



**Laredo ISD's Safe Return to In-Person  
Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan  
Updated August 24, 2023**

Laredo ISD will hold summer school classes for students and employees in June 2023 and begin the 2023-2024 academic year on August 9, 2023. LISD will continue to monitor positive COVID-19 cases for employees and students. Laredo ISD has continuously planned and prepared for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for its 20,830 students and approximately 4,000 employees for the summer instructional program and the fall semester. LISD continues to monitor the current public health situation on a daily basis through LISD's COVID-19 Tracker posted on the LISD website. Laredo ISD continues its commitment as an educational institution to provide for the health and safety of students, employees, parents, and community. As per ESSER requirements, LISD has updated the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan for the third year. This Safety Plan references most updated guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Texas Governor's Executive Orders, Texas Education Agency guidelines and preventive measures to **mitigate** the spread of the COVID-19 virus and help keep everyone safe at schools and at extracurricular activities. Laredo ISD continues the collaboration and communication with the City of Laredo Health Department and health authorities for continued direction, guidance, and feedback on Laredo ISD's most updated plan to ensure students are educated in a safe, secure and healthy learning environment.

Laredo ISD continuously takes necessary steps to reduce the risks of this viral spread to students, teachers, staff and their families. LISD implements required and recommended practices including the following:

- 1) **Notification** of test-confirmed cases in school to the City of Laredo Health Department in accordance with confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- 2) **Reporting** to the Texas Department of State Health Services and TEA on a weekly basis upon receipt of information that any teacher, staff member, student, or visitor at a school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19.
- 3) Implementation of **preventive practices** to keep the virus from entering the school.
- 4) **Respond** to a test-confirmed case in the school(s) as per updated Texas Education Agency's School Health Operations requirements.
- 5) **Mitigation strategies** preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

The following summary addresses the major points in communicating LISD's Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan to **mitigate** COVID-19 spread in LISD schools and departments.

## LISD COVID-19 District Contact

**Mr. Victor Mora, LISD Director of Safety/Risk Management and Emergency Management,** is the LISD designated staff member responsible for responding to COVID-19 cases/concerns. Mr. Mora's contact information is **956-273-1171** or [vmora@laredoisd.org](mailto:vmora@laredoisd.org). The designated Campus/Department Safety Officer(s) also address COVID-19 concerns at the campus and department respectively.

## LISD School Year 2023-2024

Approximately 20,830 LISD students are expected to return safely to school for in-person instruction for the 2023-2024 school year. All students and approximately 4,000 employees follow all CDC layered preventive measures practiced and implemented in previous years including but not limited to washing of hands, use of sneeze guards, staying home if sick, covering cough and sneeze, screening/rapid testing and vaccinations when requested. The wearing of face covering for students, employees and visitors has not been a requirement and is optional. LISD encourages and respects student choice and use of facial covering as a measure to mitigate COVID-19.

## Student Attendance

According to Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students are required to 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 effect as per the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook during the 2023-2024 school year. All students are required to comply with compulsory school attendance. LISD follows TEA attendance protocols and procedures for students who are absent due to COVID-19 and code accordingly on PEIMS. Elementary campuses each have an Attendance Scout to increase student enrollment and improve daily student attendance.

## Screening for Students, Employees, Parents and Visitors

Laredo ISD welcomes all students, employees, parents, and visitors to self-screen before entering the school or district facilities. All teachers and staff must report to their supervisor if they have COVID-19 symptoms, are test-confirmed with COVID-19, or have had close contact with an individual who is test-confirmed with COVID-19. Parents are not to send a child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms, is test-confirmed with COVID-19 or if the child has had close contact with an individual who is test-confirmed with COVID-19. If an individual experiences COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, the individual must **stay home** and cannot return to campus until the most updated CDC and LISD requirements have been met.

Laredo ISD will continue providing home testing kits for both students and employees upon availability. Laredo ISD has submitted a State of Texas Assistance Request (STAR) with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) for testing kits and disposable masks.

## COVID-19 Symptoms

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 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

### COVID-19 Cases Reported on Campus

If a student, teacher or staff shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school, the individual will be immediately separated from others and sent home to seek medical assistance. The areas used by the individual are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Students feeling feverish are temperature checked to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

### Test-Confirmed Cases on Campus

If there is a test-confirmed COVID-19 case in a school, the District will notify the local health department and follow confidentiality requirements. Areas heavily used by the individual are closed off and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by trained on-campus custodial staff. The campus provides timely notification to all teachers, staff and families of the school if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers, or staff of that campus.

### LISD Health Guidelines

Laredo ISD will take the necessary steps to reduce the risks of this viral spread to students, teachers, staff, and their families. Our district has implemented and will continue to implement, required and recommended practices from the CDC, TEA, and local health authority. Therefore, this guidance is subject to change as new information becomes available during the new school year.

### Employee Guidelines for Returning to Work

**Fully Vaccinated Employee means that they have had two Doses of Moderna or Pfizer Vaccine and two weeks have elapsed since the second dose was administered.**

Employee's Vaccinated Status	Scenario	Isolation Protocol	LISD COVID leave granted?	Is a negative test required to return to work?	Is COVID notification needed throughout building?
Vaccinated and Non-Vaccinated	Employee has symptoms	Employee can do a rapid home test, if negative can report to work	No	Yes, but only required if demonstrating symptoms on campus.	No

Vaccinated and Non-Vaccinated	Employee Positive	Employee stays home for 5 consecutive days (including weekends and holidays) and may return on the 6 <sup>th</sup> day provided no fever for at least 24 hours and symptoms have improved. <b>Day of collection is Day Zero.</b>	Yes	No	Yes
Vaccinated and Non-Vaccinated	Employee's Household Member Positive or Employee met close contact threshold	Employee can continue to report to work	No	No	No

**LISD COVID Leave is available for the Fall 2023 Semester if employee tests positive. Leave available is up to five (5) days. Employee may not need to take the five (5) days of COVID leave depending on the day of test. If the employee's symptoms have not improved after the 5 day isolation period, employee may remain at home and use their own leave, however, with a doctor's excuse, the LISD COVID leave days may be granted up to the 5 days.**

### **STUDENT Guidelines for Returning to School**

#### **Students Who Have Tested Positive for COVID-19**

- As per the document, “Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule”, Laredo ISD will exclude students from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19 or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19.
- Parents will be made aware that they must ensure that they do not send their child to school until the conditions for re-entry have been met.

#### **Release from Quarantine Rule for Positive Students**

- Five (5) days have passed since symptoms first appeared – student may return on day six (6)
- Five (5) days have passed since test date (those with no symptoms) – student may return on day six (6)
  - Should wear a well-fitting mask around others until day ten (10) (day six (6) to day ten (10))
- Twenty-four (24) hours without fever and no use of fever-reducing medication.
- Improvement in symptoms (Example: at times cough may linger)

## **Students Who Have Symptoms, Possibly Related to COVID-19**

- Parents must ensure that they do not send a child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms.
- If symptoms begin while the student is on campus, they will be sent home with a medical referral.
- **Any student who has symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 is to remain at home until the conditions for re-entry are met.**

## **Re-Entry Criteria for Students with COVID-19 Related Symptoms**

- Student must obtain a note from a United States Licensed Medical Professional indicating that the student is cleared to return to school based on an alternative diagnosis; **AND**,
- Students must have an improvement in symptoms and be fever-free for twenty-four (24) hours (without fever-reducing medication).
- District will follow DSHS recommendations for return to school.

## **Health and Hygiene Practices**

Trained LISD custodial staff thoroughly clean and disinfect Laredo ISD campuses and facilities using cleaning solutions and misters. Frequently touched areas in the classrooms are consistently cleaned before and after use. Campuses throughout the day will implement additional cleaning practices. Hand sanitizer is available for use by students, teachers, and staff. Frequent hand washing (for at least twenty (20) seconds) is highly encouraged, monitored, and practiced by students, teachers and staff. Everyone is encouraged and expected to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, with used tissues thrown in the trash as well as washing hands immediately. Campuses will practice improving airflow by allowing outside air to circulate in the building and improve the ventilation through increased maintenance and improvements/upgrades of the HVAC system. Air filtration units (Jade Air Purifiers SCA5000C) have been placed in every District classroom to add another level of protection for students and staff and prevent the spread of communicable diseases. These air purifiers have two layers of filtration (Carbon and HEPA) and a UV lamp and are easy to operate. Maintenance of these air purifiers is also provided to ensure filters are replaced accordingly. Water fountains throughout the school district campuses have been retrofitted with Elkay EZH2O Retrofit bottle filling station kits, which include the following features: Hands Free, Visual Filter Monitor, Filtered, Green Ticker, Laminar Flow, Antimicrobial, Real Drain, Electronic Bottle Filler and Sensor activation.

## **Facial Coverings/Masks/Face Shields**

As per Texas Governor Greg Abbott's Executive Order-36 and the Federal government, facial coverings have not been mandatory and therefore, LISD may not enforce or require students or staff to wear a mask. LISD supports and encourages use of facial coverings and will allow individuals to wear a mask if they choose to do so. Reusable masks and face shields are available if requested by the students. LISD continues to provide masks throughout the school year from the District's inventory.

## **Teachers and Staff**

District employees must continue to meet their essential job functions as required by their job description. LISD works with teachers and staff on a case-by-case basis to address reasonable workplace accommodations.

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

LISD has an inventory of personal protective equipment (PPE) to provide for the protection of students, employees, parents, and visitors and continues to reach out to TDEM and DSHS to address any district needs. These resources include face shields, disposable and reusable masks, Plexiglas barriers, hand sanitizer, sneeze guards for classrooms/cafeteria, and protective gear for custodial staff.

## **Transportation**

LISD provides transportation to students following the normal routes to school. If students have fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, have COVID-19 symptoms, are test-confirmed COVID-19 or have had close contact with an individual who is test-confirmed COVID-19, students are not allowed to board the school bus. Wearing masks and facial coverings are not required but are allowed if individual chooses to wear one. Buses are cleaned and disinfected before and after each route. Hand sanitizer and masks are available for bus riders.

## **School Visits**

Parents are encouraged to participate and support their child's education through remote meetings and conferences, telephone conferences as well as in person visits during open houses and student recognition activities. Administrators and teachers stand ready to provide open communication with parents to address the student's educational needs through telephone, email, Apptegy, remote setting or in-person meetings.

## **Human Resources**

The LISD Human Resources Department has provided updated employee information, flyers and resources on district policies and protocols related to COVID-19.

## **Infectious and Communicable Disease Plan**

Laredo ISD has adopted the Infectious/Communicable Disease Plan from the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) to provide standardized guidance in response to the onset and spread of an infectious/communicable disease within the district. This plan is included in the LISD Multi-Hazard Emergency Operation Plan approved on November 30, 2022 by the Texas School Safety Center.

## **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

LISD uses standard operating procedures in conducting school business and explaining how the district continues to operate during the course of the 2023-2024 school year as students return to school. LISD provides Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to guide LISD students, employees, parents and community in the following areas: 1). Operations, including Fixed Assets, Child Nutrition Program, Transportation and Maintenance; 2). Student Services, including Athletics,

Police Department, Parent Engagement, UIL activities, and Health Services; 3). Health and Occupational Safety Support Services, including school safety and security and Emergency Operations Plan; 4). Curriculum and Instruction, including Assessments, Special Education, Counseling, and Instructional continuity; 5). Human Resources; 6) Communications and 7) Finance including attendance and discipline.

### **Vaccinations and Coordination with Local Health Officials**

Laredo ISD is an approved vaccine provider in the State of Texas and stands ready to administer vaccines to students, employees, parent volunteers and community members if requested.

Laredo ISD has collaborated with the City of Laredo Health Department as well as formed partnerships with other health organizations such as Gateway Community Health Center, Preventive Health Solutions (PHS), HEB, hospitals, and other health agencies, to enhance efforts to vaccinate as many members of our school communities as possible to keep everyone safe from COVID-19.

Laredo ISD will continue promoting and encouraging employees and students to vaccinate.

### **Continuity of Services**

Laredo ISD offers extended day, extended week academic support to accelerate instruction by providing small group and differentiated instruction for students not mastering skills taught during the course of the instructional program. The extended year will also continue, with a major focus on intervention and enrichment activities that will foster student engagement and improve student learning and progress for the different student groups. Instructional support through daily and Saturday tutorials is part of the instructional continuity program for identified students.

Other initiatives that Laredo ISD provides as continuity of services are:

- Reading and Math Practitioners who provide specialized instruction that meet the needs of all student groups.
- Tutors who serve all grade levels and meet the individual instructional/learning needs of all students, including low-income, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care and highly mobile students.
- High Quality and researched based programs that enhance instruction and provide the most effective strategies to differentiate based on the student's needs (e.g., Blended Learning, Newsela, NoRedink, IXL, Education Galaxy, Empowering Writers, K-12 Summit, etc.).
- Capital Outlay and Instruction that enhances the curriculum and instructional strategies integrating technology and research-based strategies to meet the needs of all learners (e.g., Screencastify, KAMI, Google Enterprise, etc.).

