

Mount Enterprise ISD

FAQ's

Below are a list of FAQ's that will help answer most questions and concerns regarding MEISD's protocols with health, instruction, remote instruction, UIL participation, transportation, cafeteria, technology and campus visits.

Health & Wellness

If one student tests positive for COVID-19, does that mean the teacher and the rest of the class have to quarantine for 14 days?

The quarantine will be an option as an outcome for a positive case of a student. It will depend on the situation as we gather information. Upon a positive COVID test, families and employees will be notified, and the school will then work with the families and staff to determine the next steps based on [TEA public health guidance for schools](#), the CDC, and local health officials.

- Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (feeling feverish, fever of 100.0 or more, 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) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine if any of the conditions below 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 three days (72 hours) have 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 a student or staff member on campus tests positive for COVID-19, will the district be shut down?

Mt. Enterprise ISD will follow guidance from TEA, as well as local, state, and federal health officials. At a minimum, the building will be deep cleaned and sanitized. Steps will be taken to trace contact and to notify staff and families about possible exposure to the virus and to screen for symptoms. If health officials feel it best to shut down, the district will close between 3-5 days. Those days/minutes will have to be made up unless we move to remote learning for those days. The district has 6 days of minutes built into the school calendar if there are closures that don't involve remote learning.

How will the district notify affected students and families if they have been exposed to COVID-19?

Campuses will communicate with families through email, calls, and/or texts to notify families of students who may have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. All privacy laws will be followed. It is very important that your contact information is up to date in order for the district to communicate in a timely manner. Campuses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

What happens if my student gets sick or is exposed to the virus from a sick relative at home?

MEISD expects parents/caregivers to keep sick children at home. If a student is exposed to COVID-19 through a close contact, a parent/caregiver must call the school to report. The student should not report to campus. The student may be required to remain off-campus for up to a 14-day incubation period; in that case, parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to opt to have their students receive remote/virtual instruction for the 14-day incubation period in order to promote student learning.

The administration will work with the families and staff to determine the next steps based on guidance from the TEA, CDC, and local health officials.

As more is learned about COVID-19, there could be changes to this health guidance, and we will keep our families informed.

Will there be a nurse on my child's campus?

Currently, we have a nurse available 2 days per week. We are working to increase that number for 2020-2021.

Are students and staff required to wear masks?

Yes. As of now, students in grades 4-12 will wear face coverings on buses, hallways, common areas, and when social distancing is not feasible, including in classrooms, to the extent it is developmentally appropriate. All employees will also wear face

coverings. We are gathering information as whether it is appropriate to require face coverings in lower grade levels down to 3rd or 2nd grade. For now, students below 4th grade are highly encouraged to wear a face mask/covering or a face shield while inside the school buildings. **ALL STUDENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A FACE COVERING ON THE BUS.**

What is considered a face covering?

Face coverings include medical or non-medical grade disposable face masks and cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). Students may wear a face shield.

Are students required to provide their own face coverings?

Yes, a face covering will be part of regular school supplies for 2020-2021. The district will have replacements if a student loses or forgets his/her mask. Custom made face masks are allowed as long as any wording or logo is school appropriate. The administration has the final say as to whether a custom mask is appropriate for school.

Who will be responsible for helping students keep their face coverings on when in school?

All school staff will work to educate the students about the importance of wearing a face covering in situations where adequate social distancing cannot be achieved. We ask that families work with their children at home to stress the importance of wearing a face covering to keep everyone healthy and to adhere to school rules.

MEISD will do our best to adhere to the Centers for Disease Control, Texas Education Agency, and American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, but we cannot guarantee that all students will be 6 feet apart at all times of the day, including in the classroom. We expect our students to play an active role in adhering to these guidelines established for the safety of students and staff within our schools.

Will students' temperatures be checked daily at school?

Guidance on this issue has changed from TEA. Initially, guidance led districts to conduct daily temperature checks and now TEA is saying that this is not a reliable means of screening students and is not recommended. With that said, we have ordered several non-touch thermometers that will be used periodically or when needed. Teachers will have access to thermometers in their area in case a student becomes ill or if the teacher feels the need to check their temperature. All staff and students participating in on-campus learning will commit to conducting a daily COVID-19 screening at home, which will include temperature checks, prior to entering our campuses.

Will the district be using plexiglass dividers between desks or in the cafeteria?

The district will do our best to observe social distancing among students in the classroom. For the elementary, we ordered dividers for small group sessions when students are gathered around the teacher. The secondary will space desks as far apart as possible and will, at times, conduct class in the commons area if appropriate. The entire cafeteria seating will have plexiglass dividers since this room will have a higher number of students at one time.

How is the district addressing the need for additional cleaning and/or sanitizing?

MEISD will provide extra cleaning, including disinfecting every bus and rooms daily. Teachers will have disinfectant wipes and Lysol type of sprays to sanitize high usage areas such as keyboards, manipulatives, PE supplies, etc. Hand sanitizer will be available in the classrooms and offices, along with high traffic areas. Also, high usage areas, such as door handles, will be sanitized frequently.

Students will be asked to bring their own water bottle for drinking. It will not be advisable to face drink out of water fountains. Students may, however, use the fountains to fill up an empty water bottle.

The district will have signage to remind students to social distance, wash hands frequently and to cough into their elbows.

How will immune-compromised students be accommodated?

It may be more appropriate for the student to learn remotely until our county has lifted the face mask order. With that said, these situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis for students that want to learn on campus. Please contact your campus administrator to begin discussions on needed accommodations.

Will campuses be required to have a quarantine space for students who show symptoms while at school?

Yes, the elementary and secondary campuses will have a designated quarantine area where students will wait to be picked up.

What supplies are allowed to be used for cleaning/disinfecting purposes?

The district will use Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning solutions.

General Instruction

If my family starts the school year by choosing the remote, off-campus instructional setting, but then we change our minds, can our students opt into the on-campus instructional setting?

Yes. During the first two weeks of each six weeks grading period, families will have the option to move their children to in-person, on-campus instruction from remote instruction. Once the first two weeks of each grading period has passed, remote students will need to finish the 6 weeks grading period before switching to face to face instruction (with a few exceptions). Families will always have the option to move into a virtual/remote setting. Once a student moves to remote instruction from face to face instruction, the student will have to stay in the remote option until the 6 weeks grading period has been completed. Students who are ill or have been exposed to the virus will be moved into remote instruction as quickly as possible until it is safe for them to return to school.

At the beginning of each 6 weeks grading period, students have the option to switch instructional settings.

How will virtual learning differ from the In-Home Learning that occurred in the spring?

In-Home Learning was a response to an immediate crisis. The rigor of virtual/remote learning will be enhanced exponentially from the spring. Students will be expected to work each day a certain amount of minutes (depending on grade level) to satisfy the remote learning requirements. Note: TEA has directed school districts to ensure that the rigor of virtual instruction is equal to on-campus instruction for the upcoming school year.

Will the elementary students have recess?

Yes. Outdoor play and learning will be encouraged as public health conditions allow. MEISD understands the importance of students playing outside. Students will be required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon re-entry to the building.

Will my student's grades be counted for their final grade or GPA?

Yes. Whether they are in person or virtual, all grades count towards the student's final grades and GPA. While in a virtual learning environment, time management is critical to success. Students and teachers must remain in communication regarding daily schedules and assignments. As with any traditional course, there is a risk of receiving a lower grade if a student falls behind. If students are struggling with time management, then the parent or student should contact the teacher for additional assistance.

Will high school exemptions continue to utilize attendance as an exemption criteria?

No. Exemptions will be based on grades and discipline. Please refer to your campus handbook for more specific information. Handbooks will be available online after August 10.

Will Virtual Learning students be required to come to campus for exams?

Maybe. High school students who are enrolled in Advanced Academic Courses agree to take all major exams **on campus**. There could be other exams that may require in-person attendance such as certain CTE courses or other major exams.

Meals/Cafeteria

If I choose virtual learning for my child, will he/she still have access to free breakfast/lunch?

The provision of student meals will be dependent upon waivers granted by USDA and TDA for the National School Lunch Program. At this time, this information has not been made available but MEISD does not foresee that waiver not being granted.

How will students eat lunches?

With each seat having a plexiglass divider, lunches will be as close to normal as possible. Age appropriate students will wear face coverings until seated to eat. High School students will continue to have the option to eat in the commons provided the campus principal has given permission.

With there be sanitizing between lunches?

Yes, there will be a custodian on duty in the cafeteria during all lunches sanitizing the tables after each student is finished eating.

Will the microwave be available?

Unfortunately, no. The microwaves are a hotbed for germs during this time. To put it bluntly, students lick their fingers and touch the buttons/knobs. Once the students can eat in the cafeteria without the plexiglass dividers, the microwaves will be made available once again.

Can I visit my student during lunch?

No. For 2020-2021, or until the pandemic has substantially subsided, no visitors will be allowed in the cafeteria.

Transportation

Will there be social distancing on the school buses?

Per TEA guidelines, students in grades PK-12 will wear face coverings on buses. Face coverings will be available on school buses for students who arrive without them, although students are expected to bring their own face covering. Hand sanitizer will be provided as students enter and exit the bus.

In all cases, windows will be lowered to allow for appropriate ventilation (weather permitting). Buses will be disinfected on a daily basis. Family members will be seated together. The district asks families, if at all possible, to drop their students off, carpool or use another form of transportation. But, the buses will be available for anyone in the driving area.

Virtual Learning

If I choose Virtual Learning as my child's instructional option, will it impact college acceptance, scholarships, etc.?

Students will receive the same rigorous level of instruction in both educational settings. Transcripts utilized by colleges and scholarship organizations for selection purposes will not differ by delivery method and should not impact college or scholarship decisions.

What online platforms will be used for virtual learning?

The district will use Google Classroom or Seesaw as its learning management system. Through that system, students will access lessons, instruction and activities to complete each day. The secondary will also access Edmentum/Plato as an additional learning tool for core course classes through Google Classroom.

Will grades count?

Yes. Online school grades will count toward GPA, class rank, and UIL eligibility, just like on-campus grades will count. Grading policies will be similar for all students, whether they participate in virtual learning or on-campus instruction.

How will attendance be taken?

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has released specific guidance on attendance that all districts must follow. A designated daily schedule for virtual/remote instruction will be provided for students to follow, and attendance will be taken for all students every day. Virtual learners must complete assignments on a **daily basis** in order to be counted present. Students and the teacher will have to have daily contact for attendance purposes.

How much time will virtual learners be required to participate in online instruction?

Students must be engaged in learning each day. They must show progress and submit assignments **daily to be marked present**. This past spring many students would complete their work at the beginning of the week and take the remainder of the week off. Teachers will provide daily instruction and/or support to students in all grade levels. The actual time for remote learning is 240 minutes for secondary and 180 minutes for elementary per day.

Who will be teaching the virtual/remote classes?

Students who are enrolled in remote instruction will be assigned to the same certified MEISD teacher just as if they were coming to campus for a particular course, class or grade level.

If I opt for virtual learning, would my child still be able to utilize special education resources from the district?

Yes. If a student has an Individualized Education Plan and chooses virtual learning, the ARD committee will convene and determine comparable services appropriate for the remote/virtual learning.

How will Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes be taught remotely?

Some CTE courses offered at MEISD will be available to students participating in virtual learning. However, courses in the areas of Welding, etc. will require participation in on-campus instruction. If your student is currently enrolled in one of these areas but wishes to participate in virtual learning, MEISD will work with them to find other course alternatives to ensure they stay on track to be college and career ready.

UIL and other Extra-curricular activities

Students that choose to learn off-campus/remote will not be allowed to participate in UIL or other school sponsored, extra-curricular activities. Students that switch to face to face/on-campus learning will be eligible to participate as long as the student is academically eligible and/or the sponsor of the extra-curricular activity allows participation. This decision is made in the best interest of the child. Students that need to learn off-campus for health and safety reasons do not need to be exposed to potential health issues by playing sports, band or other activities that are around other students.

Technology

Will the district be loaning out Chromebooks again?

Yes, for students that do not have a learning device at home, a Chromebook or other technological device will be available for checkout.

Please note: If a student hasn't turned in a borrowed Chromebook from last spring he/she will not be issued another one.

My Internet is spotty, so my family has trouble learning virtually. What is the district doing to assist with that?

In conjunction with TEA, the district has purchased hotspots for families that need them who are learning virtually, or if the district has to close down for an extended period of time. The hotspots may not be available until after the first 6-8 weeks of school because of a backlog of orders. During the interim period, students who have spotty internet service can access the districts wifi at most locations around the buildings.

Students in grades pre-k through five may have limited experience utilizing virtual online learning settings. How will they learn how to use the online platform?

The elementary is planning a tutorial before school begins. The campus will be in contact with parents on dates and times.

Campus Visitors

Can parents attend the school for pep rallies?

Unfortunately, no. During 2020-2021, only high school students and faculty will be allowed in the gym for pep rallies, provided we have them. The district will send out information ASAP if the protocol changes.

Are parents allowed on campus for meetings?

Yes. Parents can make an appointment to meet with the teacher (during his/her conference time), principal or superintendent during school hours. We ask that parents not visit without contacting the school first. We can no longer allow parents to walk their children to the classroom.

Visitors will be asked to wear face coverings and self-screen for any COVID symptoms mentioned on the first page of this document. Visitors will also be asked COVID related questions upon arrival.

Can parents/community attend sporting or other school events outside of the school day?

Yes, but protocols for venue capacity limits haven't been made at this time. Decisions will be made prior to the first event. Some decisions may be out of MEISD's hands if mandates come down from the governor, UIL, county officials or our own city officials.