

Dear Austin ISD Parents and Families,

Beginning on Oct. 5 and continuing through Oct. 30, Austin ISD will begin welcoming students back for on-campus learning. This will be accomplished through a phase-in approach for all students who choose to return to campus. During the four-week phase-in process (Oct. 5 - Oct. 30), the intentional phase-in of more students to on-campus learning will occur if health conditions continue to indicate that we can do so in a safe and healthy way for staff and students.

To help inform your decision making regarding the recent family survey that you received, we are providing information about what the phase-in process will entail and what you can expect with regard to teaching and learning on campus.

### **Phase-In Process**

The phase-in process during weeks five through eight is designed to align with the [Austin Public Health \(APH\) Interim Guidance on Reopening for Austin-Travis County Schools](#) and with the district's commitment to the health and safety of all students, staff, and families in mind.

The four week transition is planned so that, to the greatest degree possible, each facility remains at the same percentage of facility capacity for two weeks before increasing to the next allowable level based on guidance from APH. Facility capacity refers to the number of people (staff and students) that a facility can hold. In Austin ISD, we will phase in as follows:

- Week 5: 25% of facility capacity (aligns with stage 4 of APH Risk-Based Stages and Dr. Escott's recommendation that we continue to behave as if we are in stage 4)
- Week 6: 25% of facility capacity (Up to 50% if needed)
- Week 7: 50% of facility capacity (aligns with stage 3 of APH Risk-Based Stages, the current stage for Austin Travis County)
- Week 8: 50% of facility capacity

For our campus, Nan Clayton Elementary, the above percentage represent the following:

- 25% facility capacity = 227 people (including staff and students)
- 50% facility capacity = 462 people
- 75% facility capacity = 606 people

Campuses will plan for the return of students who choose on-campus learning following the facility guidance outlined above. In addition, students from each campus that have chosen on-campus learning will be welcomed back to campus in small groups over the course of the four weeks. Consideration for which groups of students to bring back each week will be based on factors such as support services being received, grade level, newcomer and refugee status, and status as a child of an Austin ISD staff member.

For all staff and students that return to campus, we are committed to strong implementation of hand hygiene, masking, and social distancing. Per CDC guidance, our goal is 6 feet social distance whenever feasible.

### **On-Campus Learning Beginning October 5 and Beyond**

The information gathered from the September Family Pulse Survey will allow principals to appropriately plan for both on- and off-campus instruction. How instruction is delivered could vary from campus to campus and among levels based on specific campus needs. As we begin the intentional phase-in of more students to on-campus learning, BLEND will remain the common platform and access point for students who are continuing with remote instruction and will also be used by those who attend school on campus at all levels.

**At the middle and high school level**, students will be grouped into learning groups. Learning groups are groups of students that work to complete the same content lesson objectives as those students working remotely off-campus, in a designated learning space with safety measures in place while being monitored by an Austin ISD staff member. Middle and high students, whether learning on-campus or off, will have the same learning experience. A hybrid learning model will be implemented for high school students who choose on-campus learning.

**At the elementary school level**, safety protocols and the number of students who return for on-campus learning will inform the level of interactivity between students and between teacher and students on campus. On-campus teachers will provide a blended learning experience for students who return for in-person schooling. Blended learning is defined as an instructional delivery model in which students learn via electronic and online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching. In some instances, this will mean that a teacher will have to facilitate both virtual and in-person learning for students. While our goal is to keep students with their current classroom teacher, dependent on the number of students that return for on-campus learning and the ability to implement social distancing, students very well may have a teacher other than the one they began the school year with on September 8.

We will continue to monitor updates from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and local health authorities to inform our decisions to keep students, families, and staff safe. Please know that the plans shared in this letter may change in the coming weeks. For the most updated information, please refer to our [Open for Learning](#) webpage.

Thank you for your continued support,  
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