

# North Heights Elementary

## Return to School Plan

In Response to COVID-19



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<https://www.sfdr-cisd.org/elementary-school/north-heights-elementary/>

**Changes to the public health situation over the course of the school year  
may necessitate changes to this guidance.**

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## Introduction

We have created this plan to aid in navigating the reestablishment of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to the district. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO). Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by the CDC, WHO, and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

## Guiding Principles

In order to ensure the continued wellbeing of our employees the following guiding principles have been put in place:



## Campus Information

### Campus Map *(see attachment 1)*

The attached campus map indicates how the campus day to day procedures will run for Pick-up, Drop-off and campus accessibility. It additionally details Screening Stations designated for student and staff daily checks.

- **Drop-off and Pick-up**

We encourage drop offs to take place using both the Main Street horseshoe and 17th Street horseshoe entrances. Designated staff will be at each location ready to greet and receive our students. All pathways will be labeled so that students have their temperature check, receive their breakfast and report to their classroom practicing social distancing.

Pickup will be divided into the two horseshoe areas:

- K-2 and their siblings - Main Street horseshoe
- 3-5 and Day Care/Bus riders - 17th Street horseshoe
- All walkers will exit using the Main Street crosswalk

*\*These procedures did not change from last year, other than ensuring safety protocols for social distancing.*

- **Employee and Student Screening**

Screening Stations have been identified as indicated in the image below for staff and students. Parents will drive through the designated area/s. While in their vehicle, students will have their temperature checked by a school employee. Once the temperature check is cleared, (below 100.00 degrees F) the student may exit their vehicle and walk directly to their classroom while maintaining social distancing guidelines.

Students using the walk up gate will be screened at the crosswalk. Students must clear this check before crossing to enter the campus.

Staff screening stations will be utilized prior to students arriving. These checks will ensure all staff is cleared to receive students.



Staff Screening Station



Student Screening Station

- **Visitor Restrictions**

In keeping with the guidelines to help prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, elementary campuses will limit normal visitation to our campus at this time. During high traffic student arrival and dismissal, we will ask parents to remain in their vehicles to minimize interactions with others. No lunch deliveries, eating with students, or visiting classrooms will be allowed.

- **Isolation Room**

An Isolation Room has been identified on the map to indicate where we will immediately separate any student/staff member who shows COVID-19 symptoms. Should the need arise, students will wait in the Isolation Room for parent or guardian pick up.



Isolation Room

## Parent Trainings

Parent training will begin the week of August 10th. Parents are required to attend a Zoom meeting (AM/PM availability per each session including English and Spanish) as found below:

Date	Time	Audience
Wednesday, August 12th	9:00 AM	K-2nd Parents
Wednesday, August 12th	11:00 AM	3rd-5th Parents
Wednesday, August 12th	4:30 PM	K-2nd Parents
Thursday, August 13th	10:00 AM	3rd-5th Parents
Thursday, August 13th	12:00 PM	K-2nd Parents
Thursday, August 13th	5:30 PM	3rd-5th Parents
Friday, August 14th	12:30 PM	K-2nd Parents
Friday, August 14th	2:00 PM	3rd-5th Parents
Friday, August 14th	4:30 PM	Make Up Session

This Zoom meeting will cover the Campus Return to School Plan training (*see attachment 2*) GoogleClassroom training will take place at a later date. Please be on the lookout for information from your child's teacher.

## School Dismissal Manager (SDM)

This app allows parents to "check in" when they are in the car pick up line. This will send an alert to the student's teacher that the parent is in line. The student will then be dismissed from the classroom to the designated pick up spot. Campus duty personnel will assist the student getting in the car. If the student is delayed in arriving at the designated pick up spot in line the campus duty personnel will ask the parent to pull up to wait. Once the student arrives at their car they will be loaded.

This app will also be used for early check outs. Parents will simply open the app and enter the required information. This will allow the campus to keep digital documentation of check outs without the parent having to physically sign a piece of paper.

This app can also be used to notify the student's teacher if they are running late in the morning.

<https://youtu.be/nxtNMD9rOxU>

## **Breakfast**

Upon arrival students will receive a sack breakfast to eat in their classroom before the start of the instructional day. Because we have two student entry points there will be two breakfast stands so that all students receive a breakfast.

## **Lunch**

As we transition students to on campus instruction, all classes will eat lunch in their classrooms the first two weeks on campus. We will transition into lunch being served in the cafeteria as well as the classroom. You will receive a schedule of where your child will be eating on what days.

Students will get to choose their lunch daily (as available). The school menu for the week will be made available ahead of time to allow for lunch planning. Choice may not be available the first few weeks upon return, but warm meals will be prepared.

Students can always bring their lunch from home if they do not want to eat any of the choices presented. We encourage you to send your child to school with their lunch in a lunch box/bag when you bring them to school as lunch deliveries will not be allowed during the day.

## **Instruction**

### **First Day of School**

Classes begin Wednesday, August 26th via the online remote instruction platform. Classes will take place fully online up through the third week of school. Should the need for a change arise, campuses will notify parents and students.

### **Anticipated First Day to Receive Face to Face/Hybrid Students**

We are anticipating receiving students face to face on September 16th if the face to face or hybrid model was selected. Instructional hours are from 8:00 AM - 3:05 PM daily. We encourage parents to drop off students beginning at 7:30 AM so that students can enter their classroom. For safety reasons, students **cannot** be dropped off any earlier than 7:30 AM. Teachers will greet students at their door beginning at 7:30 AM. This will be the procedure we follow throughout the school year.

We welcome the arrival on campus of students in the face to face model and hybrid Group A. Hybrid Group B and Fully Online students will log in via Google Classroom. All students will participate in learning the procedures and health practices for the school, including the expectations for using the restroom, transitioning to specials, etc. To adhere to the safety of all students and staff, parents will not be allowed to walk their child to the classroom.

- **Pre Kindergarten/Kindergarten** - Parents of incoming Kindergarten students will be given a time slot to drop off your child at the teacher's door. For parents wishing to walk their child into the classroom on the first face to face day only, appointment times will begin after 8:30 AM. Masks must be worn and only one parent is allowed to enter per kindergarten student.

## **Instructional Models for Learning**

Please visit the link for a detailed description of the three learning models provided through San Felipe Del Rio - CISD. <https://www.sfdr-cisd.org/media/13875/sfdr-cisd-options.pdf>

## **Google Classroom**

All elementary students will be utilizing Google Classroom. Regardless of the instructional option you have chosen for your child, Google Classroom will be available to all students.

Parents will be able to get training on Google Classroom so you can understand the platform that your child is using. Your child's campus will be reaching out with training dates and times after August 17th. For students that are attending school through remote learning, this platform is where they will receive and turn in all of their work.

**\*\*Due to all students using the online platform the first three weeks of school, we encourage you to visit the link to learn more about Google Classroom. [www.fried.tech/Classroom-Parent](http://www.fried.tech/Classroom-Parent)**

## **Attendance**

Daily attendance will be taken for all learning models. Students in K-2 will have to show "engagement" in learning, meaning they are required to submit daily tasks. Students in 3-5 will be required to actively participate in the learning sessions daily, during the teacher assigned instructional times.

\*Incentives will not be awarded for perfect attendance for the 2020-2021 school year.

## **Classroom Expectations**

### **In-Person Classes**

- Students attending classes on campus will follow all safety protocols. This includes social distancing and the wearing of masks when not outdoors or eating. Students are encouraged to wear masks and SFDR-CISD will be following the Texas state governor's executive order. Teachers will share with students the expectations for the classroom and campus. Students are encouraged to bring their own PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). The campus will have an inventory of PPE.

### **Remote or Hybrid Classes**

- **Student Expectations:** Students attending classes through Google Classroom will have expectations, as well, regarding work to be turned in and daily attendance. (Please see the "Instructional Model" section for specifics). During online classes, the same behavior expectations will be in place as for an in-person class.
- **Parent Expectations:** Assure that your child has logged into Google Classroom attendance and learning purposes for the day. If child is unable to attend for the day, contact school through the School Dismissal Manager program to report the absence. Verify your child has completed all daily virtual assignments. Assist the student as needed with virtual assignments. Correspond with the teacher as needed. Ensure students engage in virtual learning with academic honesty.
- When online, 3rd - 5th grade students will be assigned either an AM or PM block of instructional time to complete their 180 minutes of Direct Instruction with their teacher. Students will spend the

other hours of their day working to complete the remainder of their classwork and/or special activities and lessons.

- K-2nd grade students will not be required to log in at the same time as their teacher, but teachers will set up guided instruction times within their day and we highly encourage parents and students to utilize this time for support and interventions, or mini lesson sessions.
- Example of online schedule:

Online Master Schedule			
7:50-8:35	Conference 45 min.		
8:35-11:35	Direct Instruction 180 min.	60 min. ELA Instruction 60 min. Math Instruction 60 min. Social Studies/Science Instruction 60 min. Independent Student Work	Teacher Assigned Group A
11:35-12:05	Lunch 30 min.		
12:05-3:05	Direct Instruction 180 min.	60 min. ELA Instruction 60 min. Math Instruction 60 min. Social Studies/Science Instruction 60 min. Independent Student Work	Teacher Assigned Group B

## School Supplies

Please note that the school supplies will be minimal to fit in a small container for the individual student's use only. Students will not be sharing supplies in the classroom. Students are encouraged to bring bottled water.

K-5th Grade School Supply List			
1	Box/Zipped Pouch for Supplies	2	Large Pink Erasers
1	Pkg. of #2 Pencils, 12 Count	2	Bottles of Elmer's Glue 4 oz or Glue Sticks
1	Metal Safety Scissors (Round Tip)	6	Plastic Pocket Folders with Brads
1	Box of Crayola Crayons 24 Count	6	Black & White Mead Composition Notebooks
1	Pencil Sharpener	1	Package of Highlighters (2nd - 5th grade only)
2	Packages of Notebook Paper	*	Backpacks will not be needed or allowed.



## Homework

Students will not bring paper and pencil assignments home for homework in an effort to reduce the amount of material that is physically handled and passed from school to home. Students may have opportunities to participate in online/hybrid homework activities allowing them to interact with the online component. Students may have homework assignments that require them to read a variety of print materials at home.

## Prevention

### Campus Visitors Policies

In keeping with guidelines to help prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, campus visitors will be allowed on campus by appointment only. During high traffic student arrival and dismissal, we will ask parents to remain in their vehicles to minimize interactions with others. No lunch deliveries, eating with students, or visiting classrooms will be allowed. All scheduled meetings such as 504 meetings, ARDs, or parent conferences will be by appointment via Zoom.

## Health and Hygiene

### COVID 19 Acknowledgment Form

- The COVID-19 Acknowledgement form provides a means for parents to assure SFDRICISD that their child is free of any COVID-19 symptoms that are not otherwise normal to their child. This form will be filled out and returned before the start of school.  
(see attachment 3)

### Self-Check/Student Health Check

- Students riding the bus will have their temperature checked before boarding the bus. If their temperature is 100.00 degrees F or greater, they will not be permitted to board the bus. Students arriving at school by other means will have their temperature taken prior to entering the building. If their temperature is 100.00 degrees F or greater, they will not be permitted to stay on campus.

### Symptoms to Monitor

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Parents should monitor their children for the following symptoms. If these symptoms are abnormal for your child during any time of the year you may need to contact your healthcare provider.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



This list does not include all possible symptoms. Parents are encouraged to keep their children at home if they are sick.

\*Incentives will not be awarded for perfect attendance for the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Handwashing/Sanitizer**

- During the first week of school and then on a regular basis, students will be given the procedure for correct handwashing. Teachers will also be reminding students to wash their hands regularly and after they use the restroom.
- Sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and various points on the campus including designated entry and exit doors.

## **Transitions**

### **Entry/Exit**

Entry and Exit points will be used as one way hallways always keeping to the right when we walk. All floor spaces will be identified using social distance markers when walking to and from entry and exit points and throughout the campus.

#### Kindergarten, 1st Grade & 2nd Grade

Students in these grades should be dropped off using the Main Street horseshoe. Students will be screened as they arrive but before their parents leave. Students that do not register a temperature over 100.00 degrees F will enter the building using the side door entering the A Building. Students will then walk to their classroom if arrival is 7:30 AM or later.

#### 3rd Grade, 4th Grade & 5th Grade

Students in these grades should be dropped off using the 17th Street horseshoe. Students will be screened as they arrive but before their parents leave. Students that do not register a temperature over 100.00 degrees F will enter the building using the gated entrance by the gym. Students will then walk to their classroom if arrival is 7:30AM or later.

We HIGHLY encourage students in these grades who have siblings (in Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd) to use the Main Street horseshoe as a Drop Off and will use the Main Street horseshoe for Pick Up.

### **Hallways**

Floors will be marked every six feet indicating where students should stand if they are having to wait in the hallway. (i.e. should the need arise outside of bathrooms) All hallways will be monitored and the school will utilize a Zone per grade level, minimizing traveling outside of their Zone when possible. All hallways will utilize a one way direction; walking along the right side of the hallway as students travel.

### **Specials**

#### **Art**

The Art teacher will utilize her classroom to provide Art instruction for students who selected the traditional instructional option. Students will not share Art supplies. These supplies will travel with the student in their supply box. There will be time allotted for the

Art teacher to clean up spaces, disinfect desks and take proper hygiene precautions prior to a new class coming in.

### **Music**

The Music teacher will utilize her classroom to provide Music instruction for students who selected the traditional instructional option. Students will not need Music supplies as our Music Curriculum is online. Students will be able to participate in singing activities. There will be time allotted for the Music teacher to clean up spaces, disinfect desks and take proper hygiene precautions prior to a new class coming in.

### **P.E.**

P.E. Coaches will arrive to the classroom to line students up for P.E. P.E. will take place outside only. (Inclement weather days will be reserved for health lessons in the child's homeroom classroom.) Each class will have their own "quadrant" (or field section) to participate in social distance physical activities.

### **Recess**

Classroom teachers will supervise student recess. Recess will be an assigned time during the day not always in combination with lunch time. Each grade level will have an assigned "quadrant" (or field section) outside where they can play. Each class will be issued recess equipment. The recess equipment will be for the assigned class only. The equipment will be sanitized at the end of each recess period.

### **Library**

Students will not be gathering in the library. The campus Library Personnel will assemble grade appropriate books on a cart. These carts will travel to the homeroom classes for students to enjoy. These books will remain in the classroom for a determined amount of time. The students will not be able to take the books home. After the determined amount of time the books and cart will be picked up and returned to the library. Library Personnel will do their very best to make sure that books are properly sanitized and rotated to all classes in the grade level so that everyone will have the chance to enjoy them. We will utilize online books as much as possible, especially for reading at home.

### **Restrooms**

Kindergarten students will use the individual classroom restrooms.

Each of the remaining grades, 1st - 5th, will use an assigned restroom in their designated "Zone." Each hallway restroom will be labeled. Grade levels will not double up on restroom assignments.

Students will wear individual lanyards with a name tag. (Name tag information will include student name, teacher name and grade level.) There will be three hooks on the wall outside the hallway restrooms. Students will hang their lanyard up outside the restroom indicating that someone is in the restroom. Only three students will be allowed in the restroom at a time. (Campus personnel will monitor hallways throughout the day to monitor restroom occupancy.) Once a child has finished in the restroom they will put their own lanyard back on and return to their homeroom.

All restrooms will have proper signage that will detail important health instructions and reminders. Teachers will teach proper safety measures upon arrival to school and will continue to monitor the importance of such learning skills.

## **Campus Cleaning Protocols**

- Campuses will include more frequent cleaning practices, including hourly cleaning practices in restrooms. The use of a clipboard to ensure a cleaning log will be visible outside each restroom and/or gathering areas such as the cafeteria, nurse's office, etc.
- In areas where students are daily, the campus will provide opportunities for children to clean their own spaces before and after they are used in ways that are safe and developmentally appropriate.
- Additional cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in common throughout the day will also be practiced. (i.e. door handles, common tables/desks, high touch devices such as computers or tablets)
- Products used for cleaning will be safely stored and kept in areas that are not accessible to children.
- At the end of each day, all classrooms and buildings will be thoroughly sanitized in addition to regular cleaning protocols.

## **Response**

### **Possible Cases on Campus**

- If a student or staff member develops symptoms after the morning check, the person will be immediately separated utilizing the Isolation Room and an immediate temperature check will be conducted.
- The campus will ensure the cleaning of all areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) before students re-enter the room.
- All students will be removed from the classroom space that the potentially infected student was in. The room will be immediately sanitized and parents will be notified.

### **Responding to Possible Cases on Campus**

1. While we hope to avoid exposure to illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, we will follow all privacy protocols, 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. Schools must 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 3 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, schools must 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.
4. The following is a sample of a script that may be used to notify families of possible exposure:

*"Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ calling from your child's school. This call is to inform you that your child may have come in contact with an individual who may have had symptoms of COVID 19 today at school. Please monitor your child for any abnormal symptoms of illness."*

## Slowing the Spread

- **Masks**

In accordance with Governor Abbot's declaration all students over the age of 10 and all staff members will be required to wear a mask over the mouth and nose. The district is requiring ALL students wear a face mask while on campus. A face shield can be worn along with a mask over the mouth and nose.



## Handwashing

Students will participate in proper handwashing lessons within the first two weeks of school. Some classrooms are equipped with sinks. All classrooms will have hand sanitizer available upon entry into the classroom and exit. Posters with written directions and visual directions are posted in all restrooms and above all sinks on campus.

## Working Together to Help Our Students Succeed

Our students, more than ever, will need to be aware of their support system (home and school). Working together we can focus on:

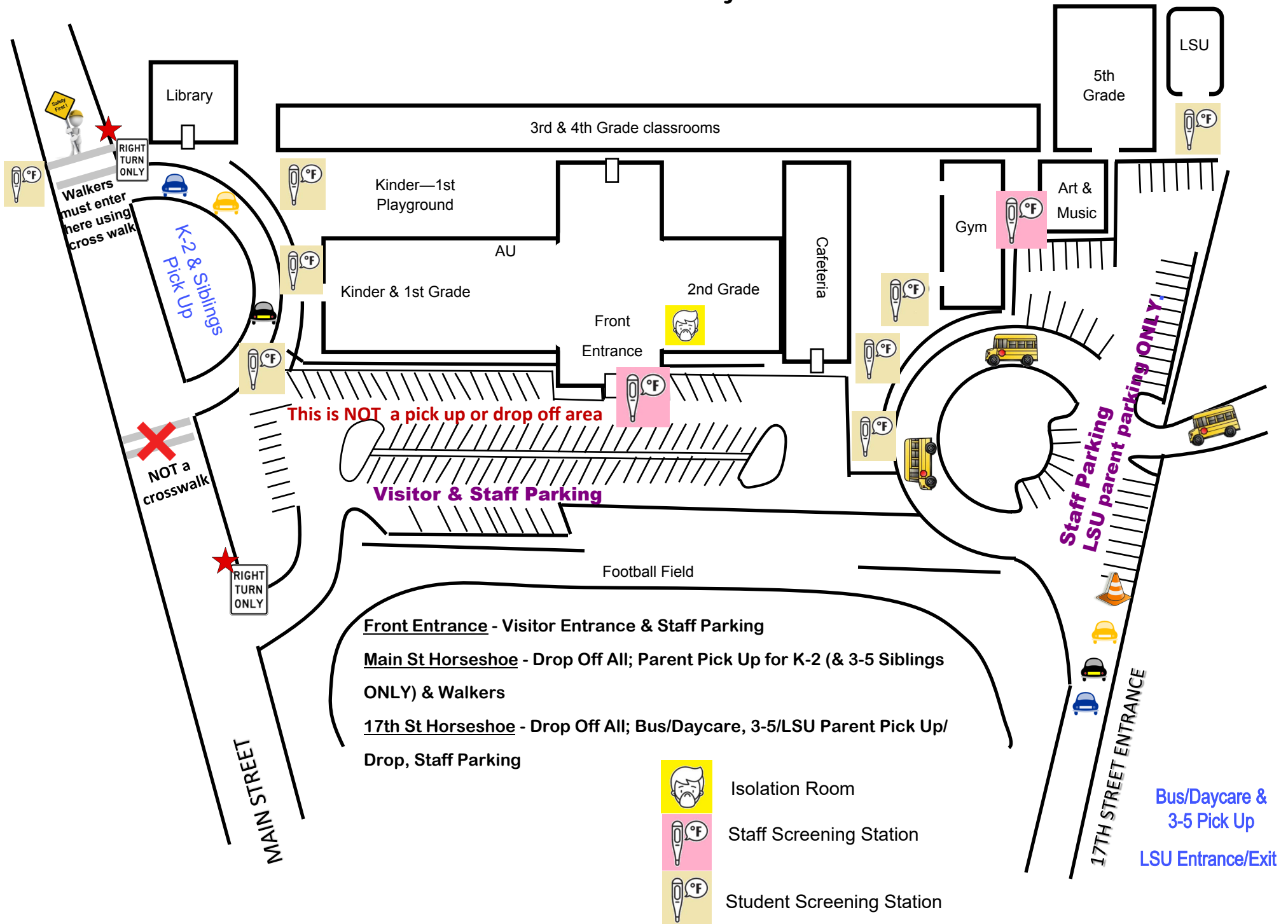
- STAY CALM, LISTEN, AND OFFER REASSURANCE
- MONITOR TELEVISION VIEWING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- KEEP EXPLANATIONS AGE-APPROPRIATE - BE HONEST AND ACCURATE
- BUILDING NEW ROUTINES
- BASIC HYGIENE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PRACTICES
- BE AWARE OF YOUR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH
- STAY CONNECTED TO SCHOOL

*(See attachment 4)*

# NORTH HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

## 2020-2021 Re-Entry Procedures



# NORTH HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

## Parent Handbook Informational Meeting

**NHE Parents & Guardians,**

**We welcome you to our informational back to school meeting. Pick a date and time to attend ONE session. If you have multiple children in multiple grades, you only need to attend ONE session.**

**Please click on the link below to sign up. The day before the meeting, you will receive an email with the Zoom Meeting Invite.**

Date	Time	Audience
Wednesday, August 12th	9:00 AM	K-2nd Parents
Wednesday, August 12th	11:00 AM	3rd-5th Parents
Wednesday, August 12th	4:30 PM	K-2nd Parents
Thursday, August 13th	10:00 AM	3rd-5th Parents
Thursday, August 13th	12:00 PM	K-2nd Parents
Thursday, August 13th	5:30 PM	3rd-5th Parents
Friday, August 14th	12:30 PM	K-2nd Parents
Friday, August 14th	2:00 PM	3rd-5th Parents
Friday, August 14th	4:30 PM	Make Up Session

**Click below to sign up!**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=8s2ejQV3X0mRQLeMOKgbSxkdr8CHQr5Hp5JWFMmPisVUMVJYOTZFS0U3VkpHV0VRMFpEWEHRFZMMi4u>

Questions? Please call 830-778-4770.





P.O. DRAWER 428002

DEL RIO, TEXAS 78842

Acknowledgment of COVID-19 Screening and Protocols (Student)

As always, the health and safety of our SFDRCISD students is a top priority. As such, to ensure the safety of our staff and students upon the return to school during this unprecedented time, all students will be required to self-screen each day before entering a District facility. When self-screening, parents must determine if their son/daughter has started experiencing any of the following symptoms in a way that is not normal for them.

**COVID-19 Symptoms**

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

By checking the boxes and signing below, you acknowledge that you are required to screen your son/daughter for COVID-19 symptoms before entering a campus, and take the necessary precautions to quarantine or isolate if needed.

☐ I affirm that **I will not** send my son/daughter to school, or have him/her participate in any school-related activity if he/she is experiencing any of the COVID-19-related symptoms listed above.

☐ I affirm that **I will not** send my son/daughter to school, or have him/her participate in any school related activity if they themselves have had close contact with anyone, including those living in my household who have been lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until they have completed a 14-day quarantine period.

*\*In general, 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 person in 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.*

☐ I affirm that **I will not** send my son/daughter to school, or participate in any school-related activity if **he/she has been lab-confirmed with COVID-19**. I also understand that my son/daughter must remain off campus until **all conditions below have been met:**

1. At least ten (10) days in isolation have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
2. At least one day (24 hours) has passed with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications;

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3. *My son/daughter has had physical improvement in symptoms (i.e., cough, shortness of breath, other COVID-19 related symptoms have ceased)*
4. *My son/daughter has obtained one acute infection test that has come back negative for COVID-19; and*
5. *My son/daughter has received medical clearance to return to school.*

☐ I affirm that my son/daughter's temperature will be screened before entering school property. I also understand that if **my son/daughter's temperature reads at 100.0 degrees or greater, he/she will be sent home.** My son/daughter will not be permitted to re-enter school buildings, classrooms, or other school property until he/she has been medically cleared to return to school.

☐ I affirm that if my son/daughter rides the bus to school, his/her temperature will be screened before boarding the bus. **I also understand that if my son/daughter's temperature reads at 100.0 degrees or greater, he/she will not be permitted to board the bus.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's School: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name(Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Telephone: (830) 778-4000

# Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19

## STAY CALM, LISTEN, AND OFFER REASSURANCE

- Be a role model. Children will react to and follow your reactions. They learn from your example.
- Demonstrate deep breathing. Deep breathing is a valuable tool for calming the nervous system. Do breathing exercises with your children.
- Focus on the positive. Celebrate having more time to spend as a family. Make it as fun as possible. Do family projects. Organize belongings, create masterpieces. Sing, laugh, and go outside, if possible, to connect with nature and get needed exercise. Allow older children to connect with their friends virtually.
- Create an environment full of love and affection.

## MONITOR TELEVISION VIEWING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Parents/guardians should monitor television, internet, and social media viewing—both for themselves and their children. Watching continual updates on COVID-19 may increase fear and anxiety.
- Explain to your child that many stories about COVID-19 on the internet may include rumors and inaccurate information. Older children, in particular, may be accessing a great deal of information online and from friends that contains inaccuracies. Talk to your child about factual disease information.
- Engage your child in games or other exciting activities instead of allowing too much time on social media.
- Stay up-to-date on the facts.  
Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for additional factual information.

### *How do I start a conversation with my child about Coronavirus?*

1. First, identify how you are feeling. Take a deep breath. How you discuss coronavirus will influence your child's reaction.
2. Inquire about your child's feelings and acknowledge ("I can tell that you are feeling a little scared. Everyone is talking about this illness because it is new, which is a little scary.")
3. Provide facts and reassurance, if necessary ("Very few kids have gotten the coronavirus." "Usually coronavirus in kids is mild." "We are here to support you." "We are doing everything we can to make sure we are safe.")
4. Reinforce what is in your child's control ("You are doing a great job singing ABCs when you wash your hands." "Let's keep talking!")

## KEEP EXPLANATIONS AGE-APPROPRIATE - BE HONEST AND ACCURATE

- For early elementary school children, provide brief, simple information that balances COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick. Give simple examples of the steps people make every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as "adults are working hard to keep you safe."

## BUILDING NEW ROUTINES

Keeping a regular schedule provides a sense of control, predictability, calm, and well-being. It also helps children and other family members respect others' need for quiet or uninterrupted time for schoolwork (designated work space area) and when they can connect with friends virtually.

1. Remember: Even if your family is isolated or quarantined, realize this will be temporary.
2. Establish and maintain a daily routine for home-learning and activities during school and work closures. Explore your local library website for digital resources you may check-out online.
3. Help your family engage in fun and meaningful activities consistent with your family and cultural values.
4. Make time to do things at home that have made you and your family feel better in other stressful situations, such as reading, watching movies, listening to music, playing games, or exercising.
5. Keep your family's schedule consistent when it comes to bedtimes, meals, and exercise.



6. Develop a daily chore schedule that includes cleaning high use surfaces and objects, including tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles.
7. Have children participate in distance learning opportunities that may be offered by their schools or other institutions/organizations.
8. Continue having family dinners together where you can maintain an open communication channel.
9. Teach your child about social distancing (staying 6ft away from each other) and the appropriate use of a facial covering/mask.
10. Recognize that feelings such as loneliness, boredom, fear of contracting disease, anxiety, stress, and panic are normal reactions to a stressful situation such as a disease outbreak.

## BASIC HYGIENE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PRACTICES

According to the CDC, symptoms of fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath appear within 14 days after being exposed to the disease. For some people, the symptoms are similar to having a cold; for others, they are more severe or even life threatening.

Practice daily good hygiene. Encourage your child to practice these simple steps to prevent spreading the virus.

- Wash your hands multiple times a day for 20 seconds. Singing “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Happy Birthday” twice is about 20 seconds.
- Compliment your children when they use a tissue or sneeze or cough into the bend of their elbow. Teach them the importance of throwing away used tissues immediately after sneezing or coughing.
- Remind them not to touch their face or face covering.
- Sadly, handshakes and hugs need to be limited to immediate family members, at least for now. Teach your child about AIR HUGS!
- Build the immune system. Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly; this will help them develop a robust immune system to fight off illness.

### CLEAN HANDS ARE SAFER HANDS

FOLLOW THESE 4 STEPS TO MAKE SURE YOUR HANDS ARE SAFE.



#### WET

Use warm or cold running water.



#### LATHER & SCRUB

Get the backs of your hands, between fingers and under nails. (Scrub long enough to hum “Happy Birthday” twice)



#### RINSE

Use clean water, warm or cold.



#### DRY

Use a clean towel or air dry.

\*Information taken from the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

## Cloth Face Coverings for Children During COVID-19

Here are a few ideas to help make them seem less scary for children:

- Look in the mirror with the face coverings on and talk about them.
- Put a cloth face covering on a favorite stuffed animal.
- Decorate them so they're more personalized and fun.
- Show your child pictures of other children wearing them.
- Draw one on their favorite book character.
- Practice wearing the face covering at home to help your child get used to it.



## **BE AWARE OF YOUR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

Most children will manage well with the support of parents and other family members, even if showing signs of some anxiety or concerns, such as difficulty sleeping or concentrating. Some children, however, may have risk factors for more intense reactions, including severe anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviors. Risk factors can include a pre-existing mental health problem, prior traumatic experiences or abuse, family instability, or the loss of a loved one. Parents and caregivers should contact a professional if children exhibit significant changes in behavior or any of the following symptoms for more than 2 weeks.

- Preschoolers—thumb sucking, bedwetting, clinging to parents, sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, fear of the dark, regression in behavior, and withdrawal.
- Elementary school children—irritability, aggressiveness, clinginess, nightmares, school avoidance, poor concentration, and withdrawal from activities and friends.

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/>

## **STAY CONNECTED TO SCHOOL**

Stay in touch. Find out how the school is communicating with families and students. Be sure to read any communications you receive. Stay in communication with your child's teacher. Check with your children, particularly older ones, as they may be receiving information directly that would be helpful for you to know.

[www.sfdr-cisd.org](http://www.sfdr-cisd.org)