



Wells ISD Safe Return to School Guidance  
**2021-2022**



## Introduction

This guide has been designed to provide information to parents, students, and staff. Leaders across the country have faced a trying situation trying to structure a return plan that will maximize learning for students in a safe environment. Regular updates will be made to this document as they become available from the CDC, as well as applicable federal, state, and local agencies.

WISD will review this plan every six months at school board meetings. Prior to those board meetings, stakeholders will be given the opportunity to offer input concerning the plan. Stakeholders invited to give input concerning all aspects of this plan as well as plans for uses of ESSER funds include, but are not limited to, staff, students, parents, community members, and board members.

**COVID-19 Response Team** – WISD has developed a COVID-19 Response Team to respond to concerns and communicate district decisions. Members of the team and email addresses are noted below:

<b>Jill Gaston</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<a href="mailto:jgaston@wells.esc7.net">jgaston@wells.esc7.net</a>
Tina Glover	District LVN	<a href="mailto:tglover@wells.esc7.net">tglover@wells.esc7.net</a>
Kristel Hise	PreK-12 Principal	<a href="mailto:khise@wells.esc7.net">khise@wells.esc7.net</a>
Rhonda Redd	PreK-12 Assistant Principal	<a href="mailto:rredd@wells.esc7.net">rredd@wells.esc7.net</a>
Friday Wright	District Special Programs	<a href="mailto:fwright@wells.esc7.net">fwright@wells.esc7.net</a>
Bonnie Denmon	RN, Health Science Inst.	<a href="mailto:bdenmon@wells.esc7.net">bdenmon@wells.esc7.net</a>

## Prevention and Mitigation

### Health and Safety Guidance

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being** – Students’ social and emotional well-being are a top priority for WISD. Together, schools and families can support students throughout the year. Counselors and staff will:
  - Work to keep routines predictable
  - Share age-appropriate facts about communicable diseases, including COVID-19
  - Make time to listen to students and giving them opportunities to share feelings
  - Reach out to support students in their learning setting
  - Enter into an MOU with ACCESS to provide support to students, staff, and families
  
- **Masks** – According to Governor Greg Abbott’s Executive Order GA-36, masks are to be optional in all school facilities.
  
- **Hand Washing/Sanitizing**
  - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available at various locations throughout the district.
  - Staff and students are expected to frequently wash or sanitize their hands.
  - Students will be instructed the correct way of hand washing and sanitizing
  
- **Disinfecting Expectations**
  - Each classroom and restroom will be disinfected daily.
  - Transportation vehicles will be disinfected daily.
  
- **Social Distancing**
  - Staff and students will work to maintain social distancing in indoor and outdoor settings, to the extent possible.
  - Classrooms will be arranged to allow for as much space as possible between seating areas.
  
- **Staff and Student Training**
  - Staff will be trained by the district administrators and district nurse to ensure understanding and preparedness to align with this manual.
  - Students will receive instruction on appropriate hygiene practices.
  - All employees and students must understand the safety requirements, protocols, and expectations to ensure safety and the prevention and spread of communicable diseases.

- **District Improvements**

- WISD will be updating aging HVAC systems to improve ventilation.
- WISD will be updating water fountains and ice dispensers to be touchless.

## **Campuses and Classrooms**

- **Learning Environments**

- The use of outdoor space for learning will be considered when possible.

- **Visitors, Drop-off, and Pick-Up**

- Before visitors are allowed on campuses, they will be screened in the campus office to determine if they have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they will not be allowed on campus.
- The number of visitors in the school will be limited to ensure that students are safe; therefore, alternative meeting options may be scheduled, including virtual meetings.
- Parents/guardians will not be able to leave their cars or enter the buildings during drop-off and pick-up.
- Visitors during the school day will be limited to the front foyer or designated area.
- Visitors during the designated lunch times of students will eat with their children outside or in the foyer of the “new” gym.

- **Restrooms and Water Fountains**

- Students’ physical needs are extremely important. Social distancing and hand washing will remain priorities during restroom breaks.
- Students will be allowed to carry water bottles, which may be refilled at water-filling stations located next to water fountains.

- **Additional Instructors in Classrooms**

- In certain instances, additional staff members may be assigned to classrooms to instruct specific students.
- These individuals will sanitize prior to entering and exiting the classroom.

- **Screening Protocols**

- Staff will be required to self-screen for symptoms of communicable diseases such as COVID-19 prior to reporting to work each day.
- Teachers and staff must report to the school system if they have any communicable disease or 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.

- o Teachers and staff must report to the school system if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19.
- o Parents/guardians are expected to screen their children each day prior to sending their student to school.
- o Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has any communicable disease or COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19.
- o Teachers will monitor students and send them to the nurse if symptoms are present throughout the day.

## Response

- o Students or staff who present with COVID-19 symptoms will be evaluated by the school nurse or designee.
- o If COVID-19 symptoms are present: Staff members will be sent home, and students will be isolated and asked to put on face covering until the parent/guardian arrives to take them home.
- o Parents need to contact Tina Glover to report positive cases of COVID-19 with students or within the home. The district number is 936-867-4400. Then, ask for Mrs. Glover, or leave a message with the secretary to have her return your call. The district will ask for a copy of the positive case report to file with attendance.

### ***Per Texas Department of Health, the readmission criteria for COVID-19 is as follows:***

If symptomatic, exclude until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free\*, and other symptoms have improved. Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 10 days after the day they were tested.

\*Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius) or higher.

### **▪ Required Actions if Individuals with Test-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School**

1. If an individual who has been in a school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must 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).
2. Upon receipt of information that any teacher, staff member, student, or visitor at a school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must submit a report to the Texas Department of State Health Services via an online form. The report must be submitted each Monday for the prior seven days (Monday-Sunday).
3. 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 classroom or extracurricular or after-school program cohort if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participated in those classrooms or cohorts.

*Please note, mask provisions of GA-38 are not being enforced as the result of ongoing litigation. Further guidance will be made available after the court issues are resolved.*

### **▪ Students Who Have COVID-19**

- o As provided in this Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, school systems must exclude students from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are 2 suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who

- have received a positive test result for COVID-19, and must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on campus.
- o Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met. See the DSHS rule for more details, including the conditions for ending the exclusion period and returning to school.
  - o To help mitigate the risk of asymptomatic individuals being on campuses, school systems may provide and/or conduct recurring COVID-19 testing using rapid tests provided by the state or other sources.
  - o Testing can be conducted with staff. With prior written permission of parents, testing can be conducted with students.
  - o *Per UIL Guidelines, in addition to the criteria and processes described above, a student who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 must receive clearance from a physician prior to returning to participation in UIL marching band or athletic activities.*
- **Students Who Are Close Contacts**
- o As a reference, close contact determinations are generally based on guidance outlined by the CDC, which notes that individuals who are fully vaccinated may not need to follow the stay-at-home period.
  - o As noted above, public health authorities will be notified of all positive cases in schools. While school systems are not required to conduct COVID-19 case investigations, local public health entities have authority to investigate cases and are currently engaged in cooperative efforts on that front.
  - o Participation by individuals in these investigations remains voluntary. If school systems are made aware that a student is a close contact, the school system must notify the student's parents.
  - o Parents of students who are determined to be close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may opt to keep their students at home during the recommended stay-at-home period.
  - o Parents who opt to send their children to school in the two weeks following exposure are encouraged to closely monitor their children for symptoms.
  - o For individuals who are determined to be close contacts, a 14-day stay-at-home period was previously advised by the CDC based on the incubation period of the virus. CDC has since updated their guidance, and the stay-at-home period can end for students experiencing no symptoms on Day 10 after close contact exposure, if no subsequent COVID-19 testing is performed.
  - o Alternately, students can end the stay-at-home period if they receive a negative result from a PCR acute infection test after the close contact exposure ends.

- **Staff Who Have COVID-19 or Who are Close Contacts**

- o Similar to students, school systems must exclude staff from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19.
- o Staff may return when the re-entry conditions have been met, as described in the DSHS rule used for students.
- o For staff who are not fully vaccinated who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, it is recommended that the staff remain off campus during the stay-at-home period.
- o For staff who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, if these staff continue to work on campus, rapid testing must be performed at the start of the day, at least once every other day until the end of day 10.

***WISD will sanitize all areas that had exposure from someone who tested positive as soon as possible.***

### **Instructional Models**

WISD will offer traditional in-person learning for instructional delivery for our students:

Traditional In-Person Learning: (face-to-face, on campus) Students attend school daily, as with a regular school year, and follow safety, sanitation, and social distancing expectations.

The campuses MUST provide instruction in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the required grade level/subject/course. Monitoring student learning and progress remains integral to the success of the students. This includes attendance, grades, formative/summative assessments, and other monitoring systems that help teachers know how students are making progress.

The following pages of this document address the specifics of school procedures for the 2021-2022 school year.

- **Attendance**

- o District funding and resources are linked to attendance.
- o Attendance will be taken each day for face-to-face learning.
- o Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade.

- **Grading**
  - o State law requires each district to adopt its own grading policies. This policy must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student’s relative mastery of an assignment.
  - o WISD grading policies are published annually in the campus Student Handbook.
  - o Progress reports and report cards, along with parent conferences, will be used to communicate each student’s progress and performance.
  
- **State and Local Testing** – All students are expected to follow state and local testing requirements.

### **Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources**

Students:

- Come to school with supplies, completed assignments, and ready to learn.
- Complete class/course by district/teacher deadlines.
- Be on time and ready to learn when entering the classroom.
- Attend class daily.
- Collaborate with teachers and peers during class discussions.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand how to use learning tools such as Google Classroom.
- Practice digital citizenship.
- Seek guidance from a trusted school employee or adult when feeling anxious or struggling with feelings of depression, anger, etc.

Parents:

- Daily prepare your child for learning by helping your child organize materials/backpack.
- Access teacher expectations/syllabus for students as well as Google classroom information.
- Designate a routine and specific place in the home for academics.
- Obtain Google Classroom access.
- Discuss with your child what was learned at school each day.
- Partner with your child’s teacher to collaborate in order to produce the best educational experience for your child.
- Create and maintain open communication with your child’s teacher via Remind, email, phone calls, and/or face-to-face conferences.
- Teach your child responsibility to take ownership of his/her own learning.
- Be a good listener for your child, and learn what to listen for if and when your child cries out for help.

- Reach out to the school if you need/want to visit about any concerns you have about your child.

Teachers:

- Follow the curriculum scope and sequence.
- Upload instructional materials and resources into Google Classroom.
- Instruct students on Google Classroom accessibility and maneuvering as they utilize learning materials for assignments.
- Assess students' assignments in a timely manner to give feedback and address next steps if tutorials or interventions are necessary.
- Post grades in a timely manner; at least weekly.
- Classroom teachers provide instruction and interventions as data determines.
- Intervention teachers provide intervention aligned to classroom needs, campus and district schedules.
- Teachers must follow student IEP/504 accommodations.
- Provide services for all special programs.
- Monitor student progress continuously (with documentation)
- Provide a mental, social, and emotional safe place within the classroom.
- Watch for warning signs for mental health struggles.
- Report all concerns to campus counselors or administration.
- Complete all required professional learning for mental health.
- Self-check yourself mentally, socially, and emotionally.
- Reach out to a school administrator or trusted adult if you need/want to visit about any concerns you have about yourself.

### **Special Programs (Special Education, ESL, 504, Dyslexia, GT)**

- **Program Participation and Services** – Students currently participating in special program services, such as special education, 504, ESL, GT, and dyslexia will continue to receive services, including monitoring and intervention as established in program handbooks. Parent meetings may be held using in-person or virtual meeting platforms.
- **Evaluations and Testing** – District protocols have been established to evaluate students who have been referred for special programs. Social distancing and/or personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used, as appropriate.

### **Staff and Student Support**

- A safe learning environment will be provided.
- The district will provide: bullying prevention, suicide prevention, child abuse prevention, dating violence prevention, sexual harassment prevention.
- Interventions will be provided at all grade levels.

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- Tutorials will be provided during and after school.