



# Cherokee Independent School District 2020 - 2021 Return to School Plan

Revised 12/10/20

Cherokee ISD is committed to the health and safety of every student and staff member as well as our community. We will follow the guidance and best practices of the Center of Disease Control (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), San Saba County Health Guidance and Emergency Management Coordinator, Texas Education Agency (TEA), and local governance.

This plan was last modified based on TEA guidance on 12/4/20 and Texas Governor Executive Order GA-29 as of 7/2/20 regarding the wearing of masks. The document will be updated as government mandates change.

The prevention and mitigation practices outlined in this document are designed to reduce the likelihood that a coronavirus outbreak occurs on campus. Some practices are required for all schools, some are required in areas with high levels of community spread, and some are recommendations. Consistently implementing recommendations to the extent feasible is the best way to reduce the potentially negative impact of infection on students' educational experiences. Additionally, the district will apply recommended practices to adults on campus, even when it might not be feasible to do so for students, to more fully protect adult teachers and staff who are generally at greater risk from COVID-19 than students.

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## ***Instructional Delivery Options, Attendance, and Enrollment***

- Cherokee ISD will start on campus learning on Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 7:45 a.m. - 4:26 p.m.
- Given the public health situation, student attendance may be earned through the delivery of remote instruction.
- Cherokee ISD will offer Synchronous and Asynchronous remote learning opportunities. Synchronous is daily participation through the live/ real time virtual classrooms. Asynchronous is independent daily participation in class assignments. 3rd - 12th grade may choose between Synchronous or Asynchronous while k-2 must do at least asynchronous.
- A student may be offered remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction for quarantine purposes.
- Both synchronous and asynchronous require students to show **daily progress** in remote learning. Just signing into class or logging in to an online platform does not

count for attendance. Completing all assignments in one day for the week is not acceptable for daily attendance.

- Per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, 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. This requirement remains in force during the 2020-21 school year.

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**PREVENT:** *Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School*

**General Health and Safety Protocols**

- Campus staff will be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols.
- Personal Protective Equipment will be provided for students and staff. See more information provided in this document.
- Disinfectants will be used for deep cleaning the campus throughout each day.
- Students and staff are required to self-screen before coming to school by asking the following questions (TEA mandate):

**Have you recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for you?**

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Shortness of breath
  - Fatigue
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Shaking or exaggerated shivering
  - Significant muscle pain or ache
  - Diarrhea
  - Nausea or vomiting
- For extra precautionary measures students and staff may be required to have temperature checked upon arrival to school each morning.
  - Touch- free forehead thermometers will be available to check/verify temperatures as needed throughout the day.
  - Staff and Students must report to administration if they have 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
    - Additionally, staff and students must report to administration if they have had “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as

defined in this document, and if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

- Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the Child has COVID-19 symptoms as listed in this document or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19
  - Parents should instead opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met.
  - Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had “*close contact*” with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 10-day period has passed.
- Excluding parental drop-off and pick-up, before visitors are allowed on campus
  - a. The district will screen all visitors to determine if the visitors have COVID-19 symptoms as listed in this document or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and
  - b. If so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted in this document.
- No outside visitors or parents will be allowed to come to school for breakfast and lunch for this school year.
- Visitors and volunteers will be limited on campus throughout the school year. NOTE: essential volunteers scheduled for work on campus will be pre-screened for temperature/symptoms before admittance on campus.
- Cherokee ISD is permitted to prevent any individual who fails the health screening from being admitted to the campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry to the campus.
- **“Close contact” is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions (CDC) as:**
  - a. Being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
  - b. Being within 6 feet for a total of approximately 15 minutes throughout the course of the day; however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e., both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (a) or (b) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test.

#### **School Health Procedures:**

- School nurse and substitute nurse will be trained with COVID-19 safety protocols.

- Regardless of age, students who report to the school nurse showing symptoms will be required to wear a mask until their parent arrives to take them home.
- The School Nurse's Office will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Any individual, including staff and students who either are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 **OR** experience symptoms of COVID-19 **must** stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school screens the individual to determine if the conditions for re-entry have been met. See more detailed information below.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Masks**

- For this document, masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose and mouth.
- According to guidelines released by the Texas Education Agency, masks are not developmentally appropriate for kindergarten students.
- For Kindergarten - 3rd grade, parents may determine if masks or face coverings are developmentally appropriate. At this time, masks remain optional and are not mandated for students in kindergarten - 3rd grade.
- All Cherokee ISD Staff will wear face coverings, masks or shields in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order GA-29.
- Texas Education Agency has provided the following PPE for Cherokee ISD:
  - 350 Disposable student size masks
  - 750 Disposable adult size masks
  - 74 Reusable student size masks
  - 195 Reusable adult size masks
  - 952 gloves
  - 12 gallons of hand sanitizer
  - 28 adult face shields
- Executive Order GA-29 requires masks **except:**
  - **Wherever it is feasible to maintain 6 feet apart or social distancing from another person not in the same household;**
  - If a person has a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering;
  - While consuming food, drink, or seated to eat or drink;
  - While exercising outdoors or engaging in physical activity outdoors while maintaining a safe distance from other people not in the same household;
  - While giving a speech to an audience while maintaining a safe distance.
- Students in grades 4th and above will be required to wear masks, face covering or shield when:
  - Entering and exiting the building and classrooms
  - Not feasible to maintain 6 feet apart
  - Transitioning from class to class
  - Going to the Restroom
  - Working in small groups

- Students may remove masks when:
  - Maintaining 6 feet apart
  - Sitting at desk and maintaining 6 feet from others
  - Exercising or physical activity
  - Outdoors and able to maintain social distancing of 6 feet
  - Eating and/or drinking

### **Social Distancing Protocols**

- Students and staff will be trained in proper social distancing.
- Social distancing becomes a personal responsibility of each individual attending school or coming to Cherokee ISD. Anyone causing a disruption or unwillingness to follow CISD safety protocols, putting students/staff at unnecessary risk may be asked to leave the premises immediately.
- Whenever possible throughout the day, students and staff will remain six feet apart. It is not feasible that staff and students maintain six feet of social distancing at all times, especially in classrooms and instructional settings.

### **Cafeteria Safety**

- Cherokee ISD plans to utilize the school cafeteria as much as possible for school meals. NOTE: no parents/visitors during breakfast or lunch, at least for the fall semester.
- Modifications have been made to the breakfast procedures to ensure social distancing while students are eating. For breakfast K-2 will eat in the cafeteria, 3rd-5th will eat breakfast outside at designated tables. If weather is not permitting, then students will eat in their homerooms; High School and Jr. High students will eat breakfast outside at designated areas. If weather is not permitting, then jr high will eat on the north side of the gym and high school on the south side.
- K-2nd and 3rd-5th will have separate lunch periods.
- Jr.High and High School will have separate lunch periods.
- Seats, tables, door handles and high touch areas will be disinfected regularly.
- All cafeteria staff will be wearing masks and gloves while serving students.
- When feasible breakfast, lunch and silverware will be pre-packaged/wrapped or boxed.

### **Bus Transportation Protocols**

- Parents are encouraged to drop students off to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.
- All drivers and students 4th grade and above will wear masks and spaced according to TEA guidelines.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided on all forms of school transportation and is to be used when boarding and exiting.
- Seats, handles and high touch areas will be disinfected between morning and afternoon routes.
- When possible windows will be opened to allow outside air to circulate in the bus or school vehicle.

### **Elementary Recess and PE**

- We will be working on routines that teach children to maintain safe distances from each other.
- Recess and PE will be outdoors when weather permits.
- We will minimize the use of equipment when feasible.
- Equipment will be sanitized before and after use.

### **Other Safety Measures**

- Students will need to bring water bottles from home.
- Students may fill their water bottles at the school but will be discouraged from drinking directly from water fountains.
- Students K-12 will be trained and encouraged to use proper hand washing and sanitizing practices often.
- Cleaning and disinfecting will occur daily in every classroom, common areas, restrooms and high touch surfaces.
- Student desks/tables and chairs will be disinfected between classes as often as possible or feasible.
- Hand sanitizer will be accessible throughout the campus.
- Staggered releases may be organized to limit the number of students in the hallways during transitions and dismissal.
- Traffic patterns during class transitions will be established.

### **Morning Arrival**

- Drop off area starts at the gate by the cafeteria.
- All students need to be screened before coming to school.
- Staff will be directing traffic to create an easy flow from drop off to exiting the parking lot.
- Elementary and Jr High students will enter at the drop-off gate north of the cafeteria.
- High school students will enter through the main entrance; high school girls' athletics may enter gate near high school dressing rooms.
- K-2 students will report to the cafeteria whether they are eating breakfast or not.
- 3-5th will report to designated breakfast/waiting area on the blacktop or first period classroom.
- Jr High will report to designated area on blacktop or in north stands (visitor side) in the old gym.
- High school students will report to the designated area on blacktop or in south side of stands in old gym unless participating in high school athletics.

### **Afternoon Dismissal**

- Elementary students will begin the dismissal process at 4:20 p.m. at the gate by the cafeteria.
- Jr High students will exit main entrance or from athletics.
- High school students will dismiss out the front entrance or may report to coaches for after school practice.

- Students will be discouraged from congregating during dismissal time.

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**Response:** *Practices to respond to suspected, exposed or lab-confirmed cases on campus*

### **Suspected COVID-19**

An individual that is showing or expressing possible symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent to the school nurse.

- The school will immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Student will be required to wear a mask while waiting to be picked up by parent/guardian.
- The school will clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) as soon as it is feasible.
- Students who report feeling feverish should be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.
  
- In the case of **an individual who has symptoms that *could be COVID-19* and who is *not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19***, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19. The individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed below.
  
- If an **individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay-at-home period**, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, **or** obtain an acute infection test between day 5 and 7 at an approved testing location that comes back negative for COVID-19.
- Students that are quarantined will continue their education through remote learning.

### **Exposed to COVID-19**

- Individuals, including students, staff, campus visitors or essential volunteers, who have had "close contact" (as defined at the beginning of this document) with someone who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, should stay at home throughout day 10 after exposure but continue to monitor for symptoms through the duration of the 14 day incubation period.
- The school nurse or administration will screen individuals after the incubation period has concluded. If the individual did not experience COVID-19 symptoms during that period, the individual could be allowed back on campus. If the individual experienced symptoms, they must stay at home until the conditions have been met.
  - 1). At least one day (24 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);

- 2). The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- 3). At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

## **Confirmed COVID-19**

### **Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in School**

- If an individual who has been in school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the district must notify the San Saba County 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).
- Schools must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 7 days have already passed since that person was on campus.
- Some cases may require the district to completely close for a brief period of time ranging from 1 to 5 days.
- In the case of **an individual who is diagnosed with COVID-19**, the individual may return to school when a medical professional certifies **all three** of the following criteria are met:
  - 1). At least one day (24 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  - 2). The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  - 3). At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

### **School Closure**

- For brief school closure due to confirmed COVID-19 case, students will continue their education through remote learning.
- Depending on the duration of the closure, the district may opt to completely close for a day and not transition to remote learning.
- District staff will promptly contact parents/guardians and students to give guidance in transitioning to remote learning.
- Remote learning during closure may be a hybrid of synchronous and asynchronous learning for 3rd-12th grades; K-2 must participate in asynchronous learning activities and synchronous is completely optional.
- During the first week of school and throughout the year, staff will prepare/train students for remote learning in case the district has to close.

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### **Guidelines for Extra-curricular Activities and School Events**

- Minimize school events since large group events will be limited to 50% capacity at this time.
- All participants, coaches and staff will follow the rules established by UIL and TEA.
- We will minimize use of locker rooms when feasible.

- Locker rooms and equipment sanitized daily.
- Spectator attendance at games may be limited based on TEA and UIL guidelines.
- Parents and Community will be informed in advance of event procedures.
- UIL Guidance can be found on the website below

<https://www.uiltexas.org/policy/covid-19/2020-2021-uil-covid-19-risk-mitigation-guidelines>

***Cherokee ISD will continue to update staff, parents and community members of any changes to the start of school or this plan. Official CISD news will be communicated using SchoolMessenger, School Website and the school Facebook pages. Specific questions or concerns should be directed to [admins@cherokeeisd.net](mailto:admins@cherokeeisd.net).***