

Reopening School and Moving Forward 2021-2022



STUDENT AND STAFF HEALTH GUIDANCE

Newton ISD has made changes to the daily operations of the campuses and district to help ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. This documents includes an overview of changes and procedures to better serve our school community.

Newton ISD (NISD) is preparing for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Due to COVID-19, it is necessary to create specific health guidelines to ensure the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and community members. This document will outline our plan and procedures for the upcoming school year. Due to the fluidity of our current situation, these procedures are subject to change based on orders and guidance from national, state, and local authorities. We hope to continue the strong relationship between our community and school district. In addition, we ask for your patience as we navigate these uncharted waters. Please continue to use our district website if you have any questions.

Public Health Considerations (SY 20-21 Public Health Planning Guide, Texas Education Agency, July 7, 2020) While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families significantly. This guidance document contains information on NISD's efforts to minimize the likelihood of viral spread.

Parents/Guardians: If your child's health care provider has cautioned your child from attending school in person due to health concerns, please contact your child's campus for guidance.

Screening Procedures

- **Teachers and staff** are required to self-screen their own health each day prior to reporting to work.
- **Parents/guardians** are expected to screen their student's health prior to sending them to school each day.
- **Teachers and campus staff** will randomly monitor students and staff temperature throughout each day of school.
- **Parents must** ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has fever, COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19. In either situation, the absence from school will be treated like any other illness and makeup work will be provided.

Isolation Procedures

- **All NISD campuses** are served by a Registered Nurse and /or licensed vocational nurse.
- **When a NISD student or staff** displays symptoms of COVID-19 or reports feeling feverish, the school nurse will provide a clinical assessment to determine if and when the individual needs to be sent home.
- **Students/Staff who show COVID-19 symptoms** while at school will be immediately separated from their peers and should be picked up by the parent or guardian immediately. Others may be removed from the classroom and taken to an alternate location (e.g. go on a walk outside, move to a different classroom, etc.) so that the classroom can be disinfected.
- **Employees and students or their parents must communicate with** NISD if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab confirmed with COVID-19, and if so, must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for reentry as noted in this document.
- **Additionally, they must report to NISD** if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined in this document.
- **Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19** will be required to meet the Reentry Guidelines listed in this document. (10 day isolation period and also being symptom free)

Disinfecting and Hand Sanitizing Procedures

- **Regular hand washing/hand sanitizer** use by all students and staff will be required.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout each campus.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided upon entry to the building in addition to periodic teacher reminders during the instructional day.

Campus Visitor Procedures

- **Only visitors essential to school operations will be permitted** to enter NISD facilities, will be expected to self-health screen and have their temperature taken.
- **Schools will utilize virtual meeting options** as needed to reduce the number of non- employee campus visitors.
- **Face Mask** NISD will comply with the governor’s orders or state requirements regarding face masks. If deemed necessary by the district, students and staff may be required to wear face masks during the school year.
- **Visitors** will be required to self-screen their health prior to visiting any campus and may have their temperature checked before entering the campus.
- **Visitor guidelines will be adjusted**, as needed, to ensure the health and safety at our campuses.
- **Deliveries to students**, including lunches, will not be allowed. (This includes no delivery of items such as flowers, balloons, candy bouquets, etc. for students.)
- **NISD is advising no lunch visitors at this time.** Please watch for updates/announcements from each campus regarding future lunch visitations.

Distancing and Transitioning Procedures

- **Distancing measures will be in place**, to the extent possible, within the school setting.
- **Class size** will be determined based upon school enrollment.
- Where possible, **campuses will establish one-way traffic** throughout campus corridors. Any changes should be made so as not to disrupt emergency exit routes or prevent students from seeking the nearest exit.
- When it is not possible for one-way hallways, students should stay to the far right side of the corridor to reduce the possibility of contact (**“Stay Right, Stay Safe”**).

- **Classroom doors will be propped open to reduce the use of high touch areas** when possible.

Restroom Procedures

- Campuses will develop procedures to **limit the number of students in restrooms.**
- Proper **hand-washing techniques** will be taught to all students and consistently reinforced.
- After a restroom break, students will be required to use hand sanitizer before reentering the classroom.

Face Covering Procedures

- NISD will **comply with the governor's executive order** or state regulations regarding the use of masks or face shields for adults and students for whom it is developmentally appropriate. The district may require students and staff to wear face masks if deemed appropriate or needed.
- Any student or staff member is **always permitted to wear a mask regardless** of whether an order is in place or not.

Cafeteria Procedures.

- All cafeterias will use **disposable trays, cutlery, etc.**
- Share tables/bins will be used for items as needed.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in all cafeterias.
- Cafeteria and serving areas will be cleaned and sanitized between serving times.
- No visitors will be allowed in the building for lunch.
- Food will be pre-packaged in boats/ bags for easy transport to classrooms, if necessary, and to prevent food from being exposed to others when needed.
- Students will be allowed to bring clear water bottles only.

Arrival Procedures

- Campuses will designate entrances for bus riders, walkers/bikers, and car riders.
- **Hand sanitizer stations** will be provided at each entrance.
- To prevent **unauthorized persons from entering**, staff will supervise all opened entry doors.
- Campuses will utilize staff to supervise arriving students.
- The campuses will adjust arrival time for certain staff to help supervise.

Dismissal Procedures

- The campuses will utilize staff to **supervise departing** students.
- Adjustments may be made with dismissal time for certain staff in order to provide additional supervision for student dismissal.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available at each exit for students to sanitize prior to exit.

Facilities

Newton ISD will not rent indoor facilities to outside groups, individuals or entities due to health and safety issues

Instructional Guidelines

Special Programs: Students in specialized programs, including but not limited to Special Education, 504, Dyslexia, ELL, Dual Credit, Gifted and Talented, and CTE will receive information related to their program once individualized plans are finalized. Individual education plans, accommodations, and modifications will be followed in face-to-face and remote settings. Progress will be carefully monitored, and the ARD Committee may re-convene to make appropriate recommendations to meet individual student needs to ensure continued growth in the general education curriculum and on IEP goals and objectives.

Technology: All students PreK-12th grade will be issued a Chromebook for them to use in the classroom and at home. Teachers will also utilize the use of Google Classroom.

Elementary Classroom Procedures

- Hand sanitizer use by students in Early Childhood, Pre-Kindergarten, or Kindergarten classrooms will be supervised by a staff member.
- Students will use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the building. Students may wash their hands in lieu of hand sanitizer when the classroom setup allows for hand washing.
- **Students will use their own supplies** and campuses will limit any shared supplies. Shared supplies will be wiped down with disinfectant between student use.
- **Students will be taught procedures to sanitize** their personal work space.

Desktops and tabletops will be sanitized by staff between classes that change or during breaks.

Secondary Classroom Procedures

- Teachers will **eliminate shared supplies**. Group supplies will be sanitized between use.
- Classrooms **will have locations of hand sanitizer**.

Desktops and tabletops will be sanitized by staff between classes that change or during breaks.

Elementary Recess Procedures

- Outdoor transmission of the virus is known to be lower than indoor transmission.
- Staggered schedules will be utilized as needed.

- All students and staff will be required to use hand sanitizer before entering the playground and upon exiting the playground.

All Campuses-Fine Arts/Specials Classes/Physical Education Procedures

- Activities may be adjusted based upon health and safety guidelines provided by an authorized entity (NISD, UIL, TEA, etc.) including but not limited to transportation procedures, number of attendees, and the orientation of the activity.

Athletic Procedures

Athletic practices, games and contests will follow safety protocol guidance provided by NISD, UIL, TEA and Newton County Health officials.

Reporting Procedures

- NISD will report COVID-19 cases consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements.

School Closure Procedures

- There may be times when specific campuses need to be closed to allow for sanitizing.
- The sanitizing process should not take longer than 12-24 hours.

Note: The conditions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are forever evolving and these plans are subject to constant evaluation and adaptation under guidance and direction of local, state, and federal government officials. For more information please visit the following websites.

www.cdc.gov

[www.cdc.gov > schools-childcare > prepare-safe-return](http://www.cdc.gov/schools-childcare/prepare-safe-return)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

www.dshs.texas.gov

www.newtonisd.net

