

ROPES ISD

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 Ropes Eagles

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SMALL TOWN VALUES, BIG TIME RESULTS

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2021-2022 Guidelines for Ropes ISD

- Ropes ISD is committed to the safety and well-being of all our students and staff. We are looking forward to having another year full of learning and growing. We appreciate your patience with us during this difficult time. We want you to know that we love your children and are working diligently to keep them safe while challenging them academically. Ropes ISD will ensure continuity of services, address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health by utilizing COVID relief funds (ESSER, ESSER II, ESSER III) for identified needs through stakeholder and public input.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

As stated by the Texas Education Agency, parents must ensure they do not send their children to school if the child has Covid-19 symptoms (listed below) or has lab-confirmed Covid-19.

SCREENING PROTOCOLS

- Parents/Guardians are expected to screen their child for Covid-19 symptoms each day prior to sending their child to school.
- Teachers will monitor students and refer children to the nurse if symptoms are present.

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- Staff will be required to self-screen for Covid-19 symptoms prior to reporting to work each day. Self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature.
- Visitors are expected to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before entering any Ropes ISD building. There will be an additional screening process in the front office. Visitors will be asked by front office staff if they have any of the above symptoms. Visitors must answer “Yes” or “No” to the overall statement that they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

- Do you have a fever of 100 degree Fahrenheit or higher?
- Have you had any of the following?
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea
- Have you been around anyone exhibiting these symptoms or who has tested positive for Covid-19 in the past 14 days?

TEMPERATURE CHECKS

Temperature checks for staff and students may be conducted as needed. According to TEA, regularly performing a forehead temperature check of otherwise asymptomatic students in school is not recommended.

REPORTING COVID

Anyone who becomes aware of someone who is presenting COVID-19 symptoms, has lab-confirmed COVID-19, or reports close contact with someone with lab-confirmed COVID-19 should:

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- Immediately report the information to the campus Principal.
- Discussions of this nature are very sensitive, confidential, and will be treated as such.
- Any necessary notifications to staff or parents will be made by the District, based on guidance from the local health department. Notifications will be made in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

STUDENT OR STAFF WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

- When a student or employee has displayed symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the school nurse will provide a clinical assessment to determine when a student/employee needs to be sent home.
- In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who has not been 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 following three-step process:
 - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication(s))
 - The individual has improvement in symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath)
 - At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared

LAB-CONFIRMED COVID-19

- School will close off areas that were heavily used by the individual with a lab-confirmed case until non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than three days have already passed since that individual was on campus per CDC guidelines.
- In the case of an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to the campus when all three of the following criteria are met:
 - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication(s))
 - The individual has improvement in symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath)
 - At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared

CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WITH LAB-CONFIRMED COVID-19

The following defines “close contact” with someone with lab-confirmed COVID-19:

- Being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield)

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- Being within six feet for 15 consecutive minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield, of an infected individual
- Either of the above occurred in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.
- 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.
- Parents should inform the campus Principal if their student has had close contact with someone with lab-confirmed COVID-19. The District will begin processes as appropriate.

HAND SANITIZING

- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the campus for students and staff to use, entry to classroom spaces will require hand sanitization. Entry to the school will require hand sanitization.
- Teachers will encourage students to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer throughout the day.
- Maintenance staff will be sanitizing rooms daily (during student transitions and conference period), students will be sanitizing their own spaces throughout the day. Cafeteria staff will be sanitizing tables between student groups.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Teachers will work to effectively utilize classroom spaces within the physical constraints of our classroom spaces. We will configure classroom spaces in a manner that is conducive for the size and furniture in the classroom space. Desks and tables will be socially distanced as much as possible.
- Cafeteria tables will have students seated every other chair, in order to keep students socially distanced.

TEA GUIDELINES

Required Actions if Individuals with Test-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School

1. 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 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. 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

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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).

3. 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 classroom or extracurricular or after-school program cohort if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participated in those classrooms or cohorts.

Masks

Please note, mask provisions of GA-38 are not being enforced as the result of ongoing litigation. Further guidance will be made available after the court issues are resolved.

Students Who Have COVID-19

As provided in this Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, school systems must exclude students from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are 2 suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19, and must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on campus.

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met. See the DSHS rule for more details, including the conditions for ending the exclusion period and returning to school.

During the exclusion period, the school system may deliver remote instruction consistent with the practice of remote conferencing outlined in the proposed Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) rules, as described here.

To help mitigate the risk of asymptomatic individuals being on campuses, school systems may provide and/or conduct recurring COVID-19 testing using rapid tests provided by the state or other sources. Testing can be conducted with staff. With prior written permission of parents, testing can be conducted with students.

Students Who Are Close Contacts

As a reference, close contact determinations are generally based on guidance outlined by the CDC, which notes that individuals who are fully vaccinated may not need to follow the stay-at-home period.

As noted above, public health authorities will be notified of all positive cases in schools. While school systems are not required to conduct COVID-19 case investigations, local public health entities have authority to investigate cases and are currently engaged in cooperative efforts on that front. Participation by individuals in these investigations remains voluntary. If school systems are made aware that a student is a close contact, the school system must notify the student's parents.

Parents of students who are determined to be close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may opt to keep their students at home during the recommended stay-at-home period. Parents who opt to send their children to school in the two weeks

following exposure are encouraged to closely monitor their children for symptoms.

For individuals who are determined to be close contacts, a 14-day stay-at-home period was previously advised by the CDC based on the incubation period of the virus. CDC has since updated their guidance, and the stay-at-home period can end for students experiencing no symptoms on Day 10 after close contact exposure, if no subsequent COVID-19 testing is performed.

Alternately, students can end the stay-at-home period if they receive a negative result from a PCR acute infection test after the close contact exposure ends.

During the stay-at-home period, the school system may deliver remote instruction consistent with the practice of remote conferencing outlined in the proposed Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) rules, as described here.

OPERATIONAL CHANGES

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL

- Any students dropped off before the building is open will not be allowed inside the building. Any exceptions would need to be specifically arranged with campus administration.
- Pre-K through Kindergarten parents will be allowed to walk their children to the classroom for the first week of school.
- After the first week of school, no parent/guardian may walk into the school building with their child.
- Staff including teachers, aides, and campus administration will be on duty located at each campus entrance and in student holding areas. Staff members at the entrance will monitor the traffic flow into the campus.
 - Students will not be allowed to congregate in the hallway, restroom, bus lanes, etc.
- Practice social distancing when feasible.

DISMISSAL

- Where possible, one-way traffic throughout campus hallways will be encouraged.
- Students will report to their dismissal holding areas outside the building unless there is inclement weather.
- Parents will drive to the student's pick up area. Parents are encouraged to stay in the car while the student is escorted by a staff member. Parents will not be allowed into the building after school hours.

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- Instructional staff including teachers, aides, and campus administration will be on duty to monitor students in the pick-up line.
- Students will not be allowed to congregate.

MEALS

For in-person meals, the following guidance will apply:

- Campus staff will monitor in the cafeteria and hallways to ensure social distancing when feasible.
- Depending on the number of students in the school, students may have meals in either the cafeteria, outside or the classroom.
- Signage and staff will reinforce physical distance and traffic patterns in the cafeteria.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available at entrances and exits of the cafeteria.

For students that have chosen remote instruction, the following guidance apply:

- Parents will need to contact Deedra Pinkert to set up a pickup time during regular cafeteria times during the school day.

Visitors at Lunch

- At this time, visitors are not allowed to eat with students on campus because of limited space.

Parents Dropping Off Lunches

- Enter the main entrance.
- Attach a student name tag with grade level.
- Leave lunch in the designated area.

PARENT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education is most successful when there is effective communication and a strong partnership between home and school. We will create options for parents to participate virtually when they do not feel comfortable entering the building. Parent conferences may occur in designated areas that are not occupied or where social distancing is practiced. Parent conferences (ARDS, 504 etc.) may be done virtually.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- Students will be required to meet the minimum attendance for class credit rule (TEC, §25.092). Students are required to attend at least 90% of their classes to receive credit. Remote attendance will count in the same manner as face-to-face attendance in satisfying this requirement.

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- Truancy laws will apply to students who fail to attend school, but remote attendance satisfies attendance requirements.
- TEA requires that schools track the instructional method in which the student is participating each school day.

TRANSPORTATION

Ropes ISD will use the following guidelines for bus transportation of students to/from school.

- We will require students to use hand sanitizer upon boarding the bus.
- When possible, we will open windows to allow outside air to circulate in the bus.
- We will encourage families to drop students off, carpool, or walk with their student to school to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.
- Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles. During cleaning, open windows to allow for additional ventilation and air flow.

UIL PROGRAMS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Ropes ISD will follow guidance from the University Interscholastic League (UIL), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the State of Texas on UIL and extracurricular activities for our students and for events hosted at our facilities. Throughout workouts and practices, equipment will be sanitized, and we will continue to follow CDC guidelines for cleaning procedures.

UPCOMING ATHLETIC SEASONS

At this time, UIL plans to begin fall competition seasons as scheduled on the UIL calendar. UIL will continue to work with the state officials and monitor CDC and other federal guidance to determine any further modifications to this guidance.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-SPONSORED AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Currently, Ropes ISD is offering participation in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities to students who select Full Time on Campus Learning only.

- In order to participate in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities (including all UIL-sponsored sports and activities), the student must be enrolled in Full Time on Campus Learning.
- Students enrolled in Remote Learning will not be allowed to participate in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities (including all UIL-sponsored sports and activities) while the student is enrolled in Remote Learning.

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- If a student returns to Full Time on Campus Learning, the student may be eligible to participate in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities, depending on the school-sponsored or extracurricular activity's normal guidelines.

TRYOUTS

Students enrolled in Remote Learning will not be allowed to participate in tryouts for upcoming school-sponsored or extracurricular activities (including all UIL-sponsored sports and activities). If students miss tryouts, they will not be a part of the team or activity. We will not create a special tryout for students enrolled in Remote Learning upon their return to Full Time on Campus Learning.

VACCINES

Ropes ISD administration and nurse will assist families in finding appointments for a COVID-19 vaccination as needed. Please visit with administration for any assistance in finding a local business's offering appointments.

VISITORS TO CAMPUS

Who is considered a campus visitor? Any person who is not assigned as an employee of the building. Parents and other adults can visit schools; however, TEA is requesting that schools limit visits to those deemed essential.

- All visitors will comply with the following procedures:
 - Enter through the main entrance
 - Use hand sanitizer
 - Comply with all applicable District policies and procedures
 - Provide identification to staff member
- Campus staff will sanitize visitor check-in area after each visitor by wiping down countertops.
- Administrators will approve all campus visitors and designate visitor areas.
- At this time, visitors are not allowed to eat with students on campus because of limited space.