

Learning Opportunities at Rains ISD

Rains ISD will offer two options of instructional delivery models for our students:

1. Traditional In-Person Learning (on campus)
2. Virtual At-Home Learning

The at-home learning option is being provided for our families who have health and safety concerns with sending their children back to school.

Parents will choose either Traditional In-Person Learning or Virtual At-Home Learning (Asynchronous).

Beginning **Monday, July 20**, parents/guardians in the Skyward directory will receive an email from Rains ISD asking to make a commitment for their child(ren) to choose either in-person or at-home learning for the first semester. In order for RISD to finalize staffing requirements, we are asking that this commitment be made no later **than 8:00 a.m. on Monday, July 27**.

Your child's schedule and teacher assignments cannot be finalized until we receive your commitment regarding the Fall 2020 learning setting AND **your child's registration/enrollment in Skyward. Online enrollment opens on Monday, July 20.**

Students will be expected to learn in their chosen setting (in-person or at-home) through at least a 3-week grading period in order to limit scheduling and staffing complexities. We understand that circumstances could change for our families throughout the semester, and adjustments will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

The following pages of this document address the specifics of school procedures for the 2020-2021 school year.

VIRTUAL AT-HOME LEARNING: Asynchronous Instruction Guidelines

- Students will remain at home and will engage in learning activities that are primarily delivered through Google Classroom (K-12 only).
- Students engage in the learning materials on their own time **EACH DAY**, interacting intermittently with the teacher(s) via the computer or other electronic devices or over the phone.
- Daily student participation in the learning activities will be **REQUIRED** in order to be counted present for the day.
- The student is only engaged if there is adequate progress in Google Classroom for the day, or progress is established from the teacher/student interactions that day, or there is a completed assignment turned in that was given by the teacher that day.
- A care-giver will need to be available to support younger students in navigating the daily schedule and to provide assistance with the learning as needed.
- Virtual at-home instruction will be designed for mastery of student learning outcomes based on the academic standards called the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for each content area.
- Expectations for coursework and grading guidelines **will be the same** for both virtual at-home instruction and in-person instruction.
- Independent learning activities will be scheduled during the instructional time for virtual at-home learning. Student participation in this setting requires **5 full days per week**.
- Virtual at-home learning is available for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12.
- Students who choose virtual at-home learning are NOT ELIGIBLE for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Instruction will be provided by Rains ISD teachers in core content and some elective areas using district-adopted curriculum.

- Social-emotional support will be provided.
- Accommodations and support services will be provided virtually where possible. Some specialized services may be provided on campus.
- Internet connection is required in order to choose virtual at-home asynchronous learning. Wifi service will be provided at various locations throughout the county.

VIRTUAL AT-HOME LEARNING: Asynchronous Instruction- Q&A

Will this 2020-2021 virtual learning look any different from this past spring?

Yes, it will be totally different. This past spring, Texas schools were given the flexibility to offer instructional continuity at a lower level of rigor to students while they learned from home. This school year will be different in that teachers will be instructing at the level of rigor required by the state. Students who select virtual at-home instruction will be **required** to participate in class daily. It will be a **full course load** of instruction, and assignments will be very comparable to in-school learning.

Will students participating in virtual at-home asynchronous learning receive live, teacher-led instruction for the full length of a school day?

No. A structured schedule will be provided to students indicating required participation in asynchronous instruction/learning each day. The schedule will include independent learning activities and/or daily engagement with the teachers. The schedule may vary by grade, course, or student.

A caregiver will need to be available to support younger students in navigating the daily schedule and assisting with the learning as needed. It is important to note that **time management, consistency, and dedication** will be critical to student success. Students, teachers, and parents should utilize frequent communication regarding daily schedules and assignments to ensure that students are progressing towards mastery of the learning outcomes.

What will virtual at-home instruction look like?

Instruction will depend on the grade level and the course; however, an example could be that a student watches a pre-recorded video of the math lesson that teaches the concept for the day. The detailed video will provide instruction needed for the student to complete an assignment and/or an assessment in Google-Classroom. The student's log-in and successful completion of the assignment will show they were engaged in the lesson.

Will there be attendance requirements?

Yes, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will require daily attendance and participation in virtual at-home learning. Students will be required to participate daily and traditional attendance rules will be reinforced.

To clarify, a student will not be allowed to complete all of their work on Monday and choose not engage Tuesday-Friday. This would result in 4 absences for the week. (TEA rule)

What qualifies as being present?

Students will be counted "Present-Remote Asynchronous" if:

1. They showed progress in the Learning Management System (LMS)--Google Classroom,
2. They showed progress from teacher/student interactions that day, or
3. They successfully completed their assignment that day.

What happens if my child does not log into Google Classroom or participate in their instruction and complete their assignment(s) for the day?

Your child will be counted absent if they do not comply with the virtual at-home learning guidelines stated in the previous answers.

Note: The 90% rule applies to all absences, including excused absences. If the student does not attend 90% of their days of class, then the student does not receive credit for the course (except as exempted by the attendance committee). Also, truancy under the Texas Education Code will apply with the parent being subject to prosecution and the student being referred to

truancy court if the student is absent 10 or more days or parts of days within a six month period. (Texas Education Code 25.095) Unexcused absences do not include absences that are excused by state law and local school district policy.

How do I choose At-Home Learning?

RISD will send out an application form for those who wish to choose virtual at-home learning. If a student **qualifies**, then he/she will be enrolled as a virtual learner. This will be the learning setting for that student for the duration of a 3-week progress reporting period.

What do you mean IF a student qualifies?

In order to be eligible for virtual at-home learning, students must have access to internet/wi-fi so they can engage in instruction daily Monday-Friday (according to the academic calendar). Wifi “Park-n-Learn” spots are available throughout the county.

I have wifi-internet at our home, but we do not have a device for our student(s). Will the district provide a device?

The district has plans to provide a device to each student when they become available from the suppliers.

What if I change my mind and want my student to attend traditional in-person learning on campus?

Due to scheduling complications, students will be enrolled in the same setting for a full 3 weeks (grading period). You will need to contact the campus registrar in the last week of the 3 week progress reporting period to change from virtual at-home learning to traditional in-person learning the following 3 weeks. Students cannot change DURING the 3 week period.

When will I need to make this commitment?

A commitment application form will be sent to you which will be due July 27th at 8:00 a.m. to allow the district to finalize all instructional plans.

Will students participating in virtual at-home learning need to purchase school supplies for the new year?

Families will need some of the typical supplies in order to complete some of the assignments.

What online learning management system will be used to support elementary (K-5) students?

The benefit of an online learning management system is to streamline all digital tools and content for a more connected learning experience for students. The district has identified Google Classroom as the tool to support a consistent learning management system for elementary students across the district.

What online learning management system will be used to support secondary students (6-12)?

The benefit of an online learning management system is to streamline all digital tools and content for a more connected learning experience for students. Secondary students in grades 6-12 in both In-Person and At-Home Learning will utilize the current learning management system Google Classroom. Certain high school courses related to college prep may use Canvas.

How will students' progress be reported?

Overall progress on learning outcomes will be communicated in a traditional format using number grades. Assignments and grades will be entered into Skyward Gradebook, which can be accessed at home through Family Access.

Will courses taken virtually be included in GPA calculations and class rank for high school students?

Yes, courses taken by students participating in virtual at-home learning will be included in calculating GPA and class rank in accordance with EIC (Local) policy.

Will STAAR/EOC be administered in 2020-2021?

Yes. Texas Education Agency (TEA) has indicated that STAAR and EOC testing will occur during the 2020-2021 school year in compliance with state and federal legislation.

Are immunizations required for students enrolled in virtual at-home learning?

Yes, at this time the Texas Department of State Health Services has not waived any vaccine requirements for students.

Will my child have virtual access to their campus nurse and counselor during the school day if we choose remote learning?

Yes, parents and students may contact the school nurse or counselor by phone or email during school hours.

How will virtual at-home learning courses be managed and staffed?

RISD will continue to be staffed based on student enrollment. We are currently exploring options for designated teachers to manage and teach virtual at-home learning through Google Classroom; however, final enrollment numbers will impact this decision.

Will students identified as ESL, Dyslexic and/or Gifted and Talented receive services if we choose virtual at-home learning?

Yes, these students will receive services. More information will come at a later date.

Will students receiving Special Education or 504 be eligible for virtual at-home learning?

Yes, all students at RISD will have the opportunity to choose virtual at-home learning. ARD meetings and 504 meetings will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis and in compliance with mandates.

Can students who choose virtual at-home learning still come to school for extracurricular activities?

NO. In order for students to participate in extracurricular activities, they must be enrolled in traditional in-person learning.

Will all courses be offered?

All core courses will be offered. There will be some elective courses that will not be able to be offered virtually due to the hands-on nature of the course, such as welding.

Will dual credit be offered and what will it look like?

Dual credit will be offered. Students who are planning to take a dual credit course will need to enroll in an online course through TVCC. They will also need to meet all of the requirements for enrollment in dual credit. For questions pertaining to dual credit courses, please contact Nicole Timmons at timmonsn@rainsisd.org or call 903-473-2222, ext. 1402.

In-Person/At-School Learning/Instruction: Traditional Instruction Guidelines

- Students will attend school on a regular instructional schedule and will engage in face-to face learning on campus all day, every day.
- Secondary students in grades 6-12 will follow their class schedules by transitioning to different classrooms for course instruction.
- Classroom instruction will be designed for mastery of student learning outcomes based on the academic standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), for each content area.
- Expectations for coursework and guidelines for grading for In-Person Learning and At-Home Learning **will be the same.**
- At-school instruction will be available for students in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12.
- Student participation will be required **5 full days per week.**
- Instruction will be provided by Rains ISD teachers.
- Instruction will be done in core content and elective areas.
- District curriculum will be utilized.
- Social-emotional support will be provided.
- Accommodations and support services will be provided.
- Implementation of preventive safety measures per CDC guidelines will be put in place to the greatest extent possible.
- Rains ISD will encourage but not require masks, but masks may be required by state or county officials.

In Person/At School Instruction- Q&A

What measures will be in place to promote a safe environment for my student(s)?

We will implement increased signage around campuses promoting disease mitigation strategies, increased cleaning and sanitation practices, as well as frequent reminders of hand hygiene and social distancing. Face coverings will be recommended and encouraged for staff and students. Rains ISD will comply with all health and safety recommendations established by the Governor, the health department, Rains County, and the Texas Education Agency. Safety and health measures may be adjusted based on current guidelines and conditions.

Will health and safety training be provided for all staff and students?

Yes, all staff members will receive COVID-19 prevention training prior to the opening of school. All students will receive instruction on health protocols related to minimizing the spread of COVID-19.

How many students will be assigned to each classroom?

Rains ISD will follow TEA guidelines for class size. At this time, the class size requirements are the same as a regular school year. The maximum number of students per class varies by grade level and also varies by class at the secondary level. We are working to reduce the number of students in each class in the scheduling process.

Will cafeterias be open, and will school lunches be served?

We plan for cafeterias to be open to serve breakfast and lunch daily. To the extent possible, the physical setup for the cafeteria and the schedule will be adjusted to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at one time. Each campus cafeteria space will be evaluated to promote social distancing. All school meals will be served by employees wearing gloves and masks, and student self-serve tables will not be used. Safety and health measures will be adjusted based on current guidelines and conditions.

Will bus transportation be provided for qualified students?

Yes, transportation will continue to be provided for all who qualify. For the purposes of social distancing, we encourage parents to bring their children to school. Doors will open at 7:00 am to accommodate working parents' schedules.

How will seating arrangements be determined on school buses?

Ridership will remain at typical district capacity. To support contact tracing, students will be assigned seats, and a seating chart will be maintained by the bus driver. The bus driver and students will be highly encouraged to wear face coverings and use hand sanitizer provided when boarding and exiting the bus. Rains ISD will comply with all health and safety regulations established by the Governor, the health department, Rains County, and the Texas Education Agency. Students are required to remain seated at all times and keep their hands and arms to themselves. Students should not touch each other or share any items. School buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily after each route (morning and afternoon). Safety and health measures may be adjusted based on current guidelines and conditions.

How will social distancing be promoted in cafeterias, gyms, restrooms, and other commons areas?

Signage reminding students and staff about social distancing, handwashing, and infection prevention will be posted throughout the school. Students will also be encouraged to follow social distancing guidelines by faculty and staff.

What precautions will be in place for athletics, fine arts, and other extracurricular activities?

Safety guidelines are being developed for conducting all on-campus workouts, rehearsals, and practices. The district will continue to follow all guidelines provided by UIL, TEA, Rains County, and the state. These safety guidelines will be published as soon as they become available.

My child is enrolled in dual credit classes for Fall 2020. What should I know as a parent/student?

Texas A&M-Commerce and Trinity Valley Community College will provide guidelines for Rains ISD students who are enrolled in dual credit courses for Fall 2020. For any questions pertaining to dual credit, contact Nicole Timmons at timmonsn@rainsisd.org or 903-473-2222, ext. 1402.

Will students have recess or the ability to play and socialize with other students?

Schedules are being analyzed to determine the feasibility of limiting the number of students at recess. Students and staff will be required to use hand sanitizer and wash their hands before and after recess.

Will students in grades 7-12 be able to participate in extracurricular activities such as clubs and organization meetings?

Yes, students who select In-Person Learning may participate in clubs and/or organizations.

What happens if a student or a teacher tests positive for COVID-19? Will the entire classroom have to quarantine? What if multiple classrooms and students/staff are impacted? Will students be able to participate in At-Home Learning during the quarantine?

Students or staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be sent home to recover. When notification of a possible exposure occurs, in coordination with local health authorities, the campus/district will conduct contact tracing. Based on the results, a determination will be made as to which students meet the criteria for “close contact exposure” and must be required to quarantine. In the event students are required to temporarily quarantine, the education of these students will continue through At-Home Learning for the duration of the quarantine period. They will be able to return to In-Person Learning at the end of the quarantine period.

What happens if my child’s campus is temporarily closed during the school year?

During the period of the school closure, students will remain at home and will engage in learning activities that are primarily delivered through an online learning management system. **Daily student participation in the learning activities will be required.** Instructional time will also be dedicated for independent learning activities.

What online learning management system will be used to support elementary (K-5) students?

The benefit of an online learning management system is to streamline all digital tools and content for a more connected learning experience for students. The district has identified Google Classroom as the tool to support a consistent learning management system for elementary students across the district.

What online learning management system will be used to support secondary students (6-12)?

The benefit of an online learning management system is to streamline all digital tools and content for a more connected learning experience for students. Secondary students in grades 6-12 in both In-Person and At-Home Learning will utilize the current learning management system Google Classroom. Certain high school courses related to college prep may use Canvas.

Will computer devices be made available to students who need them?

We are currently awaiting delivery of additional computer devices for all Rains ISD K-12 students. It has been brought to our attention that due to supplier demand, delivery will be delayed.

How will student progress be reported?

Overall progress on learning outcomes will be communicated in a “traditional” format using numeric grades. Assignments and grades will be entered into Skyward. The expectations for coursework and guidelines for grading for In-Person Learning and At-Home Learning **will be the same.**

Will STAAR/EOC be administered in 2020-2021?

Yes. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has indicated that STAAR testing will still occur during the 2020-2021 school year, in compliance with state and federal legislation.

Can students change their commitment from In-Person Learning to At-Home Learning after the start of the school year?

Due to the scheduling complexities inherent in these two options, parents will be asked to make a commitment for the duration of a 3-week progress reporting period.

How do parents commit to an instructional model of choice for their child?

For current students, parents will complete the commitment form no later than July 27 at 8:00 a.m. Upon enrollment, new students will be provided the opportunity to select their instructional model.

Health and Safety Measures

Rains ISD will work to ensure all students, staff and community members remain healthy and safe by following best practices in the areas of:

- Guidance, directives and recommendations from health authorities
- Health & safety information, social distancing and infection control practices (handwashing, face coverings)
- Health office practices, personal protective equipment (PPE), management and isolation of students showing signs of illness

Infection Control Measures

- Staff are encouraged to wear face coverings when in hallways and common areas and during arrival and dismissal.
- Students are encouraged to wear face coverings when in hallways and common areas and during arrival and dismissal.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet is encouraged where possible-12 feet between cohort groups.
- Access to water filling stations for water containers only will be monitored. Students will be able to bring personal water bottles to use throughout the day.
- Restroom capacity will be examined and measures will be in place for social distancing.
- Students and staff are encouraged to provide their own personal protective equipment (PPE). A limited supply of PPE from the Texas Education Agency will be provided as needed to staff and students.

Health Screenings

- Staff will be required to complete daily self-health screening.
- Student health screenings will be done.
- Visitors are required to complete health screening upon entry into the building.

Learning Environments

- Daily wiping of high hand-touch areas will be done.
- Hand sanitizer will be in each classroom, at entrances, and throughout common spaces.
- Campuses will open multiple entrance/exit points during arrival/dismissal to promote social distancing.
- School playgrounds will be closed to the general public.
- Visual aids will be used to illustrate appropriate spacing throughout the building.
- Nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations will be restricted.
- Students sharing of personal items and supplies will be limited.
- Mixing between cohort groups will be limited as much as possible.
- Desks and tables will be arranged to maximize space between students.
- The number of students participating in small group instruction at one time will be limited.

Student Nutrition / Lunch

- Recommended health and safety measures, such as staff wearing face coverings and gloves will be followed.
- Sanitizing and hand washing practices in all areas of the kitchen and serving area will be followed.
- Self-serve counters in all cafeterias will be eliminated.
- Pre-packaged condiments and pre-wrapped silverware will be included with all meals.
- “Grab and go” meals for breakfast will be served at all levels.
- Meals will be served in disposable packaging to eat in the cafeteria.

- Plexiglas shields at cashier counters and full length serving counter sneeze guards for service will be used.
- Procedural changes for receiving payment will be implemented.

Transportation

- Ridership will remain at typical district capacity.
- All buses will have hand sanitizer dispensers placed in the stairwells for use when loading/unloading.
- All buses will be sanitized and wiped down daily after each route.
- Bus windows will be partially open (at minimum) during routes to provide for additional ventilation when weather permits.
- To support contact tracing, students will be assigned seats according to siblings/households, and a seating chart will be maintained by the bus driver.

Campus Procedures Related to COVID-19

- If a campus is notified that a student or staff member has a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19, the student or staff member will be required to stay home until the return to school criteria is met.
- If a student or staff member is assessed and experiences symptoms of COVID-19 that are not normal for them during the school day, the cohort will be located in an alternate area while the room is being disinfected.
- District communication will be provided to the students who came in contact with a student or staff member displaying COVID-19 symptoms that are not normal for them.
- At this time, we have not been provided with specific criteria regarding the number of positive cases that would lead to a classroom or campus closure.
- Students exposed to a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 outside of school should stay home, begin at-home learning, and contact the school for instructions on meeting the return to school criteria.

Clinic Procedures Related to COVID-19

- Students or staff who present with symptoms will be evaluated and assessed by the school nurse/nurse's aide.
- If COVID-19 symptoms that are not normal for an individual person are present: staff members will be sent home, and students will be isolated from other students and asked to put on a face covering until a parent/guardian arrives to take them home.
- Students will be escorted to the vehicle upon parent arrival.
- Nurse/nurse's aide will provide parents/guardians/staff with return-to-school criteria.
- Contact tracing for lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be conducted.
- A virtual nurse will be available for at-home learners and if schools were to be closed due to COVID-19 outbreak.

Parent Communication

Our goal is to provide families with clear and concise communication through the following outbound channels:

- Email listed in the Skyward directory
- Social Media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Website
- Campus Newsletters
- Remind

Communication Tools and Channels

- Parents will receive emails from Rains ISD sent through the School Messenger system. Email addresses will be collected from Skyward Family Access.
- Information about Back to School 2020 will be posted on the Rains ISD website. The website will include:
 - Health and safety protocols
 - Information on both in-person and at-home learning
 - A list of frequently asked questions
- Campuses will share campus-specific information with parents via email, newsletters, social media, or Remind.
- Regular updates will be posted on Rains ISD's social media channels (Facebook and Twitter).
- At-Home learning support will be offered to parents through consistent communication.