

Overview

1. TEA has provided guidance to ensure teachers, staff, and students remain healthy and are able to safely return to school for the 2020-2021 school year.
2. School systems may offer a remote instruction transition period at the start of the school year.
3. Texas has ensured school systems will receive funding for both on-campus and remote learning.
4. School systems have been given instructional and operational flexibility to meet the local needs of their community, teachers, and students.
5. TEA is working to support school systems to ensure remote learning is consistent and high-quality across the state.

Instructional and Operational Considerations

When and how will school start?

- School boards control the school calendar and have the flexibility to delay their school start date.
- As of their local start of school date, school systems may temporarily limit access to on-campus instruction to facilitate an effective back-to-school transition process during the first 4-8 weeks of school.
 - School systems may limit access to on-campus instruction for up to four weeks.
 - School systems may *submit a board approved waiver request to TEA to access the second four-week transition window* if the school system believes it is best for the health and safety of its students, educators, and staff to extend this remote/transition window.
 - Any family who does not have Internet access and/or e-learning devices for remote learning is still entitled to receive on-campus instruction during this transition period.
- Parents have the option to request a transfer to any school district to meet their children's educational needs for remote instruction.

How will school look?

- School systems may utilize three models to provide instruction for the 2020-2021 school year:
 1. On Campus - School systems must offer on-campus instruction for those parents who choose on-campus instruction in order to be eligible for funding of their remote instruction models (with limited exceptions).
 2. Synchronous Instruction – Requires teacher(s) and students to be present at the same time, remotely (real-time, teacher supported work on video conference calls, etc.)
 3. Asynchronous Instruction – Does not require real-time participation (self-paced online courses with intermittent teacher instruction videos, pre-assigned work, etc.)

- School systems **must provide** on-campus instruction for every student whose parent(s) want them to receive on-campus instruction, with certain exceptions:
 - A full-time virtual campus operating under the Texas Virtual School Network
 - Any day a campus is ordered closed by an entity, other than an LEA, authorized to issue an order under state law
 - A day an LEA closes a campus as a result of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus
 - As part of a start-of-school transition period

How will my school receive funding?

- School systems will receive funding based on student attendance for both on-campus and remote instruction.
- School systems are fully funded as long as their on campus instructional calendars operate for 75,600 minutes over the course of the school year, as required by statute.
- Attendance is recorded daily, and can be recorded for remote instruction following specific procedures that vary for remote synchronous (real time) and remote asynchronous (not necessarily real time) instruction.
- TEA will implement an average daily attendance (ADA) grace period for the first two six-week attendance reporting periods that will ensure districts do not receive less ADA during those two six-weeks periods than an ADA number calculated using a three-year average trend from the 2017-2018 through 2019-2020 school years.

How will student attendance look?

- Students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered (with some exceptions) in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade (current law that has not changed).
- Student attendance may be earned through the delivery of remote instruction, given the public health situation.

Public Health Considerations

PROVIDE NOTICE: Parental and Public Notices

- School systems must post a summary of the plan they will follow to mitigate COVID-19 spread in their schools for parents and the general public, one week prior to the start of on-campus activities and instruction.
- School systems are required to provide parents a notice of their public education enrollment and attendance rights and responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic using a document published by TEA.

PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School

- School systems must require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day.
- Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19.

RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School

- School systems must notify their local health department if an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.
- School systems must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have passed since that person was on campus.
- School systems must 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.

MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread inside the School

- School systems must rely on health and hygiene practices, including the use of hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water.
- Schools must comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.
- School systems may require the use of masks by adults and students for whom it is developmentally appropriate in instances where masks are not mandated by the governor's executive order.
- School systems should encourage students to practice social distancing where feasible without disrupting the educational experience.