

Practices to Reduce the Spread of Coronavirus at School

UPDATED 4-1-2021

Natalia ISD intends to implement practices and procedures that reduce the likelihood of a coronavirus outbreak at school. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) research, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized or have severe symptoms. Furthermore, the American Academy of Pediatrics notes that COVID-19 risks must be balanced with the need for children to attend school in person, given that lack of physical access to school leads to several negative consequences. Therefore, we are working to provide a safe environment for students and staff.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps Natalia ISD can take to reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families significantly. The District is implementing the following procedures to attempt to mitigate and control the spread of COVID-19. However, this document is subject to revision as guidance to districts is updated. If you have a specific concern regarding COVID-19, please contact one of the following:

Natalia High School	Mr. Lee Myers	Principal
Natalia Junior High School	Dr. Camacho	Principal
ECC and Natalia Elem.	Dr. Moreno-Hewitt	Principal
Natalia ISD	Mr. Harry Piles	Superintendent

The CDC updated guidance on March 8, 2021, to indicate that: - A vaccinated individual does not need to stay at home following close contact exposure to a test-confirmed individual if the following conditions are true:

a. The exposed individual is fully vaccinated (at least two weeks have passed since receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine or the first dose of a single-dose vaccine)

b. Have not experienced any COVID-19 symptoms following close contact exposure to a test-confirmed individual.

- Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to stay at home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms.

c. Individuals who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

Attendance and Enrollment

The Texas Education Agency requires the following rules related to attendance and enrollment:

1. According to Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered (with some exceptions) to earn credit for the course

and/or be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in force during the 2020-21 school year.

2. Student attendance may be earned through the delivery of In-Person learning unless students have medical documentation.

COVID-19 Screening Questions:

Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way 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 or significant muscle pain or ache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

Close Contact:

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is test-confirmed to have COVID-19. The definition of close contact is evolving with our understanding of COVID-19, and individual scenarios should be determined by an appropriate public health agency. In general, close contact is defined as:

1. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
2. being within 6 feet for a total of approximately 15 minutes throughout the course of a day; 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, vaccination status, prior infection status, 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 test-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming test and continuing for 10 days following the confirmed lab test.

Staff Screening

1. All teachers and staff are required to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Symptoms are listed at the end of this document. Each teacher and staff member will be required to clock in for work and answer self-screening questions before entering school buildings.
 - a. Teachers will take their own temperatures.
 - b. Teachers and staff must report to the school system 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 as noted below.
 - c. Teachers and staff must report to the school system if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, must remain off campus for a minimum of 7 days. Before they can return to work, they must test negative for COVID-19 on day 5 post exposure and provide proof of the negative test results. If the person with COVID-19 is a member of the same household as the staff, they will be out a minimum of 17 days and must test negative on day 15. The school nurse/nurse aid can conduct the test at no cost. However, they would need to make an appointment directly with the nurse's office.

Student Screening

1. 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 request remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. A checklist is attached to keep at home for home screening.
2. Parents may also request remote instruction if their child has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 10-day incubation period has passed. If the positive COVID-19 person is a member of the same household, the quarantine period can be extended up to 20 days.
3. Natalia ISD plans to screen students for symptoms as needed with temperature checks.

Visitor Screening

1. Visitors will be restricted on all campuses to those who are essential to school operations
2. No visitors will be allowed in the classroom areas
3. Students may bring a lunch; however, no outside food for student lunches will be accepted during the school day.
4. Any visitor allowed on campus will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms.
5. Visitors who have COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry.
6. Visitors who have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

Criteria for Re-entry

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:

- For an individual 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
- For 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
 - obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, or
 - obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19 and provide proof to the school upon return to campus.

On-Campus Identification of COVID-19 Cases

When a student, staff member, or teacher is identified as exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, the following steps will be implemented:

Any staff member or teacher will be asked to leave the campus and a substitute or other staff member will be assigned to the class

Any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school will be separated until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.

All areas used by the individual who exhibited COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) will be cleaned as soon as possible.

Students who report feeling feverish should be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School

The following procedures are established for responding when an individual who has been lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 has been on school property.

1. Natalia ISD will notify the Medina County health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. Areas that were heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) will be closed off until the non-porous surfaces in those areas

can be disinfected unless more than 7 days have already passed since that person was on campus.

3. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, Natalia ISD 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 on any on-campus activities.

Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School

General operational mitigation practices that will be implemented include:

1. Hand sanitizer will be available for building entrances and in classrooms.
2. Frequent handwashing will be encouraged.
3. All students will be taught handwashing techniques.
4. Elementary students will have handwashing breaks at least two times per day.
5. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, cover with their elbows.
6. Students will be taught and expected to clean their own spaces.
7. Teachers will wipe down desks regularly.
8. Teachers desks will be equipped with sneeze guards.
9. Custodial staff will wipe down surfaces, including counters and doorknobs, three times per day.
10. Deep sanitizing weekly
12. Students will not share supplies, electronic devices, or food.
13. Until further notice, classrooms will be void of cushions, carpets, and other “soft” items.
14. When possible windows will be opened to increase airflow.
15. Students will participate in drills and practice to learn hygiene and mitigation techniques.

Health and Hygiene Practices:

Schools are required to comply with the governor’s executive order regarding the wearing of masks. Teachers and students will wear masks (For this document, masks include non-medical and medical grade disposable face masks and cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) and/or face shields.

Full-face shields may be used in place of a mask to protect eyes, nose, and mouth whenever a mask is not feasible or whenever the educational context may benefit from the ability to see an individual’s full face.

- The District will provide cloth masks for each staff member and each student.
- Face masks and shields must not display inappropriate, offensive, or distracting content.

During certain activities, it may be impractical or impossible to wear a mask or shield, in which case, students, teachers, staff, and visitors to wear masks or face shields when entering and exiting facilities and practice areas and when not actively engaging in those activities.

Student-Teacher Groupings Where feasible without disrupting the educational experience, encourage students to practice social distancing.

1. In classroom spaces that allow it, consider placing student desks a minimum of three feet apart when possible.
2. In classrooms where students are regularly within three feet of one another, schools should plan for more frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing and should consider whether increased airflow from the outdoors is possible.

On-Campus Instructional Settings and Practices:

On-campus instructional delivery will be as safe as possible. Classrooms will be arranged to encourage social distancing. Practices include:

1. Spacing desks as far apart as possible
2. Avoiding group activities
3. Limiting movement between classrooms
4. Using outdoor spaces as appropriate

Extracurricular Activities

Natalia ISD will continue to offer extracurricular activities and remote learning, and on-campus students may participate. However, remote students will be required to attend practice on campus. The following procedures will be in place for spectators

1. Masks are required of spectators
2. Facilities, both indoor and outdoor will have limited capacity
3. Ticket sales will be in advance – No tickets will be sold at the gate
4. Spectators are to socially distance
5. Children must sit with their parents
6. For varsity sports events in the stadium or gym, live streaming will be available and accessible through a subscription to a service
7. The Band will not travel to away games

Food Service

1. Social distancing practices will continue for breakfast and lunch.
2. Breakfast will be served in the classroom
3. Junior high and High school will implement multiple lunch periods
4. Elementary will eat lunch in the classroom
5. Students may bring lunch from home; however, no outside food may be delivered during the day to students.

Transportation

Hand sanitizer will be available on all buses

Bus windows will be open when possible

Family members from the same household will sit together

Students will wear masks on the buses

No one will sit in the seat behind the driver

To the extent possible, a seat will be skipped between families
Buses will be sanitized after each route

Natalia ISD Home Screening Checklist for COVID-19 Symptoms

Each morning before sending your child(ren) to school, please check them for the following symptoms. Anyone with the following symptoms should remain at home.

Has your child(ren) recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way 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
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