

# STRONG START

## 2020-2021 GUIDELINES

### Guidance on Instructional Continuity & Health and Safety

#### of School Community in Response to COVID-19

Quitman ISD is committed to providing high-quality instruction to all students, regardless of the instructional setting. The district is also committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for those students and staff returning to campus. Therefore, this document contains the essential instructional and operational protocols that Quitman ISD will use to safely instruct students. The plan below is based on the most recent guidance provided to the district. The district believes that the information included in this document is vital for parents to make informed decisions for their student in the coming school year.

## Instruction

### ATTENDANCE AND ENROLLMENT

1. 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.
2. Given the public health situation, student attendance may be earned through the delivery of virtual instruction.
3. Any parent may request that their student be offered virtual instruction from any school system that offers such instruction. If a parent who chooses virtual instruction wants their child to switch to an on-campus instructional setting, they can do so, but school systems are permitted to limit these transitions to occur only at the end of a grading period, if it will be beneficial to the student's instructional quality. If a parent requests virtual instruction and the school does not offer it, the parent may enroll in another school that does offer it for transfer students.
4. School systems must provide daily on-campus attendance for students otherwise entitled to attend school who follow this document's required public health procedures and whose parents wish them to attend on campus each day, subject to school closure and the exceptions listed in this document. In high school, school systems may offer a less than daily on campus instructional experience if there is a need to reduce the total count of people on campus at any one time to maintain social distancing.
5. In order to facilitate a safe, effective back-to-school transition process, during a period up to the first four weeks of school, which can be extended by an additional four weeks by vote of the school board, school systems may temporarily limit access to on-campus instruction. As a result, some parents opting for their student(s) to attend on campus may be required to start with remote instruction temporarily, although any family who does not have Internet access and/or devices for distance learning at home is still entitled to have their student receive on campus instruction each day during this transition period, as they are during the rest of the year. School systems must clearly describe this transition process in their posted summary of their plans to operate campuses safely, as required above. 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.

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**PLEASE NOTE** The guidelines in this document are subject to revision as guidance and directives from the Governor, Commissioner of Education, and local authorities are given to public school districts.

7/13/2020

# Quitman ISD



**Educating**  
**EVERY CHILD...**  
**EVERY CHANCE...**  
**EVERY DAY.**

# REMOTE LEARNING INSTRUCTIONAL PROTOCOLS

**Remote (Asynchronous) Learning:** Instruction that does not require having the instructor and student engaged at the same time. In this method, students learn from instruction that is not necessarily being delivered in-person or in real time. This type of instruction may include various forms of digital and online learning, such as prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks that students complete on their own, and pre-assigned work and formative assessments made available to students.

- Instruction will address the same Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as face to face instruction.
- School grading policies for remote student work will be consistent with those used before COVID-19 for on campus assignments per TEA.
- Students in grades Pre-K thru 2nd may require a higher degree of parental/care-giver support.
- All remote learning will be completed using technology and the internet.
- Teachers will post a remote learning lesson for students to complete in the learning platform Google Classroom, Schoology, for each class every day.
- Remote learning lessons will mirror face-to-face instruction taking place in the classroom as closely as possible.
- Lessons for remote learning will consist of the following:
  - Instructional videos, slideshows, notes, handouts, video conferences, and/or discussion boards,
  - Assignments, Quizzes, Projects, and/or Tests.
- Grading requirements utilized for remote learning will be the same as for face-to-face instruction.
  - Students will receive grades on assignments, quizzes, projects, and/or tests based on the percentage of correct answers or by utilizing the same rubric used for students participating in face-to-face instruction (A: 90-100%, B: 80-89%, C: 70-79%, F 0-69%).
  - Students will NOT receive a pass/fail grade for work.
- Students must login and engage with the lesson each day for all their classes/courses a minimum of 180 minutes (for PK-5) or 240 minutes (for grades 6-12), according to the TEA engagement requirements.
- Compulsory attendance laws still apply to students ages 6-19. State law requires children to attend school each day that instruction is provided. Students must meet the attendance requirements for 90% of school days to get credit for courses and/or grade level. For remote learning, students must meet the requirements listed below.
- Truancy laws will apply to remote learning students who fail to meet the attendance requirements listed below.
- Student Remote Learning Engagement Requirements for Attendance
  - Students who participate in remote learning must be self-directed. They must complete lessons each day on their own time schedule.

- Remote Learning students must:
  - Login and make progress in each subject or course each day by participating in the lesson activities,
  - Engage in discussions with teachers and classmates, or
  - Submit the required assignments, quizzes, or tests for that day.
- Student expectations for remote learning:
  - Have a space designated for school that is free from distractions.
  - Participate daily in remote classes.
  - Dress appropriately and according to campus dress code if participation in a virtual meeting is required.
  - Show their face on the screen when in engaging in a virtual lesson with their teacher.
  - Communicate with the teacher when there is a need for additional assistance or tutoring.

## FACE TO FACE INSTRUCTION

- School systems must provide daily on-campus attendance for students otherwise entitled to attend school who follow this document's required public health procedures and whose parents wish them to attend on campus each day, subject to school closure and the exceptions listed in this document.
- School systems must require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day.
- Before visitors are allowed onto campuses, school systems must 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, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry.
- Schools are required to comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.
- 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, and instead should opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met.
  - Students must complete a self-screening at home prior to coming to school or getting on a school bus. Screening guide will be provided to parents.
- Screening questions will be administered as needed in the school clinic. Any student showing symptoms will be assessed by the campus nurse. If the nurse determines the student should go home, the student must be picked up from school ASAP
- The Governor's Order on July 2nd requires facial coverings, such as masks, for staff and students while on school buses and in common areas, hallways, restrooms, and other areas where 6 feet of distancing cannot be maintained.
- Desks in classrooms will be spaced apart to allow for recommended distancing.
- Campuses will utilize one-way hallways or one-sided hallways, as applicable

# Health & Safety Guidance

## PUBLIC HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages, and school system leaders should do everything feasible to keep students safe. That said, research from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19 and some severe outcomes have been reported in children, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized or have severe symptoms.

A child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others. The same is true for adults. Even if an infected person is only mildly ill, the people they spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if that person is 65 or older with preexisting health conditions that place them at higher risk.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families significantly. This guidance document contains information on four sets of practices that minimize the likelihood of viral spread, including some that are requirements for all schools and others that are recommendations:

- **PROVIDE NOTICE:** Requirements for parental and public notices
- **PREVENT:** Recommended practices to prevent the virus from entering the school
- **RESPOND:** Required practices to respond to a lab-confirmed case in the school
- **MITIGATE:** Recommended practices to mitigate likelihood of spread inside the school

The prevention and mitigation practices recommended in this document are designed to significantly reduce the likelihood that a coronavirus outbreak occurs on campus.

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## PROVIDE NOTICE: Parental and Public Notices

**Developing a Plan for On-Campus Activities and Instruction** School systems must post for parents and the general public, one week prior to the start of on campus activities and instruction, a summary of the plan they will follow to mitigate COVID-19 spread in their schools based on the requirements and recommendations outlined here. This summary document can follow any format the school system deems appropriate to communicate the information, should broadly address the major points in this guidance, and must be posted on the school system homepage or another easily found area on the system website. The document should be developed in consultation with teachers, staff, and parents to ensure the plan provides for the safety of teachers, staff, and students. Neither this summary document nor any local school systems' reopening plans are subject to approval by any government entity.

These plans will be posted to Quitman ISD webpage at [www.quitmanisd.net](http://www.quitmanisd.net).

## PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering Schools

1. Given the potential severity and observed rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus and the time lapse between onset of symptoms, diagnosis, and reporting, we will work with our local health authorities to determine the severity in our local area. This information will be used in determining the need for school closures.
2. QISD will follow UIL, TEA, and CDC guidance for outdoor/indoor performances, practices, and events.
3. Visitor restrictions will be in place. QISD will not maintain normal visitation to campuses and facilities unless otherwise posted. Visitors may be required to participate in a screening and wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). QISD will not allow visitors to eat lunch on campuses.
4. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, employees and students will complete self-screenings weekly. Additionally, on campus screenings may take place and be conducted by QISD nursing staff. All screening information will be kept confidential.
5. Upon reopening, QISD Schools and Facilities have been completely cleaned and disinfected. All required cleaning and safety precautions have been followed. Additionally, a deep cleaning of "common areas" has been completed on all campuses.
6. Screening Practices
  - a. QISD will require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Symptoms are listed at the end of this document. The self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff would report to the school system if: (a) they have come into close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19; or (b) they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.
  - b. 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, and instead should 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 14-day incubation period has passed.

# MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood COVID-19 Spread Inside District

1. Teachers will ensure frequent handwashing of students throughout the day. Handwashing should occur prior to any meals, and at a minimum of 3 to 4 additional times daily. Other times that handwashing should occur: after PE, after playing on the playground, use of the weight room, and use of computer labs.
2. On the first day a student attends school on campus, school systems must provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices and other mitigation practices adopted in the local school system.
3. Additional cleaning of desks, doorknobs, and keyboards during the day using the provided cleaning wipes. Older students may help with this task. Teachers please take care of your own health. WIPE your desk, keyboard, and spaces as well.
4. Drop-off and pick-up times will be extended to decrease the number of students entering and exiting school at one time.
5. For middle school and high school, lockers will be assigned on an as-needed basis determined by campus administration.
6. Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential exposure to COVID-19. QISD employees, students, and visitors will practice staying six feet apart when able.
7. Masks are an important PPE and will be provided to Staff and Students. There may be times where wearing a mask is required.
8. When in common areas (gyms, cafeterias, offices), QISD will provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout the space. Further, these areas will be cleaned more frequently before and after uses.
9. Extra-Curricular programs will follow all UIL, CDC, and State Guidance and maintain social distancing practices when applicable.
10. Transportation Practices:
  - a. Students and Drivers will be required to wear masks or face shields.
  - b. When appropriate, bus windows will be put down while transporting students.
  - c. Bus pick-up lines will be clearly marked on campuses.
  - d. Drivers will create alphabetical assigned seating.
  - e. Social Distancing will be practiced at all times.
  - f. Additional cleaning of buses will occur before routes, after routes, and on a daily basis.
11. Classroom Practices
  - a. Social Distancing Practices will be utilized.
  - b. Desks will be separated 3-6 feet between individuals.
  - c. Class size will be set following social distance guidance.
  - d. Alphabetical assigned seating will be utilized in classrooms.
  - e. Hand sanitizer/wipes will be available.
  - f. Instructor will wear PPE when providing close-proximity instruction.
  - g. Common areas will be cleaned by district staff before and after use.
  - h. Elementary will utilize self-contained classrooms and limit class changes as much as possible.
12. On Campus Food Services
  - a. Pre-shift health screenings will occur for food service employees.
  - b. Mandatory PPE use will be in effect.
  - c. Increased disinfection techniques will be utilized.
  - d. Social distancing will be practiced.
13. QISD will attempt to reduce in-person staff meetings or other opportunities for adults to congregate in close settings. When those meetings are necessary and cannot be done via electronic means, everyone must follow the mask protocols in this guidance and remain at least 6 feet apart where feasible.
14. Staying home: Staying home allows individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 to monitor their symptoms during the period in which they may be infectious. These individuals should separate themselves from others outside their home, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health entity.
15. Self-isolation: Self-isolation is used to separate people infected with COVID-19 (including those who are sick with the virus and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).
16. QISD will adhere to all Federal, State, and Governor Orders as applicable.

# RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Presumptive or Lab-Confirmed Case in District

1. Students running fever will be sent home immediately. While waiting to be picked up, students will be quarantined in an identified designated location on each campus.
2. Other students will be removed from the classroom and taken to an alternate location on campus (e.g. go on a walk outside, move to a different classroom, etc.) so that the classroom can be disinfected.
3. QISD will utilize campus personnel to help identify other staff, students, or visitors that may have had close contact with a presumptive or lab confirmed individual.
4. QISD will monitor absenteeism of students and staff multiple times daily.
5. If an employee or student becomes ill on campus, they may be asked to leave QISD facilities and go home or to the nearest health center.
6. Employees and students returning to campuses after being sent home may be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note.
7. **Individuals Confirmed, Suspected, or Exposed to COVID-19**
  - a. Any individuals—including teachers, staff, students, or other campus visitors—who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below), must stay at home throughout the infection period and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:
    - i. In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
      - ☐ at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
      - ☐ the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
      - ☐ at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
  - b. 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, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
  - c. If the 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 either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.
8. **Close Contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.** Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:
  - a. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or
  - b. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes; if either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.
  - c. Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.
9. Individuals—including students, teachers, staff, or other campus visitors—who have had close contact with someone who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, as narrowly defined in this document and as determined by the appropriate public health agency, should stay at home through the stay-at-home period. For close contacts of individuals who tested positive, a 14-day stay at home period was previously advised by the CDC based on the incubation period of the virus. As of December 2, 2020, the CDC amended their guidance to allow two shorter options for the stay-at-home period. Based on current CDC guidelines, the stay-at-home period can end for individuals experiencing no symptoms:
  - On day 10 after close contact exposure without testing
  - On day 7 after close contact exposure and after receiving a negative test result.If individuals return to school from these shorter stay-at-home windows, they should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., more consistent mask usage) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period.
  - a. School systems should screen individuals after the incubation period has concluded, and if the individual did not experience COVID-19 symptoms during that period, the individual can be allowed back on campus. If the individual experienced symptoms, they must stay at home until the conditions outlined above have been met.
10. **Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School**
  - a. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-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).
  - b. Schools must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, 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.
  - c. 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 school



among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities.

- 11.** District communication will be provided to the parents of students who came in close contact with a COVID-19 positive student or staff member.
- 12.** Parents, students, and staff should contact their campus principal or supervisor if they: show COVID-19 symptoms, are lab-confirmed, and they are notified of being in close contact of a lab-confirmed individual.

# SCHOOL CLOSING: RESPONSES AND TRIGGERS

1. School closing will occur when and if the school closing serves the best interest of the students and local community. This decision will be made with the following considerations: confirmed cases in the local area defined as Wood County, Texas, number of staff that are sick, ability to provide basic supplies to students, recommendations by the local health department, CDC, and other government agencies.
2. A school closure will trigger at-home instruction.
3. School faculty, staff, parents, students, and community members will be able to access updates concerning school closures, re-opening, services, and latest updates at [www.quitmanisd.net](http://www.quitmanisd.net), Quitman ISD Facebook, and Quitman ISD Twitter. If you do not have the Quitman ISD app you can go to the app store and search for Quitman ISD. Look for the school logo.
4. All school personnel identified as "essential" will report to work as needed and directed. Their direct supervisor will notify essential school personnel.
5. QISD will operate a drive-thru free lunch pick-up daily during school closure. Pick-up location will be at Quitman Elementary School. Vehicles will enter through the normal pick-up route. School staff will distribute at the curb. Parents, guardians, and students are asked to remain inside the vehicle at all times.

## COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following question:

