
- Schools will restrict adult visitors from eating lunch with children in the cafeteria. Deliveries to campus of food/lunch will not be permitted during the school day in order to reduce outside contact.

### **Transportation**

- EISD will require students and staff to use hand sanitizer upon boarding the bus.
- When possible, drivers will open windows to allow outside air to circulate in the bus.
- Families are encouraged to drop students off, carpool, or walk with their students to school to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.

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- Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles.

## **Restrooms**

- A system will be implemented to identify the number of occupants utilizing each restroom to mitigate the chance of exceeding maximum occupancy per social distancing. Currently, restroom occupancies will be limited to three persons across the district (signs will be posted).
- Students must wash hands or use hand sanitizer before entering the classroom.
- Increased disinfecting of restrooms will occur throughout the school day.

## **Transitions**

- Classroom doors will be propped open by teachers during class changes to reduce high touch areas when possible.
- Traffic patterns will be established throughout the campus that separates individuals to the greatest extent possible.
- Staff and signage will be posted to reinforce physical distance expectations.

## **Elementary/Intermediate Specials**

- PE classes will be conducted outdoors whenever possible. Appropriate social distancing measures will be followed. Generally, PE classes will follow similar guidelines as set forth by the UIL for extracurricular sporting activities.
- Students will use their own art supplies whenever possible.
- Music and PE equipment will be sanitized and wiped down after each use.

## **Breakfast/Lunch**

EISD schools will implement practices that reduce the likelihood that students meet the close contact definition at breakfast and lunch.

- Depending on the number of students in the school, students may have meals in the cafeteria, in the classrooms, or any other location deemed appropriate by campus administration.
- [Physical distancing will be prioritized to the greatest extent possible in the Cafeteria.](#)
- Signage and staff will reinforce physical distance and traffic patterns in the cafeteria.
- Microwaves may be limited in the cafeteria due to the opportunity for cross-contamination with a high touch device.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available at entrances and exits of the cafeteria.
- Schools will restrict adult visitors from eating lunch with children in the cafeteria.

## **Library**

- Visual reminders will be added and furniture rearranged to help students maintain social distancing while in the library.
- Students and staff will wash and sanitize hands upon entering and after visiting the library.
- High touch surfaces such as table tops, chairs, and door handles will be disinfected regularly.

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- Occupancy will be limited.

## **Recess**

- Campuses will limit the number of students per recess group. Staggered schedules will be used.
- All students and staff will be required to use hand sanitizer before entering the playground and upon exiting the playground.
- Brain breaks will be implemented as needed, at the discretion of the campus and teacher.

## **Outdoor & Off-Campus Student Activities**

- [When traveling out-of-district for activities, staff and students will honor the health and safety protocols of the host site.](#)
- Campuses will limit students from leaving campus prior to travel or start of extracurricular or co-curricular activities when possible.
- Student participation in academic contests will only be attending if specific guidance is provided by an authorized entity (TEA, UIL, FFA, etc.)
- Special education community-based instruction and work-based learning guidelines will be followed to ensure these learning environments are available to our students per ARD/IEP recommendations.
- Off-campus field trips may be scheduled as appropriate to meet curricular needs while maintaining proper social distancing requirements. Virtual field trips will be considered as often as possible.

## **On-Campus Activities**

- Any school wide events that are approved to be held on campus need to adhere to social distancing requirements outlined by Era ISD, TEA, and UIL.
- Meet the teacher, open house, parent conferences, etc. will be held virtually whenever possible.
- Parents will be allowed to attend class parties and performances virtually, where possible.
- School wide events will be live streamed and/or occur virtually when possible.
- To limit larger gatherings, campus club meetings should be held virtually when possible. If meeting in person is required, groups should utilize larger meeting spaces or multiple meeting opportunities will be provided.
- Currently, Era High School will not be holding pep rallies on campus on Fridays until further notice.

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