

**WATER VALLEY INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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

In compliance with federal requirements for ESSER III

Updated August 2021

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LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

(a) An LEA must describe in its plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services—

- (i) how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:
 - (A) Universal and correct wearing of masks.
 - (B) Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding).
 - (C) Handwashing and respiratory etiquette.
 - (D) Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.
 - (E) Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments.
 - (F) Diagnostic and screening testing.
 - (G) Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities.
 - (H) Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.
 - (I) Coordination with State and local health officials.
- (ii) how it will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services

The Water Valley ISD Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services constitutes the district's policies relative to the plan title. The Plan addresses each of the CDC's safety recommendations (a)(i)(A)-(I) to the extent determined most beneficial by the Water Valley ISD Health and Safety Committee.

(b) During the period of the ARP ESSER award established in section 2001(a) of the ARP Act, an LEA must regularly, but no less frequently than every six months (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools), review and, as appropriate, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. Plan has been reviewed for changes each time that the CDC has updated its guidance, and the Plan will continue to be reviewed every semester (less than 6 months) for changes by Water Valley's Health & Safety Committee.

In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the LEA must seek public input and take such input into account. **Public input will be sought via a district transparency webpage, where all plans and activities associated with ESSER III will be available for review and comment. The webpage address is <https://www.Water-Valleyisd.net/esser>.**

If at the time the LEA revises its plan the CDC has updated its guidance on reopening schools, the revised plan must address the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies, and describe any such policies, for each of the updated safety recommendations. **District leaders will continue to review CDC guidance and the extent of Water Valley implementation as part of the revision process.**

(c) If an LEA developed a plan prior to enactment of the ARP Act that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i)(1) and (2) of the ARP Act but does not address all the requirements in paragraph (a),

the LEA must, pursuant to paragraph (b), revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ARP ESSER funds to meet the requirements in paragraph (a).

Plan will be revised and posted no later than six months after receiving funds.

(d) An LEA's plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services must be—

- (i) In an understandable and uniform format;
This easy-to-read plan will be posted on the central WVISD ESSER III webpage
- (ii) To the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; and
This plan will be posted in English and Spanish, with automated translations into other languages available via Google Translate.
- (iii) Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. **We will provide audible format and other accessible alternative formats as they are requested.**

Health and safety

WVUSD's safety plan focuses on communicating clear expectations, implementing preventative measures, and responding quickly and consistently to cases. Our safety plan and protocols are in compliance with recommendations provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and local health authorities.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

- Facial coverings will be optional for all staff and students (grades PK-12) to wear at their personal discretion and preference. Personal choice about mask wearing is always to be respected by all staff, students, parents, and visitors. Face coverings protect not only the wearer, but also significantly reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.
- Water Valley ISD will continue to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for all employees and students.
- Campus Offices will have facial coverings and other PPE items available for any employee or student upon request.
- If you are wearing a mask:
 - You can cough or sneeze into your mask. Put on a new, clean mask as soon as possible and wash your hands.
- If you are not wearing a mask:
 - Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
 - Throw used tissues in the trash.
 - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer.

Current CDC guidance recommends the wearing of facial coverings for vaccinated and unvaccinated persons when indoors and in confined spaces. Additionally, Governor Abbott's Executive Order 38 effective as of July 29, 2021, states that no governmental entity including public school districts may mandate the wearing of facial coverings.

Isolation of COVID-19 Confirmed Cases

- In line with recommendations from the CDC and local health authorities, Water Valley ISD will continue to quarantine positive confirmed cases and direct the confirmed cases to stay home and self-isolate for:
 - At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, **and**
 - At least 24 hours with no fever and without fever-reducing medication, **and**
 - Other symptoms of COVID-19 continue to improve. **Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.

Reporting of COVID-19 Confirmed Cases

- In line with TEA guidance and in coordination with state and local health officials, Water Valley ISD will notify confirmed cases:
 - Water Valley ISD will report to Tom Green County Public Health on the same day that a case is discovered using the School Reporting link [here](#).
 - Cases will also be reported to the Texas Department of State Health Services on a weekly basis using the following link [here](#).

Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)

Physical Distancing

- Schools should place student desks in rows with space between individuals. Desks should be placed facing the same direction.
- Schools will promote more frequent hand washing and/or sanitizing when social distancing recommendations are not possible.

Buses and Student Transportation

- In line with the executive order from Governor Abbott, beginning 6/5/21 the wearing of masks will be optional for students and staff while riding school buses.
- The Transportation Department will monitor and adjust bus seating protocols as COVID cases fluctuate in the community as needed. Students receiving special education services whose ARD indicates special education eligibility and students eligible for the McKinney-Vento program will be transported.
- All buses will be equipped with hand sanitizer for use by students and staff. All bus drivers will be required to use district sanctioned CDC approved cleaning agents when cleaning buses. Transportation will ensure all staff are trained on the appropriate use of cleaning agents prior to

the start of the 2021-2022 school year. The following safety protocols will be in place to prevent any outbreak while in the bus:

- All students will be required to follow the campus requirements and expectations while aboard buses.
- Bus drivers and monitors will sanitize buses between morning and afternoon routes to prevent cross contamination.
- All transportation vehicles will be fogged to improve sanitation and germ removal if a positive person has been identified to have been transported on a bus.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Regular hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs to others. The district will expect staff, students, and visitors to frequently and consistently practice safety protocols by washing their hands as often as possible using the following handwashing protocol:

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and rinse with clean water.
- Students, staff, and visitors will be encouraged to sanitize and wash hands frequently.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available for staff and student use.
- Schools will provide signage throughout the building promoting proper handwashing techniques, social distancing practices when possible, and encourage the use of masks.
- Schools will teach students and staff general hygiene practices on the first day of in-person instruction regarding the following: proper handwashing techniques, how to cover coughs and sneezes appropriately, and other prevention and mitigation strategies that are part of the district's health and safety protocol.
- Students will be reminded to hand sanitizer after all common contacts (eat, touch points) and will receive continuous reinforcement on hygiene ownership as part of the safe practices educational campaign. Washing and sanitizing hands often, especially before eating, after using the restroom, after blowing your nose, after coughing or sneezing, and after coming in to contact with highly touched objects such as door knobs, handrails, etc. can help reduce the spread of illness.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

- Custodial services will conduct more frequent cleanings and provide cleaning supplies for teachers to clean high-touch surfaces in their classrooms during the day. Custodial services will use supplies that are EPA approved for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- Custodial staff schedules will be arranged for additional cleaning and disinfecting of common space high-touch areas such as door handles, stair handrails, tables, desks, computers, and laptops.

- Custodial staff will be trained to ensure safe and appropriate use of cleaning supplies.
- Custodial staff will use personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed.
- Custodial staff will disinfect restrooms and other common-use spaces more frequently throughout the day.
- Custodial staff will conduct routine cleaning/sanitizing at the end of every school day.
- The maintenance department will continue to maintain air filters and change out as needed to ensure better air quality. Additionally, maintenance will work to ensure fresh air supply units are working properly.
- Classrooms will be provided cleaning supplies so that teachers and other school staff can disinfect high-touch areas (e.g. door knobs and desks) during breaks throughout the day.

Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine, in collaboration with State and local health departments

Identifying and Isolating Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus

- Schools must immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Schools will close-off and clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff).
- Students who report feeling feverish will be assessed by the nurse to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.
- Similar to students, the district must exclude staff from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19. Staff may return when the re-entry conditions have been met, as described in the DSHS rule used for students. For staff who are not fully vaccinated who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, it is recommended that the school require that staff remain off campus during the stay-at-home period.

Each time a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs on campus¹ (among students or staff), the school will do the following:

1. Direct the confirmed case to stay home and self-isolate for 10 days.
2. Notify district administrators. District administrators will notify the local health department.
3. Notify families and staff of all students in the affected classroom, cohort, extracurricular, or after school program.

COVID Response Team

- Each campus will have a COVID Response Team that consists of one of each of the following roles:
 - Administrator; Head Custodian; Counselor; Nurse; Attendance Clerk
- Larger campuses may assign multiple people in each role (i.e. two administrators, two counselors, etc).

Diagnostic and Screening Testing

Water Valley ISD will not test anyone at this time.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies

- Students with disabilities in Pre-K through grade 8 that are at high risk due to health and safety concerns may benefit from homebound instruction to meet their long-term needs. This change of placement decision will be made by the student's 504/ARD committee following district protocol.
- Students with disabilities will also have equal access to learning loss assessments and all remediation intervention activities and supports in addition to their provision of FAPE. The student's ARD committee will make an individualized determination as to whether additional compensatory services are needed.

Coordination with state and local health officials

- WaterValley's Administration met and will continue to meet with local health officials
- Superintendent office communicates with state and local officials regularly (including Tom Green County Public Health and local hospital leaders) in order to remain informed on health trends and to ensure that Water Valley's policies/procedures are in line with best practices across the region.

Notifying authorities of confirmed cases

When cases of COVID-19 occur among students or staff, Water Valley ISD will notify the appropriate authorities.

- WVISD will report to Tom Green County Public Health on the same day that a case is discovered
- Cases will also be reported to Texas Department of State Health Services (per TEA) using the on a weekly basis.

Continuity of Services

21-22 Academic Overview

Given the range of student experiences over the past year, recovery cannot be one-size-fits-all. Every student will need a unique set of supports and opportunities. The pandemic has inhibited teachers' ability to impact students, therefore we must address associated learning losses in a thoughtful, equitable way.

To this end, in the Fall of 2021, Water Valley ISD is planning on having essentially all students return to in person learning.

In the event that health officials and the State of Texas determine that virtual learning is needed, all Water Valley students will have access to the internet and a learning device. District-provided devices and hotspots will be available for a year-long loan to families who do not already have connectivity. This will ensure that all students have equitable access to learning opportunities.

Moreover, all Water Valley students will be assessed for learning loss. All teachers will be measuring students' starting point for the school year. We know that the extended and unexpected time away from the school building, combined with the stress of the pandemic, impacted academic progress.

In addition to the social-emotional and mental health supports detailed below, families will continue to be able to access supports to ensure student health and continuity of learning, including family workshops and family engagement and a technology helpline.

Student Social-Emotional Support

As we all attempt to do what is best for our students, we do so with safety as a paramount consideration. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs reminds us that at the foundation of any hope of progress, best practices dictate safety be addressed and established if at all possible. With this pandemic not yet in our rear view, we know the importance of social-emotional and mental health considerations. The Counseling Department, with collaboration with our P.A.S.S. and LSSPs, are available to support each campus as we help incorporate social-emotional learning and mental health support for Water Valley students.

Counseling Training:

Via robust and research-based professional development, all Water Valley ISD Professional School Counselors are required to participate in training to address the possible SEL (Social-Emotional Learning)/Mental Health impacts of this pandemic and how they may affect children. This will include topics concerning:

- Anxiety
- ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Trauma (Individualized and Shared)
- Grief Loss/Survivors' Guilt
- Compassion Fatigue
- Trust Issues
- Empathy
- Resiliency

A: Acknowledge- We are all experiencing this pandemic and its effects together. It serves no one to pretend that this is not the case. On the contrary, not acknowledging this life changing experience can risk diminishing the reality that many may need to process in order to progress in a healthy manner.

S: Support- It is not merely enough to acknowledge trauma and significant change but to also provide relevant and specialized support when available and appropriate.

E: Engage/Evaluate with Empathy- Adults know how they feel. Students know how they feel. The work is to engage in dialogue in a safe manner to validate feelings and refer for additional support if needed/appropriate. Staff can reflect on their trauma-informed training and evaluate for understanding and effectiveness. This school year, staff will be trained on the TEA-created Project Restore Trauma informed strategies. The evaluation component is ongoing and cyclical and empathy is at the foundation of these efforts.

RT: Resiliency Training- To minimize any trauma and significant change, individuals and groups must be taught the power of resiliency, what it is, and how to recognize and practice it within themselves. Resiliency training goes hand-in-hand with SEL and character training and is significant to providing students with an emotionally safe environment in which they can learn and co-exist positively with others.

Campus Implementation

Each campus, prior to students returning, will have the opportunity to support their staff as they prepare to engage with students and families. This can be facilitated by campus counselors or other appropriate principals' designee(s). This can include some prescriptive "talking points" that all campuses can share with students to help ensure consistency, accuracy, transparency, and overall effectiveness.

Student Daily Support in the Classroom (In-Person):

This school year, all campuses will have access to the Harmony Program Curriculum. Teachers must be intentional about building relationships immediately and consistently as they engage with their students. Daily practices such as using students' names and posting their names in their classrooms, doing a quick five-minute SEL lesson or check in, and creating a "Brain Break" area in the classroom for students when they need to take a moment to regroup will all work to help build a sense of belonging and decrease anxiety. SEL lessons can be readily available in the "Brain Break" areas for students to access. Teachers will focus on building resilience in students with restorative practices and integrating SEL within the daily classroom environment. Water Valley professional school counselors are available to support these efforts and other SEL implementation.

Regular Emotional/Mental Health Check-In

Campus counselors and other related campus– level support are intentional in checking on the mental health and emotional status of students via individual and group support and resources.

Counseling Support Integration

Water Valley ISD Counseling staff will be trained and will collaborate with additional partners/resources include: Mental health and IDD, Mental Health First Aid, Texas Counseling Association, Center for School Behavioral Health, TEA, and Region 15.

Staff Social-Emotional Support

Water Valley ISD values and appreciates its dedicated staff. We realize that as we focus on social-emotional support for our district, we must include the adults that help lead and educate our students every day.