

Santa Maria Independent School District

**Military Highway 281
P.O. Box 448/11119 Military Road
Santa Maria, TX 78592**



District Operations Guide In Response to COVID-19

Response to In-person Instruction Continuity of Service

**UPDATED
August 25, 2023**

***Disclaimer:** This document serves as a District COVID-19 plan. Each campus will supplement additional information.*

INTRODUCTION and DISTRICT PRIORITIES

Santa Maria ISD will continue traditional face-to-face classroom instruction for the 2023-2024 School Year. Please note this plan will be updated based upon guidance from TEA, CDC, local, and state orders. We remain committed to doing everything possible to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. The District will continue to follow all appropriate guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), plus state and local health authorities. Face coverings are no longer required and are optional by students, staff, and guests.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we will continue to provide the excellent educational opportunities our community has come to expect from SMISD. As the public health crisis continues, district administrators will continue to plan for the 2023-2024 school year with a focus on the health, safety and well-being of our staff, students and community.

Below are some mitigation health strategies in place for the 2023-2024 school year.

- The wearing of masks is no longer required, but optional.
- Self-screening by staff is recommended prior to coming to work each day.
- Parents and/or guardians may screen their child's health condition daily before sending them to school.
- For students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling feverish, the school nurse will provide a clinical assessment and separate the student. The parent will be notified by the school nurse and sent home.

NOTE:

SMISD will no longer provide COVID-19 testing.

It is the policy of Santa Maria ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT- 2023-2024 School Year

District Operations Guide In Response to COVID-19:

Response to In-person Instruction Continuity of Service

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Santa Maria ISD has officially adopted the District Operations Guide In Response to COVID-19: Response to In-person Instruction Continuity of Service in order to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for every student.

We urge you to read this publication thoroughly and to discuss it with your family. If you have any questions about the policies and procedures, we encourage you to contact the campus administrator.

Thank you.

Martin Cuellar, Superintendent of Schools

We acknowledge that we have been offered the option of receiving a paper copy of the Santa Maria ISD District Operations Guide In Response to COVID-19: Response to In-person Instruction Continuity of Service for the 2023-2024 school year or accessing it on the district's website at www.smisd.net electronically. We understand that students will be expected to follow the policies and procedures set forth by Santa Maria ISD.

The parent will accept responsibility for accessing the District Operations Guide In Response to COVID-19: Response to In-person Instruction Continuity of Service on the district's website.

Health and Safety Protocols

The following are the health and safety protocols for Santa Maria ISD campuses and administration buildings. Due to this being an ever-changing situation, the district may need to change protocols at any time to address school district needs and circumstances in order to protect the health and safety of students, employees and the community. Please note this health guidance cannot foresee every situation that may arise. As a result, Santa Maria ISD will continue to monitor governmental agencies and other information deemed relevant to monitor the situation. The district will comply with applicable local, federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety and accessibility standards to address individual needs.

It is important to remember that COVID-19 and its variants is caused by a virus that can be spread by infected persons who have little to no symptoms. Even if an infected person shows no symptoms or is mildly ill, the individuals they spread it to may become

seriously or fatally ill; particularly if a person is 65 years of age or older with pre-existing health conditions. With the hidden nature of this threat, Santa Maria ISD expects all employees, students and families to rigorously follow the following practices.

School Opening

Santa Maria ISD will continue to ensure all staff, resources and supplies are available, including but not limited to, assigning sufficient staff to carry out re-opening, ensuring proper training and stocking inventory of necessary supplies such as masks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance, recommendations and resources to assist with plans and protocols for health and safety. Santa Maria ISD will continue to implement health and safety plans that include:

- Ensuring compliance with the CDC, Health and Human Services, the Texas Education Agency and other jurisdictional policies

General Information

Santa Maria ISD is following the recommended TEA public health guidance, coordinating with state and local health officials to develop health and safety protocols for the continued operations of Santa Maria ISD facilities.

Santa Maria ISD's expectation is that:

- If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the District Nursing staff will notify the local health department and provide recommended guidance to the campus and district.

SMISD will follow CDC and Cameron County Health Department Guidelines for any individual who tests positive for COVID-19.

Due to The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the names of any individual who has contracted or displays symptoms of the virus will not be revealed.

Student Health Protocols

- Families should not send students to school if they have a lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis or any of the following COVID-19 symptoms: feeling feverish or fever of 100.0 or greater, new loss of taste or smell, cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, new headache, fatigue, chills, sore or scratchy throat, runny nose, shaking or exaggerated shivering, significant muscle pain or ache, diarrhea. Families must immediately notify the school if a child has COVID-19 symptoms (described above) or if the student has tested positive for COVID-19. The student may be required to stay home for an incubation period.
- Families and family members who test positive at home should follow up with their family doctor for further evaluation and /or testing.

- Families must also immediately notify the school if a child has had close contact or household contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19. The student should not report to campus and may be required to stay home for an incubation period.

Student Isolation Protocols

- Students who are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling feverish will receive a clinical assessment by the school nurse to determine if he or she needs to be sent home.
- Students who are ill will be separated from their peers and should be picked up within 30 minutes and no later than 1 hour from the time the campus has contacted the parent/guardian.
- If a student is sent home from school because of COVID-19 symptoms, he or she should contact their family physician. If a student has other health concerns that share symptoms with COVID-19, it is recommended that the student obtain a physician's note to keep on file at the campus or the student needs to visit with the nurse to receive clearance to come back to school.
- If a student who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the district may 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).
- Students who need to isolate must follow the following as per CDC guidelines:
 - If you have no symptoms, day 0 is the day you tested positive and should isolate through day 5
 - If you develop symptoms within those 5 days, then the day of your symptoms become day 0 and isolate for 5 days
 - If you have symptoms, day 0 is the first day of symptoms and isolate for 5 days
 - After you have ended isolation (return to school), when you are feeling better (no lingering signs or symptoms), masks should be worn another 5 days

Employee Health Protocols

- Any employee with the following: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 should stay home throughout the infection period.
- Any employee who experiences the symptoms of COVID-19 and/or self-test positive should follow up with their doctor.
- Employees who need to isolate must follow the following as per CDC guidelines:
 - If you have no symptoms, day 0 is the day you tested positive and should isolate through day 5
 - If you develop symptoms within those 5 days, then the day of your symptoms become day 0 and isolate for 5 days
 - If you have symptoms, day 0 is the first day of symptoms and isolate for 5 days
 - After you have ended isolation (return to work), when you are feeling better (no lingering signs or symptoms), masks should be worn another 5 days
- All employees may follow the established protocols to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.
- Employees will practice cleaning, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.

Employee Isolation Protocols

- If a staff member displays symptoms at school, the school nurse will provide a clinical assessment to determine further recommendations.
- If a staff member displays COVID-19 symptoms, he or she should contact their family physician.
- Employees who need to isolate must follow the following as per CDC guidelines:
 - If you have no symptoms, day 0 is the day you tested positive and should isolate through day 5
 - If you develop symptoms within those 5 days, then the day of your symptoms become day 0 and isolate for 5 days
 - If you have symptoms, day 0 is the first day of symptoms and isolate for 5 days
 - After you have ended isolation (return to work), when you are feeling better (no lingering signs or symptoms), masks should be worn another 5 days

Campus Cleaning Protocols

Frequent cleaning will support a healthy learning and work environment for students and staff.

Daily District Cleaning

- Each classroom and restroom will be cleaned.
- Cafeterias will be cleaned between lunch periods.

Restrooms

- Staff and students must wash hands with soap and water prior to exiting the restroom.
- Visuals indicating proper hand-washing techniques will be displayed to consistently reinforce this practice.

Recess Protocols

Administrators will develop a schedule for students to access the playground equipment. Teachers will monitor students to ensure safety guidelines are followed. Campuses will limit the number of students per recess group. Staggered schedules and classroom groups will be utilized. Allow small groups of students to play together.

- It is recommended that all students and staff wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before recess and when returning to their classroom.

Attendance

State law TEC §25.092 requires students to 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 2023-2024 school year. Attendance will be recorded daily in PEIMS.

ROLES FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PREPARATION AND LEARNING

Students

- Be prepared for learning each day and have work and assignments completed and ready.
- Complete coursework by the deadline set by teachers.

Parents

- Encourage your child to have their items in their backpack/device and ready for school the night before.

Teachers/Staff

- Meet with a collaborative team to plan instruction for all students.
- Utilize district resources provided by your district curriculum specialist.
- Be prepared to teach daily lessons.

LEARNING AND TEACHING EXPECTATIONS

Students

- Attend classes according to the school schedule and give your best efforts in your school assignments.
- Be organized in your work and in getting projects completed
- Ask questions and communicate with your teacher.
- Be aware of what you should be learning each day.
- Turn in assignments on time.

Parents

- Access PEIMS Parent Portal to view student grades.
- Discuss your child's favorite part of their day and what they learned in school.
- Check in with student(s) to monitor completion of homework and assignments.
- Facilitate academic support and encouragement as a learning partner to motivate and guide your child throughout the school year in your role as a learning coach.
- Provide your child with assistance on their day-to-day activities with the exception of designated independent work.

- Consider creating a designated learning/study space for your child at home to learn comfortably.
- Maintain communication with your child's teacher by email and/or online meetings to create a learning partnership.
- Monitor and ask for evidence that your child is on track with assignments and coursework.

Teachers

- Teach students how to access learning materials.
- Provide instruction and facilitate learning throughout the day.
- Manage resources to provide consistency and routines for students.
- Provide clear learning goals for students.
- Follow the expectations established across the district.
- Check student assignments in a timely manner and give feedback in verbal or written form at a weekly minimum to provide next steps or necessary academic intervention/extension.

SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

Students

- Attend intervention/tutorial sessions as established by your teacher or school.

Parents

- Allow your child to attend intervention/tutorial sessions as needed.
- Assist in supporting your child's needs by establishing and managing the daily schedule communicated by the teacher.
- Help your child own their learning. Provide support and encouragement and expect your children to do their part.

Teachers

- Provide intervention or tutorial sessions as needed.
- Follow student IEPs / 504 accommodations in all learning environments.
- Use data to pinpoint students' specific needs for enrichment and intervention.
- Monitor student progress with fidelity according to recommendations.
- Provide and communicate office hours or conference period for student/ parent support
- Attend and participate in professional learning.

Online Resources

- ❖ **Handwashing COVID 19 Updates**
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>
- ❖ **Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks**
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/17tSnbURM9JQW3cdCcKXAYhTcubsHIsMn/view>
- ❖ **COVID-19: How to Talk to Your Child**
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html?view=ptr&WT.ac=p-ptr>
- ❖ **Family Resilience Guide** <https://resilienceguide.org/>
- ❖ **Protecting Your Kids Online: Tip Sheet**
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Akysb1zMJVjCFFKqjHkiUwZmpQDdb86X/view>

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When does school start?

A. The first day of school is Monday, August 28, 2023.

Q. What is the plan?

A. All students will have face-to-face instruction.

Q. Will my child have to wear a mask to school?

A. No, students are not required to wear masks.

Q. Will temperature checks be done at school each day?

A. No, temperature checks are no longer required.

Q. What happens if a student at my child's school tests positive for COVID-19?

A. Campuses are no longer required to notify parents if a child tests positive in the classroom.

Q. What do I do if I think my child has COVID-19?

A. If you think your child has COVID-19, do not send him or her to school. Contact your child's school, and inform the attendance clerk of the absence. Contact your child's physician for further guidance.

Q. What happens if my child's school is forced to close down for COVID-19?

A. Schools are no longer required to close due to COVID-19 status.



SANTA MARIA ISD SM

2023-2024

JULY

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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31						

LEGEND

- Prof. Development
- Teacher Workday
- First/Last Day
- Begin/End Period
- STAAR Testing Day
- Weather Make-up
- District Holiday
- Progress/Report Pd.

INSTRUCTIONAL REPORTING PERIODS

1st Six Weeks August 28 - September 29 = 25
 2nd Six Weeks October 2 - November 10 = 30
 3rd Six Weeks November 13 - December 22 = 25

Fall Semester = 80 days total

4th Six Weeks January 9 - February 23 = 33
 5th Six Weeks February 26 - April 19 = 33
 6th Six Weeks April 22 - May 31 = 29

Spring Semester = 95 days total

INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS & MINUTES

Total Instructional Days = 175
 Prof. Development/Planning/Workdays = 12

Total Contact Minutes	Elementary	Secondary
	80,655	85,905

School Hours & Daily Contact Minutes

Elementary	7:45 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	465 mins per day
Middle School	7:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	495 mins per day
High School	7:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	495 mins per day
Options Academy	7:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	495 mins per day

Early Release Schedule

Elementary	7:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	285 mins
HS & MS & Options Academy	7:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	315 mins

September 29 November 10 December 22 May 31

DATES TO REMEMBER

Professional Development

New Teacher August 11
 August 14-17 Sept. 29
 August 21-24 Nov. 10
 January 8

Workday First & Last Day

August 18 August 28
 August 25 May 31
 June 1

Holidays

Thanksgiving November 20-24
 Christmas Dec. 25 - Jan. 5
 Spring Break March 11-15
 Easter Mar. 29 & Apr. 1

Weather Makeup

February 12
 May 27
 May 31

GRADUATION

STAAR & EOC Testing Dates

EOC Retesters 2023

Dec. 5-15 Algebra 1, Biology,
 US History, English 1 & 2

TELPAS Assessment Window

Feb. 19 - Mar. 29

STAAR Alt 2 Assess. Window

Mar. 25 - Apr. 26

STAAR/EOC 3-8 Reading Language Arts

English 1 & 2

Apr. 9 - Apr. 19

STAAR/EOC Science 5&8/ Soc. Stud. 8

Biology & US History

Apr. 16 - Apr. 26

STAAR/EOC 3-8 Math & Algebra 1

Apr. 23 - May 3

EOC Retesters 2024

June 18 - June 28 Algebra 1, Biology,
 US History, English 1 & 2

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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Tony Gonzalez Elementary Bell Schedule

(Sample Bell Schedule – 2nd Grade)

Period	Time	Minutes
1st Period	8:00 am - 9:00 am	60
2nd Period	9:00 am - 9:45 am	45
3rd Period	9:45 am - 10:20 am	35
4th Period	10:20 am - 11:00 am	40
Lunch 5 th Period	11:00 am - 11:30 am	30
6th Period	11:30 pm - 1:30 pm	2 hrs
7th Period	1:30 pm - 2:15 pm	45
8th Period	2:15 pm - 3:30 pm	1 hr 15 min

Middle School Bell Schedule

Period	Time	Minutes
1st Period	8:00 am - 8:48 am	48
2nd Period	8:50 am - 9:38 am	48
3rd Period	9:40 am - 10:28 am	48
4th Period	10:30 am - 11:18 am	48
5th Period	11:20 am - 12:08 pm	48
Lunch	12:08 pm - 12:38 pm	30
6th Period	12:40 pm - 1:28 pm	48
7th Period	1:30 pm - 2:18 pm	48
8th Period	2:20 pm - 3:08 pm	48
9th Period	3:10 pm - 4:00 pm	50

High School Bell Schedule

Period	Time	Minutes
1st Period	7:55 am - 8:40 am	45
2nd Period	8:42 am - 9:27 am	45
3rd Period	9:29 am - 10:14 am	45
4th Period	10:16 am - 11:01 am	45
5th Period	11:03 am - 11:48 am	45
6th Period	11:50 am - 12:35 pm	45
Cougar Connect	12:37 pm - 1:09 pm	32
Lunch	1:09 pm - 1:39 pm	30
7th Period	1:41 pm - 2:29 pm	45
8th Period	2:31 pm - 3:13 pm	45
9th Period	3:15 pm - 4:00 pm	45

Santa Maria ISD - Administration (2023-2024)

Central Office

Martin Cuellar	Superintendent of Schools
Salvador Acosta	Director of District Operations & Special Programs
Rene R. Salinas	Director of Student Support Services
Yliana Gonzalez	Business Manager
Doralee Munoz	District Project Manager
Elizabeth A. Stenhouse	HR Specialist
Reymundo Sanchez	Operations Supervisor
Elizabeth Garza	Child Nutrition Director

Campus Leadership Team

Yadira Flores	HS Principal
Mauricio Villegas, Jr.	HS Instructional Facilitator
Jay Viera	MS Principal
Lizette Marroquin	MS Instructional Facilitator
Jacob M. Camacho	TGE Principal
Ludybina Torres	TGE Instructional Facilitator

Board of Trustees

Adolfo Hinojosa	Board President
Javier E. Jimenez, Jr.	Board Vice-President
Casey Espinoza	Board Secretary
Marco Aleman	Board Member
Andrew "Andy" De La Rosa	Board Member
Miguel Zavala	Board Member
Michele Garcia	Board Member

Special Thanks

Educators, Support Staff, Office Staff, Business Office, Human Resources,
Custodial/Maintenance/Transportation Department & Child Nutrition Department