



EL PASO INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear EPISD Community,

The EPISD Team has worked all summer developing plans and best practices to safely reopen our schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to reassure you have that we studied all aspects of the reopening process and each guideline or directive issued by state and local governments. We appreciate your patience as we work around the clock to quickly adjust to the ever-changing directives EPISD.

One thing is certain: EPISD has developed a reopening plan that takes the safety and health of students and employees as the top guiding principle.

CALENDAR

The District's instructional Calendar was revised and approved by the Board on June 14.

In order to comply with Texas Education Agency guidance on remote instruction and the City of El Paso's health order regarding in-person instruction, all EPISD students will begin the school year virtually on Aug. 17. The city order currently will allow school buildings to open on Sept. 8.

However, given the continued rise in COVID-19 cases, we are asking the Board to approve our request for a Texas Education Agency waiver that would allow us to continue virtual instruction through Oct. 9. After much consultation with health authorities, our teacher associations, staff and parents, we believe this is the best course of action at this time.

Other important changes from the previously approved calendar include: teachers will report to work on Aug. 10 and their last day on duty is June 16; the shortening of the October intersession to one week, Oct. 12-16; last day of instruction to June 15.

To learn more about the city order, please click here:

<https://www.episd.org/cms/lib/TX02201707/Centricity/Domain/6095/070920.PRESS.CITYORDER.pdf>

MORE ROBUST, ENGAGING EPISD@HOME

Parents and students can expect a much more engaging experience this fall through our virtual platform, EPISD@Home. Student schedules will be more reflective of a typical school day. Lessons are being designed to address all subject areas and will include more "face time" with teachers.

Here is a sample schedule for an elementary student:



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Virtual: A Day in the Life *Elementary School*

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Sample Student Schedule

Elementary School Virtual Schedule	
Time	Activity
8:15 - 8:30 AM	Teacher Check In & SEL Connection with whole class
8:30 - 10 AM	English Language Arts/Reading with my Teacher, Workstations, & Independent Practice
10 - 10:15 AM	Break
10:15 - 11 AM	Social Studies with my Teacher & Independent Practice
11 - 11:30 AM	Lunch
11:30 - 1 PM	Math with my Teacher, Workstations, & Independent Practice
1 - 1:45 PM	PE with my Coach & Independent Practice
1:45 - 2:30 PM	Science with my Teacher & Independent Practice
2:30 - 2:40 PM	Break
2:40 - 3:25 PM	Enrichment with my Teacher, Workstations, & Independent Practice
3:25 PM	End of the school day

Sample schedules for middle and high school are posted at episd.org/reopeningplan

LEARNING OPTIONS





Once it is safe to reopen campuses, students and their parents will choose from three learning options:

- Full virtual learning from home using the EPISD@Home learning platform;
- Staggered schedule learning that combines in-person instruction twice a week with virtual learning from home the other three days of the week; and
- Full in-person learning five days a week. This option is available only to children in certain programs including English language learners, kinder through second grade and students with disabilities better served by in-person instruction.

Learn more about our Reopening Plan here: <https://www.episd.org/reopeningplan>.

We have heard from parents on both sides of the reopening debate: those who want to send their children back to school and those who are not quite ready. Our challenge as we continue to work through our reopening plan is to meet the needs of all families. Everyone at EPISD is committed to meet this challenge.

One thing is certain as we head into the 2020-21 school year: We are committed to intensifying our efforts to provide high-quality instruction in spite of the challenges posed to our educators by the continued spread of COVID-19. We will all begin learning virtually through at least Sept. 7, and our academics team is developing a more robust and innovative virtual online learning portal that meets the needs of all students in the District.

We also are strengthening our intervention programs for students who need academic support given the extraordinary circumstances that forced us to close campuses last spring and are now impacting the start of the school year this fall. If your child needs help meeting his or her academic goals, our team is here.

SAFETY MEASURES

EPISD will follow local and state health guidelines as it reopens campuses and offices, including:

- **HEALTH**
 - Daily temperature checks for all district students and employees.
 - Self-screening and reporting of COVID-19-related symptoms for all district employees, students and visitors.
- **HYGIENE**
 - Hand hygiene promotion: EPISD will make hand sanitizer available.
 - Additional cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms and common areas by campus custodial staff.
 - Frequent cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting of school buses and other District vehicles.
- **PPE**



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- Face masks will be required for district employees and students at all times.
- Desk guards/shields will be provided for lower grades, understanding that younger children might have a harder time keeping the mask on for extended periods.
- SOCIAL DISTANCING
 - Seating will be set up in classrooms using social-distancing guidelines, and classroom sizes will be limited to accommodate decreased capacity.
 - Schools will adjust schedules and develop strategies to minimize hallway traffic and discourage student gatherings on campus.
 - P.E. will be conducted outside, as much as possible.
 - Meals will be served in the classroom for elementary students; middle and high school students will be provided grab&go lunches. Cafeteria seating will be socially distanced.
 - All campuses will be closed for lunch.

QUESTIONS?

Please check for updates from the District via our website and social media channels. We also will communicate with you via phone calls, emails and push notifications.

If you have any questions, we're here to help. Send all questions to our Let's Talk customer service platform. Access it by clicking on the "Contact Us" tab at the bottom of the EPISD website.

Thank you for your understanding and patience through these very uncertain times. We will get through this together and emerge stronger on the other side of the pandemic. Stay healthy and safe.

Warm regards,

Juan E. Cabrera

