

Brackett ISD COVID-19 School Guidance 2021-22

****Favor de comunicarse con Eliza Diaz (Directora de Primaria) o Guillermo Mancha, Jr. (Superintendente de Escuelas) para ayuda o informacion en espanol.**

Items in blue have been updated from the plan released on 9/13/21.

TEA Requirement: Providing Notice

Brackett ISD is providing notice to parents, families, and the community regarding back-to-school plans and instruction through this document. BISD plan to mitigate COVID-19 will be disseminated to all families and posted on the District's website. Brackett ISD will follow the BISD 2021-22 academic calendar adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 12, 2021. The BISD 2021-22 calendar and additional general information may be found at www.brackettisd.net.

Brackett ISD employees will report to work on Monday, August 9, 2021. The first of school for students for the 2021-22 school year will be on Thursday, August 19, 2021. BISD will only be offering In-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year.

This notice is a working copy and provides preliminary information only. The information reflects the most current guidelines provided by local, state, and federal agencies. The current status of the COVID-19 virus is constantly being updated. The constant change of the situation means that the guidelines are consistently changing. The guidance in this notice is subject to change based on federal, state, and local decisions.

COVID-19 Response Team – Brackett ISD has developed a COVID-19 Response Team to respond to concerns and communicate district decisions. Members of the team and email addresses are noted below:

Dr. Guillermo Mancha Jr.	Superintendent	guillermo.mancha@brackettisd.net
Christy Price	Secondary Principal	christy.price@brackettisd.net
Eliza Diaz	Elementary Principal	eliza.diaz@brackettisd.net
Amalia Garza	Business Manager	amalia.garza@brackettisd.net
Gary Griffin	BISD Athletic Director	gary.griffin@brackettisd.net
Savanah Molinar	BISD Nurse	savanah.molinar@brackettisd.net
Michael Munoz	BISD Technology	michael.munoz@brackettisd.net
Isauro Rivas	BISD Transportation Director	isauro.rivas@brackettisd.net
Imelda Vela	BISD Custodial Manager	imelda.vela@brackettisd.net

TEA Requirement: Prevent and Mitigate

Brackett ISD must identify and implement practices to prevent the virus from entering the school and mitigate or reduce the spread inside the school; therefore, district practices and guidelines have been established for various areas noted below:

Health and Safety Guidance

Social and Emotional Well-Being – Students’ social and emotional well-being are a top priority. Together, schools and families can support your child during this challenging time. With the endless COVID-19 media coverage, it is natural for your child to experience some changes in behavior and mood. Brackett ISD staff will continue to work closely with families and students to ease the stress. Keeping routines predictable, sharing COVID-19 facts that are age-appropriate, making time to listen and share feelings, and reaching out to us for support are all important. We are here for you and your child(ren).

Masks/Face Covering and Other PPE – Schools were expected to comply with the Governor’s Executive Order No. GA-38 related to face coverings. According to the TEA Public Health Guidance published on September 17, 2021:

Per GA-38, school systems cannot require students or staff to wear a mask. GA-38 address government-mandated face coverings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other authority to require protective equipment, including masks, in an employment setting is not necessarily affected by GA-38.

School systems must allow individuals to wear a mask if they choose to do so.

If an individual is wearing a face covering, it must be compliant with BISD Dress Code guidelines and it must only cover the nose and mouth portion of the face. An individual will not be able to cover their entire face unless it is with a clear face shield. If an individual chooses to wear a mask, guidelines recommend that masks be disposable or rotated and thoroughly cleaned daily.

All visitors entering BISD buildings will be highly recommended to wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entering the building(s).

Brackett ISD Safety Measures

Handwashing/Sanitizing - Students and staff are required to use hand sanitizer when entering a bus, building, classroom, and/or office. Frequent handwashing and sanitizing will also be incorporated in the daily schedules. All Brackett ISD buildings will be provided with hand sanitation stations. Buses, classrooms, and other common areas within the school will be thoroughly disinfected and cleaning schedules will be regularly conducted.

Disinfecting/Cleaning – BISD will be disinfecting all facilities routinely. BISD has purchased disinfecting machines and solution that kill the COVID-19 virus as well as other viruses (such as Hepatitis B & C, Influenza, Salmonella, Staphylococcus, and many more). Additionally, in the early

spring semester of 2020, BISD installed 40 new air conditioning units. The units are equipped with ionizers designed to clean the air as it is circulated.

Temperature Checks/Screening – Per Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, initial monitoring of symptoms begins at home. Individuals who are feeling ill, should stay at home and consult with a medical professional regarding school participation. Student temperature may be taken by school personal upon verbal and/or visual screening.

BISD requests for parents not to send students to school that are ill or have any flu-like symptoms such as: fever of 100.0° or higher, uncontrollable cough with difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and severe headache with fever.

All BISD employees self-monitor their health.

BISD encourages but does not require individuals to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Students with Health Conditions – Parents know their child’s needs. While we are taking all measures to ensure each student’s safety, parents must place their child’s health needs first.

Campuses and Classrooms Procedures

Visitors, Drop-off, and Pick-Up –All visitors entering BISD buildings are encouraged to wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entering the building(s). Each school will have procedures in place for daily drop-off and pick-up. This information will be communicated prior to the first day of school.

Restrooms and Water Fountains – Students’ physical needs are extremely important. Social distancing and hand washing will remain the priorities during restroom breaks. Because water dispensers have shared surfaces, these will be disabled/turned off. BISD has installed individual water bottle fill dispensers throughout the facilities.

Materials and Supplies – Students will be expected to use their own materials and supplies which will be kept individually. BISD will afford students a Chromebook for their use. BISD will be instructing students how to properly clean and maintain their Chromebook.

For early childhood classrooms, nap mats will be spaced out according to physical distancing guidelines and will be sanitized daily.

LUNCH – School lunch schedules are being reviewed.

Field Trips – Field trips must be approved by the principal.

Instructional Models

In-Person Instruction– The first day of classes is Monday, August 19, 2021. Brackett ISD is taking multiple precautions to protect both students and staff in school operations. BISD will offer in-person

instructional model; BISD will not offer a Remote Learning Option. Please be informed that according to Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 25.092,

...students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered (with some exceptions) in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in force during the 2021-22 school year.

BISD must provide instruction in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the required grade level/subject/course. Monitoring student learning and progress remains integral to the success of the students. This includes attendance, grades, formative/summative assessments, and other monitoring systems that help teachers know how students are making progress.

Attendance – District funding and resources are linked to attendance. Attendance will be taken each day.

In addition, per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in force during the 2021-22 school year.

Grading – State law requires each district to adopt its own grading policies. This policy must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student’s relative mastery of an assignment. Brackett ISD grading policies are published annually in the Student Handbook. Progress reports and report cards, along with parent conferences, will be used to communicate each student’s progress and performance.

State and Local Testing – All students are expected to follow state and local testing requirements, whether participating in in-person or remote/virtual instruction.

Meals and Transportation

Meals – Brackett ISD must comply with child nutrition guidelines. BISD is in the process of designing meal serving options for all students. Additional information regarding meals will be publicized in the future prior to the beginning of the 2021-22 school year.

Students that are home for COVID-19 reasons, families have access to student meals. BISD request that a family call Ms. Yolanda Rueda (BISD Food Service Manager) to order and schedule meal pick up. Please call Ms. Rueda at 830.563.2491 ext. 611 between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. Families must call on a daily basis. Families must pick up the meals at the cafeteria. Meals will be delivered to the vehicle. Families picking up the meals are to stay in their vehicles at all times.

Electives: Band, CTE Courses, Other Electives: Dance, Cheer, etc.

Band – Protocols established by U.I.L. and local policies will be followed for band including marching, competitions, etc.

CTE Courses – CTE courses include hands-on experiences. Social distancing and sanitation requirements will be further defined and communicated prior to the beginning of school.

Special Programs (Academic)

Program Participation and Services – Students currently participating in special program services, e.g., special education, 504, Bilingual/ESL, etc., will continue to receive services. Parent meetings may be held using virtual meeting platforms. For students under the special education program, BISD will follow ARD recommendations for each student’s educational program which may differ from guidelines in this document.

Evaluations and Testing – District and Cluster V will establish protocols to evaluate students who have been referred for special programs. Social distancing and/or personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used, as appropriate.

Extracurricular and After-School Program

Extracurricular Programs – Each program will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine implementation guidelines. Program sponsors will provide information to students and parents/families as information is available.

After-School Programs – All after-school programs will be available on the first day of instruction for BISD students. Homeschool students will not be permitted to participate in after-school programs/extracurricular activities/UIIL.

University Interscholastic League (UIL) - All UIL activities be on a customary schedule and attendance capacity. Homeschool students will not be permitted to participate in after-school programs/extracurricular activities/UIIL.

TEA Requirement: Respond

Brackett ISD must identify and implement responsive actions to address the situation if there are test confirmed case in a school.

Required Actions: if individual(s) with test confirmed case(s) have been in a school:

- 1. If an individual who has been in a school is test confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local 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. Upon receipt of information that any teacher, staff member, student, or visitor at the school is test confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must submit a report to the Texas Department of Health Services via an online form. The report must be submitted each Monday for the prior seven days (Monday – Sunday).*
- 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 classroom or extracurricular or after-school program cohort if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participated in those classrooms or cohorts.*

COVID-19 Symptoms

Has an individual recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?

- *Feeling feverish or temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater*
- *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*
- *Diarrhea*
- *Nausea or vomiting*

Students Who Have COVID-19

As provided in this Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, school systems must exclude students 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, and must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on campus.

If a student is suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, the parents may provide documentation to rule out the possibility of being sick with COVID-19. To rule out COVID-19, the individual may provide a negative COVID-19 test result or an alternative diagnosis from their physician, then that individual may return on campus immediately. This provision does not apply if there is a positive COVID-19 person living within their household.

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met. See the DSHS rule for more details, including the conditions for ending the exclusion period and returning to school. According to DSHS conditions for ending the exclusion period and returning to school are:

If symptomatic, exclude until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free, and other symptoms have improved. Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 10 days after the day they were tested.*

**Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius) or higher.*

The above DSHS guidelines and additional information may be found at <https://dshs.texas.gov/covid19readmission/>

During the exclusion period, the school system may deliver remote instruction consistent with the practice of remote conferencing outlined in the proposed Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) rules.

To help mitigate the risk of asymptomatic individuals being on campuses, school systems may provide and/or conduct recurring COVID-19 testing using rapid tests provided by the state or other sources. Testing can be conducted with staff. With prior written permission of parents, testing can be conducted with students.

Students Who Are Close Contacts

As a reference, close contact determinations are generally based on guidance outlined by the CDC, which notes that individuals who are fully vaccinated may not need to follow the stay-at-home period.

As noted above, public health authorities will be notified of all positive cases in schools. While school systems are not required to conduct COVID-19 case investigations, local public health entities have authority to investigate cases and are currently engaged in cooperative efforts on that front. Participation by individuals in these investigations remains voluntary. If school systems are made aware that a student is a close contact, the school system must notify the student's parents.

School systems may choose to require household-based close contact students to stay at home during the below stay-at-home period if they are in an area with high or rising COVID case rates. This applies specifically to students who are close contacts because an individual who lives in the same household is COVID-19 positive.

Individual's determined close contact due to a household COVID-19 positive person, BISD will require the student's and employees of that household to remain at home for the 10-day (stay-at-home) monitoring period. The household will be determined by the residency on file at BISD. The entire household will not be allowed at BISD. Under the circumstance that a positive COVID-19 household member is residing at a different location and that household member never has resided in the same household during the infectious period, then the household contact does not apply. The 10-day waiting period will reset if a different member of the same household is COVID-19 positive.

According to the CDC:

A close contact is defined by CDC as someone who was within 2 meters of an infected person for at least 15 minutes within a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic cases 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Independent of whether a school system chooses to implement the above requirement, parents of students who are determined to be close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may opt to keep their students at home during the recommended stay-at-home period. In cases when it is permitted, parents who opt to send their children to school in the two weeks following exposure are encouraged to closely monitor their children for symptoms.

For individuals who are determined to be close contacts, a 14-day stay-at-home period was previously advised by the CDC based on the incubation period of the virus. CDC has since updated their guidance, and the stay-at-home period can end for students experiencing no symptoms on Day 10 after close contact exposure, if no subsequent COVID-19 testing is performed.

Alternately, students can end the stay-at-home period if they receive a negative result from a PCR acute infection test after the close contact exposure ends.

To further clarify, students identified as close contact (does not include if student has a household COVID-19 positive person), the parent may opt to:

1. Student may return to school immediately; or
2. An optional 10-day stay-at-home period for students who had a close contact; or
3. Prior to the 10-day stay-at-home period, the parent may elect to bring their student back to school if the student receives a negative test result after the COVID-19 exposure.

During the stay-at-home period, the school system may deliver remote instruction consistent with the practice of remote conferencing outlined in the proposed Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) rules.

Staff Who Have COVID-19 or Who are Close Contacts

Similar to students, school systems 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.

If an employee is suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, the employee may provide documentation to rule out the possibility of being sick with COVID-19. To rule out the possibility of COVID-19, the employee may provide a negative COVID-19 test result or an alternative diagnosis from their physician, then that employee may return on work immediately. This provision does not apply if there is a positive COVID-19 person living within their household.

For staff who are not fully vaccinated who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, it is recommended that the staff remain off campus during the stay-at-home period, but this is a local employment decision.

For staff who meet the close contact threshold with a COVID-19 positive individual, if these staff continue to work on campus, rapid testing must be performed periodically for 10 days post-exposure.

If an employee is close contact (does not include if employee has a household COVID-19 positive person), regardless of vaccination status, the employee must perform a COVID-19 rapid test periodically for 10 days after the close contact occurs to continue to work on campus.

Superintendent Recommendations:

1. The recommendation is for BISD to follow Governor Abbott's GA-38. Masks are highly recommended for students, staff, and visitors.
2. The recommendation for close contact is, if a person is able to reside at a different location from COVID-19 positive person for the duration of the infectious period (10-days), consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis to the individual circumstances. An individual may return to school as determined by BISD.