



SANTO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. BOX 67
SANTO, TEXAS 76472

ADMINISTRATION
940-769-2835
FAX
940-769-3116

July 23, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Santo ISD is committed to a safe return of students for the 2020-2021 school year. The school district knows many parents are waiting for guidance regarding plans and learning options before deciding if your child will be attending face-to-face classes or opting for remote learning.

Last week, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Governor Abbott again released updated guidance for school districts. While this is a very fluid situation and continually changing, we would like to share general plans as we know today. SISD will be offering two learning options for your student—face-to-face or remote instruction.

Two weeks prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, by August 7, parents will be asked to login and commit to face-to-face or remote instruction per TEA guidelines. The district will set up a site for you to record your decision. There will be a process in place for you to change how each student receives instruction during an initial 4-week transition period and then at the end of each six weeks reporting period.

Option A: Face-to-Face Instruction

Principals and staff are working to create a safe, in-person learning environment that is as similar to the previous school years as possible. To ensure the safety of all students and staff, the measures described below will be in place to help mitigate the spread of the COVID virus:

Staff

- Will be trained in COVID virus mitigation

Masks **or** Face Shields

- Required for all students and staff
- The school district will provide face shields for all students and will make age-appropriate adjustments as needed. A parent may request consideration to provide a face covering for their student
- Exceptions may apply during athletics, recess or some extra-curricular activities
- Masks **or** face shields may enable students who have been near a confirmed case of COVID-19 to stay in school per TEA guidelines

Health Screening

- Parents will be responsible for screening all students for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to dropping them off at school

Recess

- Recess will be offered for appropriate grade levels with organized games/play that assist in maintaining social distancing

Lunch

- Students will eat in the cafeteria/snack bar when adequate social distancing is possible
- Masks **or** face shields will not be required while eating
- All meals will be served in closed, to-go containers
- Disposable products will be used when possible to reduce risk associated with the virus

Health and Hygiene practice

- Scheduled hand washing will be encouraged
- Students will have frequent access to school-provided hand sanitizer
- Additional cleaning and sanitizing of facilities will be provided by SISD custodial staff
- Students will take part in disinfecting individual work areas

Social Distancing

- Social distancing will be practiced in classrooms and common areas to the extent possible

Visitors

- Restricted to only those essential to school operations
- Volunteers are important to SISD and will be screened on an as-needed basis

Transportation

- Transportation for all students will continue to be available
- Parents who are able to transport their students will be encouraged to do so to reduce bus occupancy
- Hand sanitizer will be used upon entry to the bus
- Social distancing will be encouraged to the maximum extent possible
- Buses will be disinfected daily
- Masks **or** face shields will be required for all students and staff on buses

Response to Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

- District guidelines will be in place to address lab-confirmed positive cases
- The Texas Education Agency, working with the Governor's Task Force, has established protocols in responding to a positive COVID case
- Protocols for cleaning, disinfecting, and adjusting facilities will be established with the goal of minimizing interruptions
- Parents and local health officials will be notified of any confirmed COVID-19 cases that potentially exposed your child
- Students who must stay home due to having COVID-19 or direct exposure will be able to switch to remote instruction

Option B: Remote Instruction

Remote instruction for the fall will be considerably different than last spring. TEA guidelines for the new year demand students are in attendance and progress measures are taken daily. A home internet connection that can support 2-way communication will be necessary, along with a learning device (tablet, laptop, computer).

- Teachers will evaluate progress each day
- Attendance will be taken daily

- The state 90% compulsory attendance rule will be in effect
- The district grading guidelines are the same as face-to-face
- Proctored exams may be required in person with enhanced social distancing or online

A parent may choose to switch a student from remote instruction to face-to-face instruction at the end of a six weeks reporting period.

UIL and Extracurricular Activities

- Students participating in remote instruction will be not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities (band, athletic, etc.)
- Students participating in remote instruction will be not allowed to participate in after-school activities or games
- Some elective classes may only be offered in person; a list of remote electives will be available upon request

Prior to August 7th, two weeks before the start of school, each parent will need to confirm the learning option you choose for your child when school begins on August 20th. Additional information about remote instruction will be posted next week. The Texas Education Agency is requiring all schools to develop remote instruction procedures that mirror face-to-face instruction. Remote learning will be considerably more rigorous than last spring. There will be no pass/fail option or students who are not engaged on a daily basis. Those students will simply fail the six weeks period and be in danger of losing credit for the semester.

Thank you for your continued support as we work our way through this uncertain time together. Santo ISD staff is excited to welcome students back to campus after 5 months and the district has received UIL information yesterday that athletics and band are a go for the new school year. Staff is working really hard to design a safe return for students in an environment that is as close to normal as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue background behind the text.

Greg Gilbert
Santo ISD Superintendent