



Johnson City ISD

Roadmap to Reopening: Questions & Answers

Please Note: This document is aligned with the August 4, 2020 Public Health Planning Guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Information is subject to change

VIRTUAL (Remote/Online/At-Home) LEARNING

1. How will the virtual learning for the 2020-21 school year look different than last spring?

There were a significant number of statutory requirements waived last school year when we transitioned to remote instruction in March 2020. These requirements **will not** be waived for the 2020-2021 school year.

Statutory Requirements Waived (Spring 2020)

Teachers providing instructional support
No daily attendance taken
No minimum hours of instruction per day
No 90% attendance requirement
Lenient Pass/Incomplete Grading Policy
No STAAR/EOC Exams
No State Accountability for students/District

Statutory Requirements Reenacted (Fall 2020)

Teachers providing rigorous curriculum & instruction
Attendance taken daily
Daily student engagement required
Students must attend 90% of days course if offered
Regular Grading Policy as before COVID-19
Students will be required to take STAAR/EOC Exams
State Accountability will occur this school year

2. How will content be delivered in remote online learning and what should my student expect?

Students in the Remote/Online Instruction option will access instructional videos, content, and assignments via an online tool such as Schoology, the district's LMS(Learning Management System) and Google Classroom. There will be opportunities to engage in real-time learning with the teacher via video conferencing or other tools. Students are required to engage daily with direct instructional videos, assignments, and tasks. The specific tasks a student must complete and submit daily are determined by the teacher of the course / grade level. Teachers will post the requirements for daily engagement in addition to other course / grade level requirements online for students and parents to access. Students will participate daily by completing and submitting assignments, answering questions, providing responses or feedback to posted content, completing projects, submitting pictures of assignments or tasks, or communicating with teachers via video conferencing or phone for "check-in" sessions. In addition, students may also participate daily during office hours in order to receive instructional support and to get answers to any questions or concerns they may have regarding their course work. Students that do not demonstrate engagement will be marked absent. Lack of student engagement will trigger actions taken by the course teacher and / or campus principal that will include conferences with the student and parent in order to determine what additional support a student may need in order to be successful.

3. What role will parents have in supporting their child's remote online learning?

Parents are expected to help build a partnership with teachers, counselors, principals, and support staff in order to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for their child.

Parents are expected to:

- Assist their child in locating a space in the home that is ideal for learning
- Establish routines and expectations at home to support work completion and submission
- Participate in open communication with school staff and check student progress on a regular basis for each class
- Support the use of technology and other tools to access instruction and complete assignments
- Support their child to complete work within regular school hours
- Help and support your child accessing teacher office hours in order to get additional support with assignments and content
- Read all correspondence from teachers and school staff
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences
- Participate in ARD and 504 meetings

- Consult their child’s principal should a situation arise that necessitates a change in learning setting (remote or on-campus)
- Access help documents and videos posted on the JCISD website for additional support with questions about technology

4. Will my child be expected to attend remote/online classes every day? What is the attendance requirement?

Students in both programs are subject to compulsory attendance laws. All students enrolled in remote/online instruction must check-in and engage in learning activities in all classes daily. Students must be in attendance for at least 90 percent of the time the course is offered in order to receive credit or a final grade.

5. Why do we have to complete the “JCISD Instructional Commitment Form” by August 7, 2020?

While it would be nice to wait until the last minute to evaluate the virus trends, we need to have some idea of how many students at which grade levels are contemplating online learning and what technology resources will be needed. The Commitment Form for 2020-21 must be completed and submitted by Friday, August 7th so we can make final planning arrangements in order to best utilize our staff to meet our learner’s needs. Families have until August 7th to notify the campus principal if there is a change in placement from the time you submitted the form. Once the commitment is finalized, students will be expected to remain in that same learning environment for the duration of the 1st grading period (Aug. 24-Oct. 16). Two weeks prior to the end of the grading period, parents will have the opportunity to shift instructional environments.

6. Can we switch to traditional in-person instruction if my child is not successful in remote/online instruction?

Students can transfer from one instructional model to another at the end of the nine-week grading period. This allows the campus to design and implement on-campus safety guidelines for those attending school in-person. However, the district will have a process to transition a student to or from remote online learning based on individual student’s needs.

Parents have until two weeks prior to the start of a new grading period to change their student’s instructional setting for the next grading period. The parent would have to notify the school by Friday, October 2, 2020.

7. If we opt for virtual schooling, how will state testing be handled for students who are at home?

We have not been given guidance on STAAR testing from the state beyond them saying we will have STAAR testing. If the state continues online learning into the Spring, we expect to be given some guidance as to if and how we would be STAAR testing.

8. Will breakfast and lunch be available to remote learners? New 8/4/20

Grab and go breakfast and lunch will be available for pickup between 10:00am – 11:00am at the corner of 303 N. LBJ Drive and E. Cypress Street. This is the back of the elementary/middle school cafeteria. Both meals will be served at one time so there is no need to make more than one trip to the school. Please do not enter the school building.

The district encourages everyone to complete a Free & Reduced Lunch Application.

[Application in English](#)

[Application in Spanish](#)

Breakfast Prices	Elementary (K-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)
Free	Free	Free	Free
Reduced	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
Regular	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75

Lunch Prices	Elementary (K-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)
Free	Free	Free	Free
Reduced	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60
Regular	\$2.85	\$2.95	\$3.10

We are asking parents to deposit money in their child's account by cash/check or online at the following link: [EZSchoolPay](#) This will help minimize contact with parents and employees.

9. If my child is in virtual learning, are they still able to participate in athletics or other extra-curricular activities? Updated 8/4/20

Students who chose the Remote/Online Instruction option will be able to participate in extracurricular activities. Some extracurricular activities have a class period associated with the specific activity that students may be required to attend on a daily basis. Families should consider transportation limitations when considering this option. Students would still have to maintain eligibility with attendance and grades, which is no different than attending regular in-person classes.

- Middle school boys/girls' athletics are required to attend 1st period athletic class and practices outside of school hours during sport season in which they are participating
- High school boys/girls' athletics are required to attend 9th period athletic class and practices outside of school hours during sport season in which they are participating
- Marching Band will be required to attend 6th period band class and practices outside of school hours

Example: If a student plays basketball only, they would not be required to attend the athletic period until basketball season begins.

10. My child receives services through special education or 504. Will these services continue in remote/online instruction?

Special education instruction and/or related services will be provided in accordance with the ARD/IEP. 504 instruction and/or related services will be provided in accordance with the students 504 Plan. Campuses will work with individual parents to ensure student needs are met.

11. What counseling support is available for remote/online learners?

JCISD school counselors will assist students and/or families with any concerns virtually and/or in-person at their campus.

ON-CAMPUS LEARNING

12. What if we choose on-campus learning initially but change our mind and want remote online instruction (and vice-versa)?

The one stipulation we ask parents to abide by is to remain in a setting for the entire grading period (1st grading period: Aug. 24 - Oct. 16). This allows the campus to design an instructional plan and track virtual learners. However, the district will have a process to transition a student to or from on-campus learning based on each individual student's needs.

If a student is diagnosed with COVID-19 or experiences symptoms, then the student will transition to virtual learning until medically released to return to school.

Parents have until two weeks prior to the start of a new grading period to change their student's instructional setting for the next grading period. The parent would have to notify the school by Friday, October 2, 2020.

13. Will the school hours and number of days per week be normal for those selecting on-campus learning?

The on-campus in-person school option will be just like regular school; five days a week at regular hours. After considering the hardship that odd schedules would pose for working families, we decided to keep it as consistent as possible. See [Academic Calendar 2020-2020](#)

14. What if I want to walk my child into school or visit them for lunch?

Unfortunately, for the first 9 weeks, the schools will be completely closed to outside visitors, including parents. We know this will be very difficult, especially for parents of students who are just starting school, but it is part of our efforts to mitigate and minimize the potential spread of COVID in our schools. This will also include special events like birthday parties in elementary classrooms. Bringing in outside food will not be allowed on any campus. We will re-evaluate this stance as we are able to assess the health and safety conditions in the community.

14. What procedures will be in place for lunches, arrival & departure, recess, passing periods, etc.? Updated 8/4/20

Please visit the following link: [Roadmap for Reopening](#) and click on the “In-Person Instruction” tab

15. Will my student be able to ride the school bus?

The district will continue to provide transportation for those students who qualify as bus riders. However, TEA outlines the health & safety protocols we must follow. We are encouraging families to drop students off or walk with their students to school to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.

16. What safety measures will be in place for bus riders?

Students and staff will use hand sanitizer upon boarding the bus. Students will be required to wear face covering. When possible, social distancing will be enforced and windows will be open. Buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each bus trip, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles.

HEALTH & SAFETY

17. If we choose on-campus learning, will children be required to wear face covering (i.e. masks, shields) all day? What about recess or gym class?

Depends on the Governor’s Executive Orders and Blanco County Orders. Schools are required to comply with the governor’s executive order regarding the wearing of masks.

They have to wear them upon arrival, while in the hallways, transition, and anytime they leave the classroom. They may remove them inside the classroom when they are seated apart (at least six feet) from others. If social distancing cannot occur in the classroom, they will have to wear a face covering.

However, we are giving teachers an option to have their students wear them when they have to work in small groups or one-on-one when social distancing is not possible.

For smaller children, it is not developmentally appropriate for children to wear masks for long periods of time, however, if they cannot be socially distanced in the classroom they will need to wear a mask or shield. Due to classroom space this may be needed while in classrooms, but breaks to take them off will be built into the day as needed. Teachers will have clear face shields to protect themselves and the children.

Masks will not have to be worn if the children are outside and socially distanced. We will teach children about maintaining safe distances. They will have to wash their hands before and after recess. We are

purchasing cleaning devices that allow us to sanitize the equipment without having to wipe down every square inch of it.

In physical education classes - no masks will be worn unless spacing the children becomes an issue. The teachers are already in planning mode to ensure their activities keep children engaged but safely apart (six feet).

Please note: State health and safety guidance does change on occasion. If guidance about masks is revised from local or state agencies, we will communicate that.

18. What type of mask should our children wear?

Per TEA guidance there are several options for staff and students which include:

Face masks (masks with ear loops)

Neck Gaiters

Cloth face coverings (bandanas)

Face Shields

Here is the specific guidance from the [CDC](#) which speaks to the effectiveness of face coverings as well as helpful videos from the [World Health Organization](#) and how to put on and take off various masks among other mask related concerns.

19. Will the schools do fever checks of all students each day? **Updated 8/4/20**

No, we ask that all parents do that each day prior to sending your child to school.

We have health and safety guidelines written specifically for COVID, and at the guidance of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), we opted not to take temperatures. Asymptomatic people, particularly children, will not run a fever if they are positive for the virus. Taking temperatures at the onset and throughout the day would consume valuable teaching time and would not necessarily yield results we would need to take further action. Teachers will still screen children throughout the day and if anyone is feeling ill, our nurse will screen them with a temperature check in the nurse's station.

It is critically important that parents keep children home from school if they experience any of the following symptoms that is not normal for them:

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

20. If a student or teacher tests positive, who will be informed?

If someone tests positive, we are obligated to inform any staff and students (including the parents) who came in close contact with that student. The state has given us a clear definition of what close contact is, which would require us to conduct a contact tracing process whenever a student or staff member tests positive. That could mean quite a few people with just one case once we determine the degree of contact with every person involved.

21. How is “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 defined? **Updated 8/4/20**

Close contact is defined as:

- a) being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
- b) being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes; however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e., both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (a) or (b) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test.

22. What happens if individuals are confirmed or suspected with COVID-19?

Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

- at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.

23. What are the symptoms of COVID-19? **Updated 8/4/20**

Any of the following symptoms indicate a possible COVID-19 infection:

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

24. Will a quarantined student be counted absent?

No, the student will continue with instruction by switching over to remote learning. As long as the students maintain good attendance with online expectations, the student will not be counted absent.

25. If one student or staff member tests positive for the virus, will the entire school be quarantined?

The district will notify their local health department if an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. We will close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab confirmed case of COVID-19 (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than seven days have passed since that person was on campus. The district will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers, or staff who participate in any on-campus activities.

26. Are doors going to be left open to help circulate air?

We are planning to leave doors open **within** the school building to improve circulation and minimize commonly touched surface areas in the classrooms. **Exterior doors will remain locked and secured.** No outside visitors, including parents, will be allowed inside the schools during the first 9 weeks of school. We will evaluate these processes throughout the year and revise if necessary and prudent. Safety and security remain our top priority!

27. Will large gatherings such as pep rallies and school assemblies take place?

At this time, the district will be eliminating assemblies and other activities that bring large groupings of students and/or teachers and staff together.

28. What about large gatherings for sporting events?

According to the UIL, Schools may allow spectators to attend games, contests, or events within a maximum 50% capacity limitation, provided that appropriate spacing between spectators is maintained according to the protocol, and according to the following:

1. Schools and/or host sites should post visible signs and/or messaging stating any individuals who are confirmed to have, suspected of having, are experiencing symptoms of, or have been in close contact with an individual who has been confirmed to have COVID-19 should not enter the facility.
2. Spectators, audiences, fans and media are required to wear face coverings as described in Executive Order GA-29.
3. Groups should maintain at least six feet of distance from other groups at all times, including the process of admission and seating. A group is defined as no more than 10 people including the members of the household and those persons who traveled together to the facility.
4. Schools should not allow seating in consecutive rows, and should block off seating to maintain a minimum six feet of distance between groups.

For more detailed information, please see the [UIL Mitigation Guidelines](#).

GENERAL QUESTIONS

29. What guidance is the district using to develop the Instructional Plan for 2020-21?

The district receives guidance from TEA (Texas Education Agency) as well as county, state, and national agencies, including the Governor's office. In addition, almost daily conversations are shared with other

Central Texas superintendents.

Another [important document the district used is from the American Academy of Pediatrics](#). We encourage all parents to read it.

30. Will there be a "Meet the Teacher" night this year?

Each campus will send out specific instructions about how each grade level will meet.

This is an unusual year, but rest assured that each campus principal will find ways to make that first day as smooth and as pleasant as possible.

31. What if I want to do remote online instruction but do not have access to technology and/or the internet?

Parents and students will be notified of checkout date(s) for school issued devices. Parents will sign a device use agreement, and the campus will provide the necessary technology for remote instruction.

32. Will my student be able to check out a Chromebook and hotspot?

The district will check out all available Chromebooks to remote students in need. Keep in mind, remote learning will look different from last spring. Each child will need their own device in order to meet the needs of the course. The district has a limited number of hotspots that can be checked out as well.

33. Where can I find updated JCISD information regarding the 2020-2021 school year?

As the district receives updated information, we distribute information to students and parents through our Blackboard communication system. If you are not receiving these messages, please contact the school to ensure we have your correct information. All messages sent through Blackboard are posted on the [District Website](#) and pushed out through our [Twitter](#) account.

34. Will football, volleyball, and band practice begin prior to the school year? And who needs to attend?

Yes, all the above will begin on August 3, 2020. Football & Volleyball (Grades 9-12); Band (Grades 8-12)

35. What type of disinfectant does the district use and is it EPA approved?

The United States Environmental Protection agency has an approve list of disinfectants for use against COVID-19. The district uses Zenatize disinfectant spray and Performex RTU to fog larger areas. Both are EPA approved for use against COVID-19.