

# RECONNECT SAFELY RETURN STRONG



Updated 10/14/20

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*Information and procedures subject to change based on updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and public health and education officials.*

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# REOPENING TIMELINE

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT FALL 2020

SEPTEMBER 8:

First day of school (Virtual only)


OCTOBER 19:

Face-to-face instruction begins subject to change based on COVID-19 conditions across the city of Houston and recommendations from local, state, and federal health officials. \*

SEPTEMBER 8- JANUARY 29:

First semester of remote learning for students/parents who choose online-only instruction.

*\*Parents will have the option to choose remote instruction for the fall semester (through January 29) or entire school year (through June 11).*



- Even with HISD's enhanced safety protocols, some families may be reluctant for their students to return to the classroom once face-to-face instruction resumes. Those families may select an online-only option for a portion of the year or the entire school year. Parents choosing this option must attend a virtual class outlining expectations and sign an agreement committing to virtual learning for the semester.
- A gradual transition to 100% face-to-face instruction will give us time to monitor conditions across the city, making adjustments as necessary, and ensure our safety protocols are closely followed.

## PARENT FAQs

### What is the plan for the 2020-2021 school year?

All students will begin the 2020-2021 school year virtually on September 8, 2020. Virtual instruction for all students will continue for six weeks through Friday, October 16, 2020. On Monday, October 19, 2020, face-to-face instruction for all students will begin. However, this date is subject to change based on COVID-19 conditions across the city of Houston and recommendations from local, state, and federal health officials.

### What is the timeline?

- **September 8, 2020:** First day of school (Virtual only)
- **October 19, 2020:** Face-to-face instruction begins\*
- **September 8 – January 29:** First semester of remote learning for students/parents who choose online-only instruction.

*\*Parents will have the option to choose remote instruction for the fall semester (through January 29) or the entire school year (through June 11).*

### How was the reopening plan formulated?

The HISD Communicable Disease Plan Task Force, a group of key employees, educators, parents, community members, and health care officials, was charged with reviewing safety guidance from local, state, and federal health and education officials. The district also considered feedback from parent and teacher surveys distributed over the summer. The HISD Academics team developed an Instructional Continuity Plan to ensure that learning will continue throughout the year. This plan provides a robust framework that expands on the current HISD @ H.O.M.E. at-home learning platform and provides additional guidance and support for any future extended periods of closure.

### Will parents have the option to extend virtual instruction?

Yes. Parents may elect to have their children continue to participate in virtual instruction for a portion of the year or the entire school year.

### What will be required from parents who decide to continue remote instruction?

Parents choosing this option must attend a virtual class outlining expectations and sign an agreement committing to virtual learning for the semester.

### What information will be used to determine whether to keep or push back the target date?

The district will remain in close contact with federal, state and local health and education officials and make necessary adjustments to the target dates for in-person instruction if COVID-19 conditions change.

### What safety protocols will be in place at district schools and facilities?

Once in-person instruction resumes, safety protocols will include requiring all HISD employees, students, and visitors to undergo entry screenings, wear face coverings, wash hands regularly, and practice physical distancing. The district will provide enough hand soap, paper towels, tissues, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant to accommodate frequent cleaning of high-touch areas. Additionally, it will be mandatory for nurses, custodial staff, food service workers, and special education staff to wear gloves.

### Will visitors on school campuses be limited?

Yes. Visitation is limited to essential visitors with pre-scheduled appointments.

### What should classrooms look like to ensure physical distancing measures are in place?

Classrooms must be reconfigured to ensure 6 feet of physical distancing between desks whenever possible. Reduced space would only be implemented as needed, with the goal continuing to be to place as much space as possible between desks. Students may have staggered schedules and alternate between in-person and virtual learning to accommodate limitations. Student assemblies will be held virtually. All campus-based employees and students must follow infection and high-touch area protocols. Schools should limit visitors and assign a team to notify their communities of the updated visitation procedures. Campuses must establish isolation areas for students and adults who are flagged during entry screening or become ill during the day.

### How often will schools be sanitized?

HISD Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations employees will follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines regarding the cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection of district facilities. The district will provide enough hand soap, paper towels, tissues, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant to accommodate frequent cleaning of high-touch areas.

### Will a student lose his/her magnet school placement if they choose virtual instruction?

No. A student will not lose their magnet school placement.

### How do parents obtain technology for their child(ren) during virtual learning?

Parents should contact their campus for technology needed for virtual learning.

### Will students be provided meals at school?

Nutrition Services will provide individually wrapped student meals in the classroom to reduce this risk of potential exposure between larger groups of students. All competitive food sales – including food sold by schools, parent groups, booster clubs, and outside vendors – will be prohibited until normal operations resume. Curbside pickup also will be available for students who opt to continue virtual learning after in-person learning resumes. Curbside meals are available for any student who is between the ages of 1 and 18 and not engaged in in-person learning. Children must either be present in the car for pickup or families must bring a birth certificate or proof of enrollment – student ID, report card, etc. – in any school district for each child needing meals.

Employees will continue to accommodate student health, medical, and special dietary needs, as well as allergy concerns. Department employees will follow public health hygiene recommendations and enhance custodial cleaning and surface disinfection.

### What will extracurricular and fine arts activities look like in the fall?

Extracurricular activities will follow the same safety practices employed on school campuses during the school day. School-based extracurricular activities will resume when in-person instruction begins. Face coverings must be made available to and worn by students and teachers during all extracurricular activities. Student sporting events are tentatively scheduled for the fall, but HISD Athletics will adjust plans as needed if COVID-19 conditions change. Fine Arts will reduce class sizes and maintain guidelines for physical distancing. Students will not be allowed to share personal belongings, equipment or other items, including computers and uniforms. Dance students must have their own water bottle, hand sanitizer, mask, dance shoes, and/or dance bag.

### Will any field trips take place in the fall?

Field trips for all grade levels will not be held until the district receives guidance that it has been deemed safe for students to visit non-HISD facilities.

### How will grading take place?

Students enrolled in remote instruction follow the same grading guidelines as in-person instruction. Teachers receive support and guidance on effective grading practices to ensure that grading guidelines are followed in both instructional models. Teachers will post grades on a weekly basis.

Courses taken as Dual Credit or Dual Enrollment will be subject to the grading policies of the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) issuing the college credit.

Additional information on grades:

- Grades will be taken during each grading cycle of the 2020-2021 school year.
- All cycle grades will be used in the calculation of the final average for any class.
- Final exams will be administered for all high school credit courses.
- Teachers will be recording grades, which will be available for parents and students to access through the HISD Connect Parent Portal (log-in information will be provided by campuses).

### How will attendance be taken?

Students who are engaged in daily learning as defined below will be considered “present” and will not be marked absent. Participation in the HUB, the HISD Learning Management System and completion of independent reading and work assignments.

Interaction with teacher via Microsoft Teams as part of live or small group instruction, and/or submission of assignment(s) via the HUB. When unable to submit via the HUB, students can submit assignments via emails, photos, phone conferences or other forms of documentation.

Students who have not met at least one of the three requirements above by the following times will be marked absent:

- Elementary Schools - 2:30 p.m.
- Middle & K-8 Schools – 3:30 p.m.
- High Schools – 3:30 p.m.

Absences can be resolved if the student engages in daily learning assigned by their teachers by 11:59 p.m. that same day. Parents and students will receive absence notifications via School Messenger after 6 p.m. each day and will be reminded of the opportunity to resolve that day’s absence. If a student is engaged in remote learning and completes the entire week’s worth of learning activities on Monday and does not log in for the remainder of the week, he/she will be marked “present” on Monday only and counted “absent” for Tuesday-Friday. State law and HISD policy still require students to attend at least 90% of their classes to receive credit and be promoted. Remote attendance will count in the same manner as on-campus (face-to-face) attendance in satisfying this requirement.

### When can I make my initial selection for either face-to-face or virtual learning for my child?

Parents will have from Monday, September 21, through Friday, September 25, to make their selection through the HISD Connect Parent Portal.

### How do I make my initial selection for face-to-face or virtual learning?

Parents will make their selection through the HISD Connect Parent Portal “Forms” section. Parents will be able log in and select in-person or virtual learning for the school year. Selection can be made through HISD’s Connect Parent Portal. You can find the full instructions at [HoustonISD.org/LearningOption](https://HoustonISD.org/LearningOption). This process will ensure campuses can begin planning for physical space, staffing, and scheduling. Once a selection is made, the choice is valid for the entire school year.

### Can I change my initial selection?

Yes, there will be opportunities to change a selection throughout the year, if needed.

Once a selection is submitted for a student to be taught in-person or virtually, that selection is final for the current six-week grading period and cannot be updated until the selection window is opened again.

### How do I access the Parent Portal?

The Parent Portal can be accessed at [hisdconnect.houstonisd.org/public](https://hisdconnect.houstonisd.org/public). Parents who have not yet signed up to access the Parent Portal should utilize the access code provided by their home campus to create their accounts online at [hisdconnect.houstonisd.org/public](https://hisdconnect.houstonisd.org/public). Parents who have not yet received their access code or do not have access to technology should contact their child's campus directly to indicate their choice.

### What happens if I do not make a selection for either face-to-face or virtual instruction in the Parent Portal?

Students for which a selection has not been made by the deadline will automatically be selected for face-to-face learning.

### What will happen if there is not enough space on my child's campus to accommodate in-person learning?

For campuses where the number of face-to-face selections is more than can be accommodated to ensure physical distancing guidelines, there may be a phase-in process.

### What will the schedule be for students who choose the face-to-face learning option?

Students will follow their usual campus schedules, including all courses selected and/or assigned, as well as extracurricular activities. School hours are as follows:

- **Elementary:** 7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- **K-8 and Middle School:** 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- **High School:** 8:30 a.m. – 4:10 p.m.

### Will my child be able to keep the same teacher if we select face-to-face instruction?

The goal is for students to keep the same teacher they had during virtual learning. However, it will vary from campus to campus based on the number of students who select the face-to-face option.

### Will my child be required to wear a mask while at school?

Yes. All students, staff, and visitors are required to wear masks or facial coverings at an HISD campus or facility.

### What will my child's classroom look like for face-to-face instruction?

Classrooms will be reconfigured to ensure 6 feet of space between desks whenever possible. Reduced space would only be implemented as needed, with the goal continuing to be to place as much space as possible between desks.

### How will my child be provided meals for face-to-face and virtual learning?

Nutrition Services will provide breakfast and lunch in classrooms for students engaged in in-person learning. Curbside meals will be available for students enrolled in virtual learning. Employees will continue to accommodate student health, medical, and special dietary needs, as well as allergy concerns.

### What will virtual instruction look like once face-to-face instruction begins?

Certified teachers will continue to provide instruction to students virtually. Students can interact with their teachers during short live lessons and ask questions and receive feedback from teachers during virtual office hours. During virtual instruction, students will maintain a similar schedule as they would during face-to-face instruction.

### Is my child eligible for transportation to school?

Once in-person instruction begins, transportation will be provided to special education, homeless, elementary and specialty school students. Service may also be provided to some students in middle school or who live along high-risk routes if resources are available.

### How will school buses accommodate physical distancing look and what other safety measures will be in place?

Transportation Services will enhance cleaning protocols and implement physical distancing for all buses. Students are required to wear masks while riding the bus.

Transportation Services also will implement contingency plans for responding to student bus riders and bus drivers who develop a presumed or confirmed case.

Bus capacity will be limited to 26 students, with one person per seat required to sit by the window. Students must wear masks, and drivers must wear masks, shields, and gloves. Upon boarding, students must sanitize their hands and scan their bus badge. Seats must be filled from the back to front and emptied from front to back to minimize contact. Four-to-six bus windows will be down whenever possible for air circulation. Routes will be modified through the creation of additional or shorter routes to accommodate physical distancing protocols.

### Can my child still participate in University Interscholastic League Athletics and Activities if they decide to participate in virtual instruction?

Yes.

### If my child or staff member on campus tests positive for COVID-19, will the building be shut down?

If COVID-19 cases are identified, campuses will be closed/sanitized. Notifications will be provided to impacted parents and students who have possibly been exposed. Instruction will shift to virtual learning if the school closes.

### Will HISD notify me if my child is been exposed to COVID-19?

Affected students and families will be notified by their campuses if they have been exposed to COVID-19. HISD will follow all Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines and has established the information that will be shared with staff, students, and families regarding a positive COVID-19 case on campus.

# RECONNECT SAFELY RETURN STRONG

## — PARENT GUIDE —



### FIRST DAY OF FACE-TO-FACE INSTRUCTION: OCTOBER 19

#### HOW TO MAKE A SELECTION FOR VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION?

- Parents will have from **Monday, September 21 through Friday, September 25** to make their selection.
- Selection can be made through **HISD's Connect Parent Portal**. Find full instructions at [HoustonISD.org/LearningOption](https://HoustonISD.org/LearningOption)
- Parents who have not yet signed up to access the Parent Portal should utilize the access code provided by their home campus to create their accounts online.
- Once a selection is submitted, the **selection is final for the current six-week period** and cannot be updated until the selection window is opened again.
- Students for which a selection has not been made by the deadline **automatically will be selected for in-person learning** for planning purposes.

#### WHAT WILL ON-CAMPUS INSTRUCTION LOOK LIKE IN HISD?

- Certified teacher will provide **in-person instruction for students**.
- **Physical distancing will be practiced** in the classroom, hallways, common areas and throughout the building inside and out.
- **Daily deep cleaning** will occur throughout the campus with an emphasis on high touch surfaces.
- **Hand sanitizing stations and plexiglass** have been installed at campuses.
- Breakfast and lunch will be served in the classroom in elementary schools.
- **Temperature checks will be conducted daily** for everyone on campus (faculty, staff, and students).
- **Safety protocols are in place** and signage is placed throughout the campus.
- If Covid-19 cases are identified, **campuses will be closed/sanitized**. Notifications will be provided to impacted parents and students if possibly exposed. Instruction will shift to virtual learning if the school closes.
- Students, staff, and anyone on campus will be required to **wear masks at all times which will be provided daily**.
- Students will follow their daily schedule, including all courses selected and/or assigned, as well as extracurricular activities, if applicable.
- Hours for in-person learning are as follows:  
**Elementary:** 7:30 A.M.–3 P.M. | **K-8 & Middle Schools:** 8:30 A.M.–4 P.M. | **High Schools:** 8:30 A.M.–4:10 P.M.
- **Transportation** will be provided to special education, homeless, elementary and specialty school students. Service may also be provided to some students in middle school or who live along high-risk routes if resources are available.
- The number of students participating in face-to-face instruction will determine the type of schedule a campus will follow, such as a hybrid or rotating schedule.

#### WHAT WILL VIRTUAL LEARNING LOOK LIKE IN HISD?

- Certified teachers will continue to provide instruction to **students virtually**.
- Students can interact with their teachers during **short live lessons** and ask questions/receive feedback from teachers during virtual office hours.
- During virtual instruction, **students will maintain a similar schedule** as they would during face-to-face instruction.

# RECONNECT SAFELY RETURN STRONG

REOPENING PLAN FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR



## PARENT GUIDE

As HISD navigates the COVID-19 health crisis, the district will utilize a model of remote and face-to-face instruction for the fall. Here is a timeline of key dates and important information:



**SEPTEMBER 8:** First day of school (Virtual only)

**OCTOBER 19:** Face-to-face instruction begins subject to change based on COVID-19 conditions across the city of Houston and recommendations from local, state, and federal health officials.\*



**SEPTEMBER 8 - JANUARY 29:** First semester of remote learning for students/parents who choose online-only instruction.

“  
**WHAT IF I WANT  
TO KEEP MY CHILD  
HOME LONGER?**”

Families who select virtual learning for the fall semester or the entire academic year, must attend a virtual class

outlining expectations and sign an agreement committing to remote learning.

\*Parents will have the option to choose remote instruction for the fall semester (through January 29) or entire school year (through June 11).



During remote learning, students will use the **HISD @ H.O.M.E.** learning platform to access classes and resources

**HoustonISD.org/Home**



### SAFETY FIRST

For the in-person classroom phase:

- **All HISD students and employees required** to undergo **temperature screenings** before entering an HISD building
- **Appropriate face coverings** and **routine handwashing** required, as well as adherence to **social distancing** protocols
- **Mandatory gloves** for nurses, custodial staff, food service workers, and special education staff

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The virtual model of instruction will enable HISD to monitor conditions across the city and make adjustments as necessary to ensure the health and safety of all students.

For more information please visit [HoustonISD.org/Reopening](https://HoustonISD.org/Reopening)

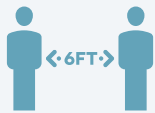
# HISD COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

## REOPENING FACT SHEET

### REMEMBER TO



**WEAR A  
FACE MASK**



**PRACTICE  
PHYSICAL DISTANCING**



**WASH HANDS  
REGULARLY**



**STAY HOME IF YOU  
ARE FEELING ILL**

### EMPLOYEES

- Review educational information and complete online training
- Follow public health guidelines
- Talk to supervisor for health issues and workplace concerns
- Stay home when sick
- Wear masks
- Adhere to physical distancing
- Follow directional signage
- Undergo daily screening and temperature check
- Wash hands regularly
- Hold meetings virtually
- Don't hold face-to-face meetings unless absolutely required

### STUDENTS

- Stay home when sick
- Wear masks during school and extracurricular activities
- Adhere to physical distancing
- Follow teacher instructions
- Undergo daily screening and temperature check
- Don't share classroom supplies or books

### SCHOOLS

- Reconfigure classrooms to ensure 6 feet of space between desks whenever possible
- Minimize movement and contacts by keeping class in designated area
- Implement no-contact student pick-up and drop-off with extended and staggered times
- Don't allow parents or visitors on campus unless absolutely necessary

### SCHOOL BUSES

- Adhere to physical distancing
- Stay in seat and sit by the window
- Wear masks
- Use hand sanitizer
- Follow bus driver instructions
- Don't share seats

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Receive updates and new information at  
**HoustonISD.org/Reopening** and  
**HoustonISD.org/HealthAlerts**

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