

Tolar Independent School District 2021-2022



Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

This document is subject to change based on current circumstances, updated 8/23/21

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Introduction and District Priorities

As a school district, Tolar ISD looks forward to welcoming students back to school on August 17, 2021. Despite the challenges with COVID-19, our district will continue to provide excellent education to our students, with an in-person learning environment.

While Tolar ISD is planning for face-to-face instruction for the 2021-22 school year, we will continue to monitor updates put forth by the CDC. All procedures are contingent upon regulations and other directives from Governor Abbott, the Texas Education Agency, and state and local officials.

The situation with COVID-19 is continuously changing, as are the protocols and measures needed to keep students and staff safe. Plans will remain flexible to accommodate potential changes and these guidelines may be modified as needed. As adjustments may be necessary throughout the coming school year, it will be our priority to keep the community informed of those changes and updates. The Tolar ISD website will provide you with the most up-to-date information.

Our planning process has continuously evolved around new information and guidance that we receive from the state. We have planned with the following key priorities and focus areas in mind:

KEY PRIORITIES AND FOCUS AREAS



- ▶ Public Health and Safety
- ▶ Instructional Continuity
- ▶ Maintaining Workforce
- ▶ Equity
- ▶ Innovation
- ▶ Communication



Fall 2021: Instructional Information for Families

This fall, Tolar ISD will be implementing instructional practices to provide consistency across learning environments and ensure the safety of students and staff.

Tolar ISD is committed to ensuring that students have an equitable experience and access to high quality instruction:

- ▶ Students will interact with instruction in a face-to-face learning environment, making it necessary for teacher teams to plan instruction that is content-consistent and ensures equitable learning opportunities for all students.
- ▶ Learning experiences are designed to meet the needs of the learner where they are.
- ▶ Students will engage in high quality learning experiences aligned to Tolar ISD curriculum and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.



FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING

Students and teachers will attend class in-person, five days a week, with additional safety measures in alignment with state and federal guidelines and recommendations.

- ▶ In this setting, teachers will provide face-to-face instruction, learning resources and support utilizing Google Classroom.
 - ▶ Teachers will plan instruction that is quickly and easily transferable from face-to-face to remote in the event of a temporary school closure due to COVID-19 spread.
 - ▶ District-directed and campus-designed safety procedures will be implemented.
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Learning & Teaching Expectations

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| Student | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Attend classes according to the school schedule and give your best efforts in your school assignments.▶ Participate in class activities as instructed by teachers.▶ Be organized in your work and in getting projects completed.▶ Ask questions and communicate with your teacher.▶ Be aware of what you should be learning each day.▶ Become familiar with the structure of Google Classroom and how your teacher organizes information.▶ Turn in assignments on time. |
| Parent | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Access Parent Portal (grades 3-12) to view student grades.▶ For elementary students (PK-5), parents are expected to manage their email account.▶ Check in with student(s) to monitor completion of homework and assignments.▶ Discuss your child's favorite part of their day and what they learned in school.▶ Facilitate academic support and encouragement as a learning partner to motivate and guide your child throughout the school year in your role as a learning coach.▶ Maintain communication with your child's teacher by phone, email and/or meetings to create a learning partnership.▶ Monitor and ask for evidence that your child is on track with assignments and coursework. |
| Teacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Provide instruction and facilitate learning throughout the day.▶ Manage online and offline resources to provide consistency and routines for students.▶ Provide clear learning goals for students.▶ Check student assignments in a timely manner and give feedback in verbal or written form to provide next steps or necessary academic intervention/extension.▶ Post grades in a timely manner according to district grading guidelines. |

Support and Intervention

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| Student | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Attend intervention/tutorial sessions as established by your teacher or school. |
| Parent | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Allow your child to attend intervention/tutorial sessions as needed.▶ Help your child own their learning. Provide support and encouragement and expect your children to do their part. |
| Teacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Provide intervention or tutorial sessions as needed.▶ Follow student IEPs / 504 accommodations.▶ Use data to pinpoint students' specific needs for enrichment and intervention.▶ Monitor student progress with fidelity according to recommendations.▶ Provide and communicate conference periods for student/parent support.▶ Attend and participate in professional learning. |



Return to School Protocols

Following are the return to onsite work protocols for Tolar ISD campuses and administration buildings. Since this is an ever-changing situation, the district may need to change protocols at any time to address specific needs and circumstances in order to protect the health and safety of students, employees and the community. Please note, health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. As a result, Tolar ISD will continue to consult available guidance through governmental agencies and other information deemed relevant to monitor the situation. The district will comply with applicable federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety standards and accessibility standards to address individual needs.

It is important to remember the virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. Even if an infected person shows no symptoms or is only mildly ill, the people they spread it to may become seriously or fatally ill, especially for persons 65 years of age or older with pre-existing health conditions placing them at higher risk. Because of the hidden nature of this threat, Tolar ISD expects all employees, students and families to rigorously follow these practices.

Health and safety protocols in Tolar ISD for the 2021-2022 school year will include the option for students, staff, and volunteers to wear masks or face coverings. However, face coverings will not be required in TISD facilities or on school buses. Campus administration will also continue to make efforts to minimize large indoor gatherings such as whole school assemblies and pep rallies.

Preparation for the Opening of School

Tolar ISD will ensure all staff, resources and supplies are prepared for opening school, including but not limited to assigning sufficient staff to carry out re-opening, ensuring proper training and stocking inventory of necessary supplies, such as personal protective equipment (PPE).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance, recommendations and resources to assist with plans and protocols for health and safety. Tolar ISD will implement health and safety plans that include:

- ▶ Ensuring adequate supply inventory (e.g., PPE, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- ▶ Cleaning with products approved by governing authorities and per guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency
- ▶ Ensuring compliance with CDC, the Texas Education Agency and other state and local policies
- ▶ Providing communication of procedures and expectations upon entering facilities and throughout buildings

Protocols for Screening and Isolation

General

All students and staff will self screen for COVID-19 symptoms daily.

Definition of Close Contact

Someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes in one day). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date), until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

Exception:

In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinically compatible illness](#)) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) [correctly and consistently](#) wore well-fitting [masks](#) the entire time.

This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

Public Health Recommendations:

Except in certain circumstances, people who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 should quarantine. However, the following people with recent exposure may NOT need to quarantine:

- People who have been fully vaccinated
- People who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last three months

Additional Information:

A number of factors can influence a person's risk of exposure to COVID-19, including the [type, proximity, and duration of their exposure](#), environmental factors (such as [crowding](#) and ventilation), [vaccination status](#), [prior COVID-19 infection](#), and [mask use](#).

[Correct](#) and consistent [mask use](#) is a critical step that people can take to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. However, the [type of masks used](#) and whether they are used consistently and correctly varies throughout the general population. Except in K-12 indoor classroom settings as described above, mask use is not considered when defining a close contact during case investigation and contact tracing, regardless of whether the person diagnosed with COVID-19 or the person exposed to SARS-CoV-2 was wearing a mask. (Note: Exposure risk in the healthcare setting is determined separately and outlined in CDC [guidance](#)).

- Students/employees who test positive for COVID-19 or show symptoms will still be required to quarantine per local guidelines.
- Quarantine requirements based on possible exposure is the responsibility of the parents.

From there, it will be the responsibility of parents to monitor and assess their child for symptoms of COVID-19.

Screening Protocols

- ▶ Staff will self-screen daily prior to entering a Tolar ISD building, and the district may require further screening of employees at any time based on current state and federal guidelines.
- ▶ A parent or guardian will screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending them to school. Parents will need to take their child's temperature daily. Additional screening may be conducted during the school day.
- ▶ **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.**
- ▶ Staff and students should not enter a campus or district building if any of the following apply. If the individual:
 - ▷ is sick with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following question:
Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

- ▶ Has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or has been in close contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19. These individuals must follow all isolation and quarantine guidelines from the local health authority or their physician.
- ▶ Has a household member who is awaiting COVID-19 test results, or who is awaiting their own test results.

Teachers will monitor students and refer them to the nurse if symptoms are present.

Isolation Protocols

- ▶ For students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling feverish, the school nurse will provide a clinical assessment to determine if and when a student needs to be sent home.
- ▶ Students who are ill will be separated from their peers and should be picked up within 30 minutes and no later than 1 hour from the time the campus has contacted the parent/guardian.
- ▶ The classroom will be disinfected.
- ▶ 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).
- ▶ 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 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). Here is the link to the Texas Public Schools COVID-19 Data:
<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/schools/texas-education-agency/>
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ 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.

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.

Staff Who Have COVID-19 or Who are Close Contacts

- ▶ Similar to students, school systems must exclude staff from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19. Staff may return when the re-entry conditions have been met, as described in the DSHS rule used for students
- ▶ For staff who are not fully vaccinated who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, it is recommended that the staff remain off campus during the stay-at-home period.
- ▶ For staff who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, if these staff continue to work on campus, rapid testing must be performed at the start of the day, at least once every other day until the end of day 10.

Individuals Confirmed with COVID-19:

A school administrator shall exclude from attendance any child having or suspected of having COVID-19. Exclusion shall continue until the readmission criteria for the conditions are met. The readmission criteria for COVID-19 is as follows:

- If symptomatic, exclude until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free*, and other symptoms have improved. Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 10 days after the day they were tested.

AND

- Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius) or higher.

In addition to the criteria and process described above, a student who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 must receive clearance from a physician prior to returning to participation in UIL marching band or athletic activities.

Protocols for Campus Visitors

Visitor Screening/PPE Requirements

- ▶ All visitors will self screening before entering any Tolar ISD facility.
 - ▶ If visitors have COVID-19 symptoms, or are lab confirmed with COVID-19, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry.
 - ▶ Any Individuals permitted to proceed beyond the reception area must follow all safety and campus protocols.
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Protocols for Disinfecting and Hand Sanitizing

Frequent disinfection and hand sanitization will ensure health and wellness of students and staff.

Hand Washing/Sanitizing Expectations

- ▶ Hand sanitizer will be available at the main entry to the campus, in classrooms, in the cafeteria and in common areas throughout the campus.
- ▶ Staff and students will be expected to regularly wash or sanitize their hands.

Disinfecting Expectations

- ▶ Staff will have access to disinfectant solutions to sanitize high-touch and working surfaces and shared objects frequently.
 - ▶ Staff will limit the use of shared supplies when possible.
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Protocols for Campus Cleaning and Disinfecting

Frequent cleaning and disinfection will support a healthy learning and work environment for students and staff.

Daily Campus Cleaning

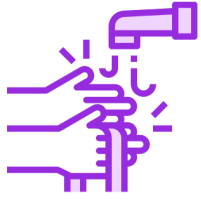
- ▶ Each classroom and restroom will be cleaned and disinfected.
- ▶ All high-touch areas will be disinfected throughout the day.
- ▶ Cafeterias will be disinfected between lunch periods.
- ▶ Staff and students will have access to disinfecting items to sanitize working surfaces, shared objects, and high-touch areas after use and during breaks in instruction.

Restrooms

- ▶ Staff should supervise and limit the number of students that enter the bathroom at one time to comply with health agency recommendations and social distancing.
- ▶ Increased disinfecting will occur throughout the school day. Staff and students must wash hands with soap and water prior to exiting the bathroom. Proper handwashing techniques will be taught to all students and consistently reinforced.

Protocols for Positive COVID-19 Cases on Campus

- ▶ If a classroom or facility is closed due to COVID-19 spread the area will be disinfected prior to re-entry.
 - ▶ Custodial staff will disinfect classrooms, restrooms, athletics, fine arts areas and all additional areas throughout the school facility.
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Campus Health & Safety Protocols

Training

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. To include the practice of covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, to cover cough or sneeze with their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.

| Safety Training for Protocols & Procedures | |
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| Student | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Students will participate in training specific to newly adopted health and safety protocols. ▶ All students will be trained on information about COVID-19 screening, identification of symptoms, prevention of spread, and sanitation of work areas. ▶ If a student is experiencing symptoms they need to immediately notify a teacher. |
| Parent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Parents are asked to talk to their students about COVID-19 symptoms and prevention strategies. |
| Teacher/Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teachers attend training and develop classroom procedures consistent with TEA, District and CDC guidance. ▶ All staff will be trained on COVID screening, identification of symptoms, prevention of spread, and sanitation of work areas. ▶ All staff will monitor students that exhibit symptoms and will be required to notify the nurse if a student is showing any symptoms. |

School Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival: When possible, separate entrances will be utilized for car riders, bus riders, and walkers. All staff will be utilized for duty to maintain a line of sight in hallways and distancing of hallway cohorts. Students will go straight to the designated areas set by each campus. Parents will not be allowed to walk students to classrooms.

Dismissal: Campus will designate staggered dismissal groups. Staggering the groups of walkers, car riders, bus riders or grade level will help manage student movement in the building and decrease the risk of potential crowding outside at dismissal time. Separate exits will be utilized for car riders, bus riders, and walkers. Parents picking up students during the day will call ahead.

General Building Arrival

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| Student | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. ▶ Campuses must plan for entry, exit, and transition procedures that reduce large group gatherings (of students and/or adults) in close proximity. ▶ Students will be assigned to report to a specific area and will be expected to adhere to schedules for morning arrival. ▶ Students are expected to stay seated until they are dismissed by a staff member. |
| Parent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Parents are encouraged to talk with their child about the health benefits of social distancing at school, as well as the health benefits of washing their hands, and/or using hand sanitizer. ▶ Parents are expected to screen their child at home prior to coming to school. |
| Teacher/Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Campus staff is required to self-screen prior to entering the building. ▶ Staff members will be assigned to supervise students who report to multiple areas for morning arrival. |

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students using school bus transportation services will follow revised protocols. Starting at the time when students arrive at their designated bus stop and board the school bus, the new safety and sanitizing protocols will need to be followed.

Transportation COVID-19 Protocol: Parent Information

The Tolar ISD Transportation Department offers the following guidance to parents and caregivers regarding school bus transportation for daily bus routes as well as field trips. Although the district is implementing the safety protocols and disinfecting efforts described below, families are encouraged to drop students off, carpool or walk with their student to school to reduce possible exposure on buses.

General Education/Special Needs/Shuttle Loading and Unloading Procedures

Bus Stop Expectations

- ▶ Students should practice social distancing, whenever possible (if there is adequate space and it is safe to do so) while waiting for and approaching the school bus.
- ▶ Students should NOT share drinks or personal devices.

Morning Boarding Bus Procedures

- ▶ Students should practice social distancing as they approach and board the bus.
- ▶ Use hand sanitizer (provided near the bus stairwell).
- ▶ Bus in motion rules: Standard Tolar ISD bus rules apply.
- ▶ Students should NOT share drinks or personal devices.

Unloading at Campus

- ▶ Students should practice social distancing and follow campus guidelines.

Afternoon Campus Boarding Bus Procedures

- ▶ Students should practice social distancing as they approach and board the bus.
- ▶ Use hand sanitizer (provided near stairwells).
- ▶ Bus in motion rules: Standard Tolar ISD bus rules apply.
- ▶ Students should NOT share food, drinks or personal devices.

Unloading at Bus Stop

- ▶ Students should practice Social Distancing and avoid gathering in groups of 10 or more.
- ▶ Students should NOT share drinks or personal devices.

Disinfecting Protocol

Between each AM & PM Campus drop-off

- ▶ School bus drivers, bus assistants and staff will be spraying and wiping down seats and high-touch items with disinfecting spray.
 - ▶ Bus seating areas will be disinfected after each bus route, particularly high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs and stairway handrail.
 - ▶ When possible, bus windows will be open to allow outside air to circulate in the bus.
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Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

All Tolar ISD Professional School Counselors are required to participate in training to address the possible SEL (Social-Emotional Learning)/Mental Health impacts of this pandemic and how they may affect children. This will include topics concerning:

- Anxiety
- ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Trauma (Individualized and Shared)
- Grief Loss/Survivors' Guilt
- Compassion Fatigue
- Trust Issues
- Empathy
- Resiliency

TISD partners with Paluxy River Children's Advocacy Center for Counseling services and Prevention Education.

Each campus, prior to students returning, will have the opportunity to support their staff as they prepare to engage with students and families. This can be facilitated by campus counselors or other appropriate principals' designee(s). This will include some prescriptive "talking points" that all campuses will share with students to help ensure consistency, accuracy, transparency, and overall effectiveness.

Teachers must be intentional about building relationships immediately and consistently as they engage with their students. Daily practices such as using students' names and posting their names in their classrooms, doing a quick five-minute SEL lesson or check in, and creating a "Brain Break" area in the classroom for students when they need to take a moment to regroup will all work to help build a sense of belonging and decrease anxiety. SEL lessons can be readily available in the "Brain Break" areas for students to access.

Campus counselors and other related campus-level support personnel (Campus Nurse, etc.) are intentional in checking on the mental health and emotional status of students via individual and group support and resources.