

Neches ISD 2021-2022 Return to School Plan

As Neches ISD continues to remain 100% open, protocols and information for parents have been updated. The Return to School Plan may also be referred to as the Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services (RIPICS) Plan for the purposes of federal and state requirements. This document and implementation of protocol will be revisited every six months, or earlier if necessary, to address any changes.

Our goal is to ensure a continuity of services for all our students in the areas of academics, social & emotional health, general health, and food services.

- The district will provide on-campus, face-to-face instruction as normal to pre-pandemic conditions as possible.
- Students targeted for accelerated instruction due to learning gaps and academic deficiencies will be provided necessary opportunities for remediation as part of HB 4545.
- The district has a counselor to address social and emotional needs of students.
- The district has a school nurse to help address health concerns of students/staff.
- All students will be provided one free breakfast and one free lunch daily for the 2021-2022 school year.

State and Texas Education Agency (TEA) Imposed Regulations:

- Health and Hygiene Practices: Masks
 - Per GA-36, school systems **cannot** require students or staff to wear a mask. GA-36 addresses government-mandated face coverings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other authority to require protective equipment, including masks, in an employment setting is not necessarily affected by GA-36.
 - School systems **must** allow individuals to wear a mask if they choose to do so.
- Required Actions if Individuals with Test-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School:
 - 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 the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
 - 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).

Local District Regulations:

- School Times:
 - Arrival and dismissal times will remain unchanged from the previous year. Daily schedules (lunch time, etc.) may fluctuate if additional mitigation measures become necessary.

- Wearing of masks/face coverings:
 - As stated previously, there will be no mandate to wear face coverings. Likewise, we will not prohibit the wearing of masks by persons that choose to do so.
- Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing:
 - Under Normal Operations in our Health Mitigation Protocol, physical distancing will not be required.
 - Mitigation measures, including physical distancing, table barriers, additional lunch periods, etc. may be initiated as conditions change.
 - The use of outdoor space for learning will be considered when possible and appropriate.
- Cleaning and maintaining Healthy Facilities:
 - Classrooms and restrooms will be disinfected and cleaned daily.
 - All high-touch areas will be disinfected and cleaned daily.
 - Cafeteria tables will be disinfected and cleaned between lunch periods.
 - Hand sanitizer is available in all facilities.
 - Additional cleaning measures will be used when necessary.
- Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette:
 - Students/Staff will be reminded of the importance of washing hands properly. Students in lower grade levels will be taught how to properly wash hands.
 - Students/Staff will be reminded of the importance of covering mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing. Students in lower grade levels will be taught how to properly cover the mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Diagnostic and Screening Testing:
 - Neches ISD will offer COVID-19 testing. Persons that are symptomatic may request to be tested at the school. Consent must be obtained before testing can be done.
 - Parents may opt to have testing done elsewhere. When using an outside facility, we request you submit results to the school nurse immediately.
- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities:
 - Neches ISD will not administer COVID-19 vaccinations.
 - Upon request, parents may seek assistance to locate vaccination clinics in the area.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities (health and safety):
 - The recommended procedures will be applied to all classroom settings, including special education service locations when possible and appropriate. Individual student needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Coordination with State and local health officials:
 - Neches ISD will communicate with and report required findings to authorized agencies.
 - Information from local agencies will be shared with parents/staff/community as necessary.
- Positive COVID-19 Cases:
 - Individuals that are test-confirmed COVID-19 Positive will not be allowed on campus or any district function until the following are met:
 - 24 hours with no fever (100.0 degrees); **and**
 - 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

- Quarantine:
 - Individuals who are determined to have been in close contact with a person who is test confirmed COVID-19 POSITIVE may opt to keep their students at home during the recommended stay-at-home period. However, the district is only allowing 10 COVID-related days per student per semester.
 - Parents who opt to send their children to school in the two weeks following exposure are encouraged to closely monitor their children for symptoms.
 - Individuals who are fully vaccinated may not need to follow the stay-at-home period. Please contact the school nurse.
- Attendance:
 - Persons should not attend school if ill.
 - Students will be allowed to make up assignments according to the Grading Guidelines of the district.
 - Remote instruction *may* be used in the event of a student absence for a lengthy period of time or when appropriate as deemed necessary by orders of the Governor or the Texas Education Agency.

Continuity of Services

- Academics:
 - Students will be engaging in learning experiences that are on-grade level as well as participating in instruction that reinforces essential skills from previous grades/courses.
- Social Emotional and Mental Health:
 - NISD is committed to ensuring the social and emotional health and wellbeing of all students. Direct instruction and support are provided to students in the area of social emotional learning (SEL) and wellness.
 - NISD counselor has been trained in social emotional support and trauma-informed care.
- Health:
 - The health and safety of our staff and students remain our highest priority. While it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, this guidance document contains information on the practices NISD will implement to help minimize the likelihood of viral spread. These protocols and guidelines will be modified based on public health and governmental directives, and advancing scientific knowledge on the transmissibility of COVID-19. We also believe that continuing to educate our students and staff about proper hygiene techniques and necessary safety measures to prevent the spread will not only keep everyone safe but will also keep their respective families safe.
- Food Services:
 - All students will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2021-22 school year.
 - Tables will be sanitized between lunches.
- Special Education/RTI/504:
 - Neches ISD will ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education. To the greatest extent possible, each student will be provided the specialized instruction, support and related services identified in the student's RTI plan,

individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan. Service provisions will align to all regulations and guidance outlined by the state. Students with disabilities will follow the District guidelines and protocols with special consideration given to meet their individual needs.

- Accommodations will be provided to students to ensure their safety while on campus or attending campus-based events.
- Accommodations for children with disabilities:
 - Students who have disabilities will receive the needed accommodations to ensure their safety while they are on campus or attending any campus-related events.