



MONTAGUE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
“STRONGER TOGETHER”

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RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN 2020-2021

As of 7/30/2020 Subject to Change

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Return to School Plan

Montague ISD is looking forward to welcoming students back to school on Thursday, August 13th. We have been carefully monitoring the COVID-19 spread and have been in constant communication with local and state health authorities, the TEA commissioner of education, other superintendents from around the state, and our local school board to determine the best possible methods for re-opening school for the 2020-2021 school year.

Despite the challenges with COVID-19, Montague ISD will continue to provide excellent education services to our students, which will include both in-person and remote learning environments.

The following guidelines will be followed in order to help protect our students and staff and minimize the spread of COVID-19 as we resume instructional activities and student interaction.

There will be a few key differences this year in daily operations. Please see the information below as a quick reference:

- The front doors will be unlocked at 7:15am. Students will not be allowed to enter the building prior to this scheduled time.
- If the student is eating breakfast, they will come directly to the cafeteria. Once they have finished eating, they will be dismissed to their 1st period classroom.
- If the student is NOT eating breakfast, they will go into the new gym and be seated 6 feet apart in the bleachers until 7:30. At that time, they will be dismissed to their 1st period classroom.
- Teachers will be in their designated classrooms at 7:30 in order to supervise students and provide tutorials as needed for their 1st period class.
- All students arriving after 7:30 will either go to the cafeteria for breakfast or to their classroom.
- Daily announcements and pledges will be done via the intercom system at 7:50 am.
- No parents/ visitors will be allowed to come into either building, including the cafeteria to have breakfast or lunch, or to walk students to their classrooms.
- Parents/ visitors will not be allowed to gather on the lawn outside on school premises.
- There will be 3 designated parking spots for parents who are picking students up early or bringing items during the day.
- Due to health precautions, only prepackaged food will be allowed for class snacks, birthday celebrations, or class parties.

Communication

Montague ISD will continue to communicate with surrounding school districts, local and state health authorities, and the Texas Education Agency to monitor the spread of COVID-19. In addition, Montague ISD will relay all pertinent information to parents via Remind, email, the school website, or the district Facebook page to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of current situations.

Please contact Superintendent Carla Hennessey at 940-894-2811 with any questions.

Preparation for Opening of School

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance, recommendations, and resources to assist with plans and protocols for health and safety. Before schools re-open, Montague ISD will implement health and safety procedures that include:

- Ensuring adequate supply inventory. (e.g., PPE, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- Cleaning with products approved by governing authorities and per guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Ensuring compliance with CDC, Health and Human Services, the Texas Education Agency, and other jurisdictional policies.
- Providing communication of procedures and expectations upon entering facilities and throughout buildings.

Health and Safety Protocols

Healthy hygiene practices will be expected throughout the day by both staff and students. Hand washing guidelines indicate that students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before eating, and upon entering classrooms. Breaks will be provided for hand washing. If soap and water are not readily available, sanitizer will be provided.

Students will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms via questionnaire prior to entering the building each week. The screening requirements will be sent out to parents via Remind. Parents will need to complete it prior to the beginning of school the following week. Students will also be visually screened for symptoms by school staff upon entering the building.

Students will be asked to bring a water bottle from home and use our refilling stations throughout the day. Water may also be purchased in the cafeteria as needed. The school will also provide a water dispenser in the cafeteria with disposable cups for anyone unable to provide a water bottle.

Water fountains **will not** be available for use at any time to help prevent the spread of possible COVID-19.

Montague ISD will also ensure that intensified cleaning and disinfection practices are consistently followed. Daily sanitizing will be implemented for high touch areas (doorknobs, handles, fixtures, etc.) with a medical grade sanitizing solution. More frequent monitoring and cleaning of restrooms throughout the day will be done. We have added extra custodial time for this. Contracted cleaning services will be utilized, as needed. Between classes, teachers will sanitize desks, chairs, tables, and any supplies or technology used. School supplies will be kept separate for each student.

Social distancing practices will be followed. Montague ISD plans to increase spacing between individuals using strategies such as separation on school buses, posted signs to remind staff and students of 6-foot distances, and arranging desks separated by the maximum allowable space facing in the same direction where appropriate. When possible, students will be restricted from mixing with other classes such as in the hallways during transitions and entering or exiting the cafeteria.

Closures/ Quarantine Periods

Montague ISD will strive to remain open to the maximum extent possible. However, should we have a need, the school will close for a period of not more than 5 days in order to sanitize and disinfect appropriately. During these closures, all students will continue instruction through virtual methods to ensure that the delivery of effective instruction continues seamlessly.

Parents will be notified of the length of closure deemed necessary by administration.

If a parent wishes to quarantine their student due to possible exposure, that will be allowed; however, once the student has notified the school of self-quarantining, that placement will be in effect for a 2 week period.

Screening Protocols

Staff will be required to complete a self-screening process prior to entering Montague ISD facilities. The district reserves the right to further screen employees at any time based on current state or federal guidelines.

A parent or guardian will be required to screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending them to school. Parents are asked to take their child's temperature daily. Additional screenings may be conducted during the school day.

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab confirmed with COVID-19.

Staff and Students should not enter campuses or district buildings if **any** of the following symptoms are present. The following symptoms indicate a possible COVID-19 infection:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth; **or**
 - Sore throat; **or**
 - New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (or, for students with a chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline); **or**
 - Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain; **or**
 - New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever.
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- The individual has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or has been in close contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19. These individuals must follow all isolation and quarantine guidelines from the local health authority or their physician.
 - The individual has a household member awaiting COVID-19 test results or is awaiting their test results.

Teachers will monitor students and refer them to the nurse or school office if symptoms are present.

Notification of Positive Test Results

If your child has been tested for COVID-19 and received a positive result, please notify the school office at 940-894-2811 as soon as possible.

The school will notify all parents throughout the district of any positive test case upon receiving this notification (Student names will **NOT** be released).

Isolation Protocols

- For students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or are feeling feverish, the school nurse will provide an assessment to determine if and when a student needs to be sent home.
- Students who are ill will be separated from their peers.
- Students should be picked up within 1 hour of being contacted by the school.
- Other students will be removed from the classroom and taken to an alternate location on campus (go on a walk outside, move to a different classroom, etc.) so that the classroom can be disinfected.
- If an individual who has been in a school is lab-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).
- 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.
- Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be permitted to return to school when:
 - They are 1 day (24 hours) fever-free without using fever-reducing medication; **and**
 - Symptoms have improved (cough, difficulty breathing, etc.); **and**
 - 10 days have passed since symptoms began.

If an individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either:

- obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis **or**
- obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Schools are required to comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks. At this time, Montague County is exempt from this executive order due to the number of active cases in the county.

This requirement is subject to change at any time as guidance is issued by local and state health authorities.

Employee PPE

Montague ISD will issue every employee their choice of either a standard Texas Education Agency issued reusable mask or face shield. Employees are expected to supply a face covering should the one provided by the school become unusable or lost.

Employees will wear either a mask or face shield at any time they are not giving direct instruction. Examples: when entering or exiting the campus, and while on campus in common areas such as hallways, restrooms, the cafeteria, foyers, or offices.

Employees will wear a mask or face shield when working within **close contact** with a student or another employee for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes or longer.

Close Contact

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:

- being directly exposed to infectious secretions (being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield)
- being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield

Employees are **not** expected to wear masks or face shields when teaching or instructing a lesson to a classroom of students or while instructing a group of students during a group activity.

Student PPE

Face masks or shields **will not** be required for students while on campus, however, anyone may wear a face mask if they desire, as long as it complies with the dress code rules of no pictures, emblems or writing on clothing or elsewhere that is lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, or that advertises or depicts tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any other substance prohibited under school policy.

Montague ISD **will** enforce the mask order to all students and staff who ride the school bus due to the inability to social distance. Students may either bring their own mask from home or the district will provide them a disposable mask while on the bus.

Montague ISD will provide any student upon request, a reusable face mask provided by the Texas Education Agency. If that mask should become lost or unusable, the student would be responsible for providing subsequent masks if desired.

Visitors on Campus

All visitors will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms by a MISD staff member prior to entering the building. To help ensure the safety of our students, parents and visitors will no longer be allowed to be in the cafeteria during breakfast or lunch with their students. We also ask that parents or visitors do not gather in the gym, cafeteria, or on the lawn prior to or after school. Students will be dismissed to their cars or the busses. Please remain in your vehicle during pick up and drop off times.

Attendance

Attendance will still be taken for both in-person and virtual instruction at 9:15 each morning. The state requirement of 90% attendance in order to receive credit will remain in effect.

Each student participating in remote virtual instruction will be required to check in daily with the assigned MISD staff to record attendance. Students who do not check in daily will be counted absent and subject to state mandated truancy laws.

Students will also have a scheduled time designated by the teacher in advance to engage with the teacher in order to ensure student progress is met. Students will be required to be available at this designated time to receive credit.

Once a student has chosen the remote virtual instructional method, that placement will remain in effect for a 2 week period. At the end of the 2 week period, a student may then choose to continue the remote method or change to the in-person instructional method.

For students in special education or 504, all accommodations will be followed regardless of the learning environment chosen.

Grading

The adopted grading policy for Montague ISD can be found in our student handbook and on the school website. The grading policy will be the same for both in-person and remote virtual instruction. The current grading policy is:

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Excellent, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory

Grades 1-8

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 F = 69 and below

Grades 1-3

Grades are taken and averaged at equal weights per subject curriculum. A minimum of 12 grades per core subject per 6 weeks will be taken.

Grades 4-8 Core Subjects

Major Grades – 60% of the 6 weeks grade, at least 3 grades per 6 weeks

Daily Grades – 40% of the 6 weeks grade, at least 12 grades per 6 weeks

Grades 6-8 Elective Courses

Grades are taken and averaged at equal weights per subject. At least 1 grade per week is required.

Recess and Morning Break

Each class will have a designated recess time that will be independent of all other classes.

Morning break for grades 6-8 will be divided between the library, the new gym, and the old gym. They will be assigned to one of these areas each week in order to provide distancing between the grade levels.

Technology and Infrastructure

During times of mandated closures, Montague ISD will provide students who do not have an instructional device such as a Chromebook or iPad with the appropriate resources to continue with virtual instruction until school resumes. It will be the responsibility of the student/parent to ensure that they have adequate bandwidth and connectivity to be able to successfully participate in remote virtual learning so that the student is not counted absent.

The Acceptable Use Policy will be enforced with these devices and a violation of that policy could result in the denial of use for a school device.

Transportation

School busses will be limited to one student per bus seat, unless seated with a sibling from the same household. Due to the close proximity of bus seats, all students choosing to ride the bus will be required to wear a mask while on the bus. The driver will monitor students as they enter the bus to ensure this safety precaution. Students may wear their own mask or a disposable one will be provided by the district. Students may remove the mask upon exiting the bus.

Discipline

Should a discipline issue arise during remote virtual instruction, the school reserves the right to hold the student accountable by revoking the privilege of using a school issued device. If the student is a transfer, the school reserves the right to deny the student's transfer.

Food Service

Students will enter the lunchroom one class at a time with appropriate social distancing. Once in the cafeteria, students will be seated at a table with every other seat being left empty. One or more classes each week will eat lunch in their classroom to help minimize the number of students in the cafeteria.

Parents will have the option to pay student meal accounts through mymealtime.com.

Students participating in remote virtual instruction will have access to school lunch at a time designated by the Food Service Director. Meals will be provided through a drive-up service at the school.

Early Parent Pick-up Procedures and Bringing Items to Your Student During the School Day

If a parent needs to pick up a student early for any reason, they will ring the front door bell and the office staff will assist them as necessary. They will not be admitted into the building.

If you are bringing an item to your child, please ring the front door bell. The office staff will remotely open the door and you can leave the item on the table provided in the entry way for their specific grade level. There will be no admittance into the office or the main part of the school.

Extra-curricular Activities

Athletics and extracurricular activities support the goal of providing a well-rounded educational experience for students within the reopening process. Montague ISD will follow UIL guidance for physical and social distancing, restricting the size of gatherings for indoor and outdoor spaces, disinfecting equipment, and other health and safety precautions. Students who choose the remote virtual instructional method will still be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities.