



# **Somerville Independent School District**

## **2021-2022 Safe Start Protocol and Procedures**

### **Mission**

Somerville Independent School District will provide a safe educational environment that fosters academic achievement, post-secondary success, and ensures each student graduates from high school both college and career ready with the ability to become responsible, productive, and contributing citizens in a diverse world.

### **Goals**

**Student Performance:** Provide high-quality instruction for all through academic and post-secondary success through proficiency in reading and math, and implement programs aimed to support college and career readiness in a safe and secure environment.

**Human Resources:** Recruit, retain, and develop high-quality teaching staff, who engage in continuous professional development focused on providing viable and relevant student instruction, and who share the responsibility for providing a positive and successful learning environment.

**Partnerships:** Maximize partnerships by engaging students, parents, staff, and the community to maximize every child's potential.

**Equity:** Effectively personalize learning, and close all learning gaps for each child, by adopting a plan to know every single student from Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade; their strengths and needs, and focus on educational success for each.

### **Superintendent**

Karla Sparks

### **School Board**

, President

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**Somerville ISD is committed to the health and safety of every student and staff member as well as our community. We will follow the guidance and best practices of the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [Texas Department of State Health Services \(TDSHS\)](#), [Public Health Region 7 Health Department](#), Texas Education Agency (TEA), and local governance.**

**This plan was last modified based on TEA guidance (7/17/20) and Texas Governor Executive Order GA-29 (7/2/2020) regarding the wearing of masks. The document will be updated as government mandates change.**

## **General**

- Campus staff will be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols.
- Disinfectants will be used for deep cleaning campuses and store these products safely to ensure that harmful cleaning products are not used near children.
- Students, teachers, staff, and essential campus visitors/volunteers will be encouraged to sanitize and wash hands frequently.
- Tissues will be provided in classrooms and common areas to encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, to cover with their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom
- Social distancing and safety signage will be added and visible throughout school facilities.
- No outside visitors or parents will be allowed to come to school for lunch at least during the fall semester.
- Visitors and volunteers will be limited, at least during the fall semester.
- Essential volunteers scheduled for work at a campus will be pre-screened for temperature/symptoms before admittance on campus. A signed pre-screening attestation will be required before entering the building.
- Somerville ISD is permitted to prevent any individual who fails the health screening criteria from being admitted to the campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry to the campus.



- Currently, all locker rooms and shower rooms are “CLOSED.” This guideline could change by the opening of school in August.

## Health Screening Protocols

- Students and staff are required to take their own temperatures daily before arriving at school. Anyone with a fever of **100° F or higher** should not come to school or a SISD facility. (TEA mandate)
- Teachers will monitor students and refer to the nurse if symptoms are present.
- Students and staff **are required** to self-screen before coming to school by asking the following question (TEA mandate):

**Have you recently experienced any of the following in a way that is not normal for you?**

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100° Fahrenheit
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Shortness of breath
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Sore throat
  - Shaking or exaggerated shivering
  - Significant muscle pain or ache
  - Diarrhea
- Students and staff may be subject to periodic temperature checks for verification, especially if they are feeling ill or suspected of having a fever during the school day.
  - Teachers will have access to a touch-free forehead thermometer to check/verify temperatures throughout the day as needed and will immediately send anyone with a **100° F or higher** temperature to the school health clinic for temperature verification and symptom check by the school nurse.

Teachers, staff, and students must report to campus/district administration if they have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry.

Additionally, teachers, staff, and students must report to campus/district administration if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined in



this document, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

**“Close contact” is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as:**

- being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or
- being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield.

Somerville ISD will be pre-screening all contracted workers and essential volunteers before they are allowed entrance on campus.

TEA Guidance is as follows for students:

*“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, and instead should opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 14-day incubation period has passed. School systems may consider screening students for COVID-19 as well. Screening is accomplished by asking questions by phone or other electronic methods and/or in person. The screening questions should also be asked of a student’s parent if that parent will be dropping off or picking up their child from inside the school.”*

## **School Health Clinic Protocol**

- Minor health needs may be handled in the school office area to reserve the health clinic space for students experiencing symptoms or fever.
- When a student has displayed symptoms of COVID-19, 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 contacted the student’s parent/guardian.
- Other students will be removed from the classroom and taken to an alternate location on campus (e.g. go on a walk outside, move to a different classroom, etc.) so that the classroom can be disinfected.



- Regardless of age, students who come to the school health clinic showing symptoms will be required to wear a mask until a parent or guardian arrives to take them home.
- School health clinics will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

## Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19 Protocols

Any individual, including teachers, staff, students or other campus visitors/volunteers, who either a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 or b) experience symptoms of COVID-19 (as described in this document) **must** stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to the campus until the school screens the individual to determine if the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met.

### **Confirmed COVID-19**

In the case of **an individual who is diagnosed with COVID-19**, the individual may return to school when a medical professional certifies **all three** of the following criteria are met:

- 1) at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- 2) the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- 3) at least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

### **Suspected COVID-19**

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**, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19. The individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

### **Criteria for Returning**

***Conditions for return to school after an individual shows symptoms or gets a positive test result:***

***Either:***

- 24 hours with no fever; and



- Symptoms improved; and
- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- 

**Or:**

An acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19

**Or:**

A doctor's note indicating an alternate diagnosis

### **Exposed to COVID-19**

**Individuals**, including students, teachers, staff or other campus visitors, and volunteers, **who have had close contact (as defined at the beginning of this document) with someone who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19**, should stay at home through the 14-day incubation period, and should not be allowed on campus.

Somerville ISD's school nurse will screen individuals after the incubation period has concluded. If the individual did not experience COVID-19 symptoms during that period, the individual could be allowed back on campus. If the individual experienced symptoms, they must stay at home until the conditions outlined above have been met.

## **Face Coverings or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- Masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose, and mouth.
- According to health guidelines released by the Texas Education Agency, masks are not developmentally appropriate for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students.
- For students under 10 years old, parents may determine if masks or face coverings are developmentally appropriate. At this time, masks **remain an option** and are not mandated for any student under 10 years old.
- For students over 10 years old, masks or face coverings **are required** in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order GA-29 (TEA mandate).



- Some 4<sup>th</sup> grade students will be nine years old at the beginning of the year. To assist with compliance and safety, SISD will require masks for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students regardless of age.
- All SISD staff will wear face coverings, masks or shields in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order GA-29 except the following:
  - wherever it is feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household;
  - if a person has a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering;
  - while consuming food or drink, or seated to eat or drink;
  - while exercising outdoors or engaging in physical activity outdoors while maintaining a safe distance from other people not in the same household;
  - while giving a speech to an audience while maintaining a safe distance.

**The Texas Education Agency recently announced that PPE would be purchased and provided to each district for use as needed.**

From the state, Somerville ISD will receive:

- 1,521 student size disposable masks
- 3,550 adult size disposable masks
- 352 student size reusable masks
- 915 adult size reusable masks
- 3,026 gloves
- 4 thermometers
- 59 gallons of hand sanitizer
- 89 adult face shields

## **Handwashing & Hand Sanitizers**

- Students and staff will be trained in proper hand washing protocols to prevent COVID-19 and the spread of germs.
- Elementary teachers will be encouraged to supervise student handwashing for 20 seconds at least two times each day. In addition, all students will be encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom and before eating.
- Handwashing stations are available in restrooms and some classrooms.





- Hand sanitizer is available in each classroom and common areas.

## **Social Distancing Protocols**

- Students and staff will be trained in proper social distancing.
- Social distancing becomes a personal responsibility of each individual attending school or coming to a SISD facility. Anyone causing a disruption or unwillingness to follow SISD safety protocols, putting students/staff at unnecessary risk may be asked to leave.
- Schools will reduce in-person staff meetings or other opportunities for adults to congregate in close settings. When those meetings are necessary and cannot be done via electronic means, everyone must follow the mask protocols in this guidance.
- Whenever possible throughout the day, students and staff will remain six feet apart. It is not feasible that staff and students maintain six feet of social distancing at all times, especially in classrooms and instructional settings.

## **Social Cleaning & Disinfectant Protocols**

- SISD custodial employees will be trained on COVID-19 safety protocols.
- Cleaning and disinfecting will occur daily in every classroom, commons area, and on high-touch surfaces.
- Every classroom and office area will have disinfectant in a spray bottle with disposable cleaning cloths provided for employees and students to use in high-touch areas throughout the school day.
- The state recommends that each school district provide students the opportunity to clean their own spaces before and after they are used in ways that are safe and developmentally appropriate.
- In addition to cleanings throughout each day, restrooms, cafeterias, and computer labs will undergo extensive cleaning after each day's use.
- The District will 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 unless more than three days have already passed since that person was on campus.



## Campus Visitors

To minimize foot traffic in the building and to allow for adequate physical distance for students, no visitors are allowed in the building without an appointment. These restrictions may loosen as the year progresses.

- Parents must drop off their students without entering the building.
- Until further notice, outside food may not be brought to the school, this includes birthday celebrations. Students may bring their own lunch at the beginning of the day.
- All individuals who enter the building will be required to wear a face covering. Individuals who proceed beyond the reception area will follow specific guidelines for visitors.
  - All visitors will be subject to screening by way of a symptom screening form.
  - The use of virtual meetings will be considered before scheduling in person sessions.
  - Visitors and staff will maintain physical distancing for other required meetings in smaller conference areas and will be required to wear masks.

## Transportation

- When possible, the district encourages families to drop students off, carpool, or walk with their students to school to reduce possible virus exposure on buses.
- Buses will load from back to front left to right/ this will reduce touching
- All buses will have a hand sanitizer station mounted at the front of the bus. Each person entering the bus will be required to apply Hand Sanitizer as they board the bus.
- Buses will offload from front to back left to right/ this will reduce touching
- Drivers will be provided with a mask to wear at all times while transporting students. When dealing with a suspected sick student, the driver will wear a provided face shield in addition to the mask.
- Face covering will be required on all SISD buses(all ages)unless a health condition prevents a student from wearing a face covering.
- When the temperature is acceptable, windows will be open to allow for circulation of fresh air. Fresh air vents on top of the bus will be open at all times.
- Buses will be thoroughly disinfected after each route for both a.m. and p.m.
- Students will be assigned seats and students from one household or one family will be seated together on the bus.
- There will be a 10 minute window for each bus to offload in a safe manner while dropping off students at school in the morning and all picking up in the afternoon.



## Breakfast and Lunch

To minimize foot traffic in the building and to allow for adequate physical distance for students during eating periods, no outside food deliveries, even by parents, will be accepted and there will be no visitors allowed in the cafeteria. These restrictions may loosen as the year progresses however, it is important to allow campus staff the flexibility to spread students throughout common areas so that social distancing is possible.

- All meals will be served from the cafeteria. Students may have meals in the cafeteria in the classroom, or outside at picnic tables based on campus direction.
- Cafeteria, serving, and eating areas will be cleaned between uses.
- Breakfast and lunch menus and serving procedures will be modified to minimize student interaction during the serving line.
- All SISD child nutrition staff will use face coverings/masks and gloves while performing job responsibilities and will be trained to practice health and hygiene regulations.

## Arrival, Dismissal, and Transition

Parents are asked to assist campus staff in the implementation of arrival and dismissal plans. When transporting or walking children to school, please follow all signage, drop off and pick up children at the appropriate locations.

- Parents will not be permitted to walk students inside the school building
- Designated entry doors may be propped open for no-touch entry. Any open doors will be continuously monitored by staff to stop unauthorized access and to monitor for threats.
- Each group of students will be directed to a designated location for entrance and exit prior to the start of school.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed at entrances, exits and common areas throughout the building. Students will be encouraged to sanitize hands at entry and exit of all classrooms and buildings.
- All areas of the building (gym, cafeteria, larger classrooms, common areas, etc.) will be utilized to limit the size of student groupings.
- Parents picking up students during the day will call ahead so that students can be sent or accompanied to parent vehicles upon arrival.



- Students will be released directly from their classroom whenever possible.
- Transition time of students will be limited as much as possible during the school day.

## Classroom Configurations and Procedures

SISD will adhere to any State or County executive orders. It is our promise to maintain a warm and inviting learning environment in our classrooms while simultaneously following health guidelines.

Each classroom will have the following:

- Visual reminders of distancing requirements in all classrooms, marking off areas for common spaces and distancing best practices.
- Access to alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Access to safe disinfectant supplies to sanitize working surfaces.
- Desks or tables will be socially distanced as much as instructionally possible.
- Shared supplies will be limited and cleaned between uses.
- Based on district guidance, teachers will develop, teach, and implement procedures that:
  - Limit student movement within the classroom such as turning in assignments, materials being passed out, etc.
  - Establish student responsibilities to clean personal areas and materials/supplies.
  - Reinforce hand washing protocols and intermittent use of hand sanitizer.
  - Reduce the use of large table seating in classrooms and replace it with desks when possible.
  - Limit the number of students per table to provide as much social distancing as possible.
  - Locked doors will be propped open between classes to minimize contact with doors and door handles by students and staff entering or exiting classrooms.

## Restrooms and Water Fountains

Students' physical needs are extremely important. Social distancing and hand washing will remain the priorities during restroom breaks. Because water dispensers have shared surfaces, these will be disabled/turned off. Students will be provided with other options for hydration. Students should bring water bottles that can be filled at a water filler station that will be installed at each water fountain. A system will be implemented to identify the number of occupants utilizing each restroom to mitigate the chance of exceeding maximum occupants per social distancing.



## **Instructional Delivery Options**

Somerville ISD is committed to providing rigorous, TEKS-based instruction to all students whether they attend school face-to-face or select remote instruction. We recognize that this may be a challenging year, but we are embracing the opportunity to expand and maximize learning for all students. We will offer face-to-face instruction and only remote instruction for students who have been confirmed to have COVID or exposed by someone in their household or in close contact with someone who is positive for COVID. As our local/state conditions change, our plans may change accordingly.

## **2020-2021 Attendance Basics**

- The requirement for students to attend 90% of the days a course is offered in order to be awarded credit for the course or to be promoted to the next grade level remains in force for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, student attendance may be earned through the delivery of remote learning.
- Any parent may request remote learning if a student has a confirmed case of COVID or if the student has been exposed to COVID from someone who resides in the same household or by someone who the student has prolonged close contact with.
- SISD must provide daily on-campus attendance for students otherwise entitled to attend school in person, on campus.
- SISD will post required notice to parents regarding their public education enrollment and attendance rights and responsibilities during the COVID-10 pandemic with a document published by TEA.

## **Attendance Methods**

### **Remote Learning**

Attendance will be measured for each student, each day. The Texas Education Agency requires remote learning students to engage in academic work each and every day of the week. The approved engagement methods are listed below:



- Daily progress in the online learning platform, as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Daily progress via teacher-student interactions, as defined in the approved learning plan; or
- Completion/Turn-in of assignments from student to teacher (potentially via email, online, or mail).

## **PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT**

As it has always been, the health and safety of our staff and students remain our highest priority. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, this guidance document contains information on practices that minimize the likelihood of viral spread. These protocols and guidelines will be modified based on public health and governmental directives, and advancing scientific knowledge on the transmissibility of COVID-19. We also believe that educating our students about proper hygiene techniques and necessary safety measures to prevent the spread will not only keep them safe but will also keep their respective families safe.

This document may be updated as new information becomes available.



To be considered exposed to COVID-19, you need to have prolonged close contact with a person who has the virus. Close contact includes living in the same household, caring for a sick person with the virus, being within 6 feet of a sick person with the virus for at least 15 continuous minutes without the use of a face covering, or being in direct contact with secretions from the sick person.

### Somerville ISD Employee/Workplace Process Map for COVID-19





### Somerville ISD Student Process Map for COVID-19 2020-2021



June 9, 2020