

**SEALY ISD**

*Reimagine & Reconnect*

2023-2024

# Sealy ISD

**COVID-19**

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



***This document is subject to change depending on the circumstances of COVID-19 and official health decisions.***

The purpose of this document is to outline operational protocols and procedures that will allow for in-person learning and the continued safety of students and staff during the 2023-24 school year while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. This plan is a requirement for accepting and utilizing ESSER III funding provided by the federal government through the US Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is based on guidance issued by the CDC, TEA, and local and state health authorities. During the period in which ESSER III funds are available, Sealy ISD will review and revise this plan at least every six months. These revisions will take into account parent and community feedback, as well as updated guidance from the Texas Education Agency and federal, state, and local health agencies.

## 1. Maintaining Health and Safety

Sealy ISD has established the following operational protocols and strategies for the 2023-24 school year related to the nine mitigation strategies recommended by the CDC to lessen the spread of the COVID-19 virus and maintain staff and student health. Every effort has been made to allow students to have as much freedom as possible throughout their day while still providing a level of safety for both students and staff.



### A. Universal Face Covering

- a. Per Executive Order GA-38 issued by Governor Abbott: students and staff cannot be required to wear a face-covering in a public school setting
- b. Sealy ISD will support any student, staff member, or visitor, especially those who are not vaccinated, in wearing a face covering while participating in indoor activities and events
- c. Students who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to voluntarily wear a face covering while waiting in the nurse's office to be picked up
- d. Face coverings will be made available on all campuses



### B. Modified Facilities (Physical Distancing)

- a. When at all possible, students and staff will maintain a three feet social distancing space between themselves
- b. Students will report to individual classrooms upon entering the building in the mornings. Breakfast will continue to be grab-and-go to avoid congregating.
- c. We will assist children in remaining as socially distanced as possible in cafeterias.
- d. Students and staff will be encouraged to use outdoor spaces when appropriate.
- e. Water bottle fillers are available at drinking fountains on all campuses. We recommend students bring their own pre-filled water bottles to school.



### **C. Hand Washing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- a. All Sealy ISD staff and substitutes will receive training on managing, instructing, and promoting student hygiene protocols.
- b. On the first day of school, instruction will be provided to students on appropriate hygiene practices and other practices that will promote their safety. These practices will be reinforced daily through repeated lessons and visual and verbal reminders.
- c. Hand sanitizing stations are available in all classrooms and at the entrances of all campuses.
- d. Students will be taught to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. They will have the opportunity to wash their hands at least twice a day in addition to prior to eating and after using the restroom or returning into the building from outside. When possible and age-appropriate, hand washing will be supervised.
- e. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, cover them with their elbows. Used tissues will be thrown in the trash, hands will be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer will be used.



### **D. Cleaning and Maintaining Facilities**

- a. 'High touch' areas will be disinfected periodically during the instructional day. This includes student and teacher desks, group tabletops, technology, and door handles using SSC-provided microfiber cloth, alcohol wipes, Clorox wipes, Clorox spray, and approved virucide disinfectant provided by Sealy ISD and SSC.
- b. Custodial staff (SSC) will clean all classrooms at the end of each day using SSC's disinfection program which includes CDC-approved disinfectants and best management practices.
- c. Cafeteria tables will be disinfected between each use.
- d. Custodial staff will spray down and sanitize 'high touch' surfaces such as drinking fountains, restroom areas, and door handles daily.



### E. Improved Ventilation

- a. Facilities equipped with fresh air dampers will be programmed to maintain 900 - 1200 ppm CO2 levels. This will result in fresh air exchange rates that are consistent with ASHRAE recommendations. Not all of our campus Air Handling Units are equipped with UV lights but those that are will be maintained and continue to operate as designed.
- b. The district will continue to use "B" High-Efficiency HEPA air filters



### F. COVID Case Responses

Any individual - including all staff, students, or campus visitors - is required to follow the below guidelines and safety measures put in place in regard to COVID-19. The below precautions apply to those who themselves are confirmed to have COVID-19 or have possible symptoms of COVID-19.

#### **POSITIVE COVID TEST:**

- i. *In the case of an individual who was diagnosed as positive with COVID-19, the individual may return to campus when all of the following criteria are met:*
  - at least 24 hours have passed since the resolution of any fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications); and
  - the individual's symptoms have improved (e.g., cough, congestion, shortness of breath) but not including loss of taste and smell.

Students absent for more than three consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying they were seen and with a date to return to school listed. Otherwise, the absence may be considered unexcused and in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

#### **SYMPTOMS & PRECAUTIONS:**

- ii. *In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19, the following must be met in order to return to campus:*
  - Have a significant improvement in symptoms including being fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications)

#### **CLOSE CONTACT:**

- iii. *In the case of an individual who has had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, as long as the person who had close contact remains fever and symptom-free, he/she may continue to attend school. If symptoms*

*develop then the steps listed above for a positive or symptomatic person should be followed*

b. Symptoms of COVID 19

- i. Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- ii. Loss of taste or smell
- iii. NEW, uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- iv. Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- v. NEW or atypical headache
- vi. Chills, shaking, or exaggerated shivering
- vii. Sore throat
- viii. Significant or unexplained muscle pain or ache
- ix. Diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea
- x. Unexpected congestion/runny nose

District Notification for Exposure to COVID-19

Based on data collected at both the state and local level during the 2020-21 school year showing a very low COVID-19 transmission rate in a school setting, TEA is not mandating and Sealy ISD will not be contact tracing during the 2023-24 school year.

If Sealy ISD is made aware of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 and who has been on campus or at a school-sponsored function, we will communicate in the following manner:

- A. During a surge, the district will maintain a posting of active cases on its website

Additional Information

Per CDC guidance, close contact is defined as someone who:

- i. was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period
- ii. provides care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- iii. has direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- iv. has shared eating or drinking utensils with a positive person
- v. has been sneezed on, coughed on, or somehow gotten respiratory droplets on them from a positive person

Sealy ISD will continue to investigate options to keep our students, staff, and families safe while on campus. Current procedures may be updated in the weeks and months to come.



### **G. Diagnostic Screening and Testing**

- a. Sealy ISD expects each stakeholder (student, staff, visitor) to conduct the following self-screening each day prior to accessing SISD buses or buildings. If you answer YES, to any of the following questions you are to stay home until you have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours.
  - i. *Screening Questions:*
    - Have you had a fever greater than 100.0 F in the last 24 hours?
    - Have you had a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing?
    - Have you experienced any vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- b. Sealy ISD has discontinued on-campus COVID-19 testing for the 2023-24 school year.



### **H. Efforts to Provide Vaccinations**

- a. Multiple vaccination opportunities were provided to staff during the Spring of 2021
- b. Multiple communications were sent to families notifying them of vaccination opportunities in the community during the Spring and Summer of 2021



### **I. Coordination with State and Local Officials**

- a. Sealy ISD will continue to coordinate efforts and abide by the guidance received from state and local officials.

## 2. Continuity of Services for Students and Staff

Sealy ISD has established strategies and programming to ensure continuity of services in the following areas during the 2023-24 school year



### A. Academic Needs

- a. Academic interventions will be provided to meet the individual needs of students
- b. Educational software will be utilized to reduce learning gaps
- c. A district professional coaching and learning program will be developed to support teachers in their craft
- d. Enhanced learning resources will be purchased
- e. Additional tutoring and expanded learning opportunities will be made available to students
- f. Parent and family outreach activities will take place to strengthen the partnership between home and school
- g. Facility updates will take place to provide enhanced learning environments



### B. Social and Emotional Needs of Students and Staff

- a. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) resources will be purchased and counselor training will be conducted to support students' emotional needs
- b. All staff will receive training on meeting the social and emotional needs of students
- c. Continued partnership with UTMB to provide tele-counseling through the TCHAT program for PK-12 students on an as-needed basis



### C. Students with Special Needs

- a. Students with IEPs that contain accommodations due to a student's health or physical limitations will be addressed on an individual basis



#### **D. Food Services**

- a. Per the CDC, given the low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, our food service will return to pre-COVID operations
- b. Food service operations will be altered during an outbreak as outlined in our Response Protocols at the end of this document



#### **E. Extracurricular Activities**

- a. Educational student field trips will continue
- b. Sealy ISD intends to participate in all UIL events, following the regulations set forth by UIL



#### **F. Transportation**

- a. Sealy ISD will support any student or staff member in wearing a face covering while riding district transportation
- b. Social distancing will be maintained when possible



#### **G. Visitors to Campus**

- a. Visitors will be allowed on campus to help facilitate campus programming, attend student/teacher meetings, and assist in educational activities





## Sealy ISD COVID-19 Response Protocol

The district and/or campus response level will be determined through campus and district review of each positive COVID case reported and determination of potential virus spread and mitigation actions required to prevent spreading. The following defines our response protocol.

### Transition between levels:

Classrooms, groups, campuses or the district will transition up levels when case numbers warrant. Once cases begin to decline, levels will be adjusted accordingly.

### LEVEL 1

#### Prevention

(Standard operation under the guidelines of the SISD Safe COVID Return Plan)

- Self-monitoring for COVID symptoms
- Physical distancing-3 feet when possible
- Grab & go breakfast
- Bottle fillers available at drinking fountains
- Frequent hand washing
- Sanitizing high touch areas multiple times a day
- Cafe tables sanitized after each lunch period

### LEVEL 2

#### Mitigation

(Highest number of COVID cases)

- Limit small group instruction, use of dividers when necessary, increased physical distancing when possible
- No grade level meetings, no dances, no large gatherings in school
- Limited campus visitors
- Desk station activities instead of sharing stations
- Reduced amount of sharing of supplies/materials
- Pre-packaged condiments in all cafeterias
- At secondary cafeterias, student use of disposable gloves in the serving line
- At elementary cafeterias, more items will be served directly to students and/or single use veggies, fruits
- Additional buses will be used for extracurricular activities
- Higher level, detailed communication to specific groups/classrooms/campuses

### LEVEL 3

#### Modified Operations

(In school spread or potential outbreak is suspected)

- Fully pre-plated meals in all cafeterias
- Recommendation of parent transportation vs. buses
- Cease small group instruction or use dividers
- Staggered release at lunches and during transitions
- Assigned seating for contact tracing (elementary)
- Campuses closed to visitors
- Limit indoor spectators at extracurricular events
- Sanitizing desks in between each class period
- Schedule adjustments made to limit the amount of class interaction at specials, lunch and/or recess
- Contact tracing implemented
- Higher level, detailed communication to specific groups/classrooms/campuses
- A student classroom, grade level or student program will be closed temporarily based on consultation with the health department
- Higher level, detailed communication to specific groups/classrooms/campuses

### LEVEL 4

#### Facility/District Closure

- Entire facility will be closed temporarily based on consultation with the health department
- Scheduled District events will be considered based on cases among the program
- District-wide, detailed communication to specific groups/classrooms/campuses