

Alief ISD School Start Plan 2020-2021

HD Chambers, Superintendent of Schools
July 21, 2020

Elements of Alief ISD School Start Plan

1. Framing & Planning Process
2. School Start Overview
3. Health and Safety
4. Academic Model
5. Operational Model

Guiding Values



HEALTH AND SAFETY

We center our work on safety. Preserving the **health** and **safety** of **students, families, and staff** will be foundational for every decision we make.



EMPATHY AND RIGOR

We are **caring** and **supportive** while also maintaining **rigorous instruction**. SY '20-'21 will be far from normal, but we will prioritize high-quality teaching and continuous student learning.



EQUITY

We prioritize equity. We will not allow COVID-19 to leave vulnerable students behind. We must **double down on efforts to close the achievement gap**.



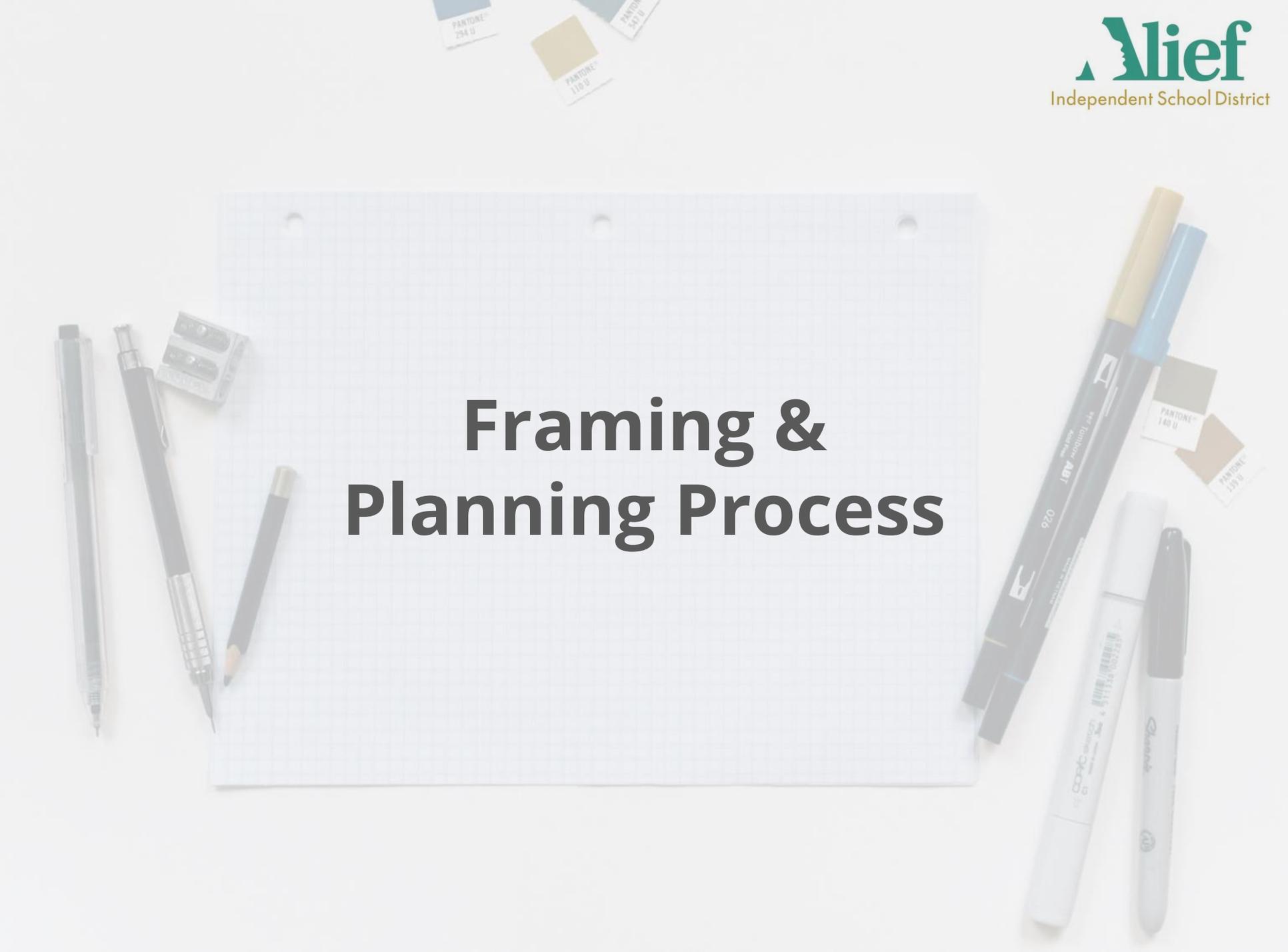
COMMUNITY

We **collaborate with parents and community**. Our plan must be effective for both students and their **families**. We will **leverage community partners** where possible.



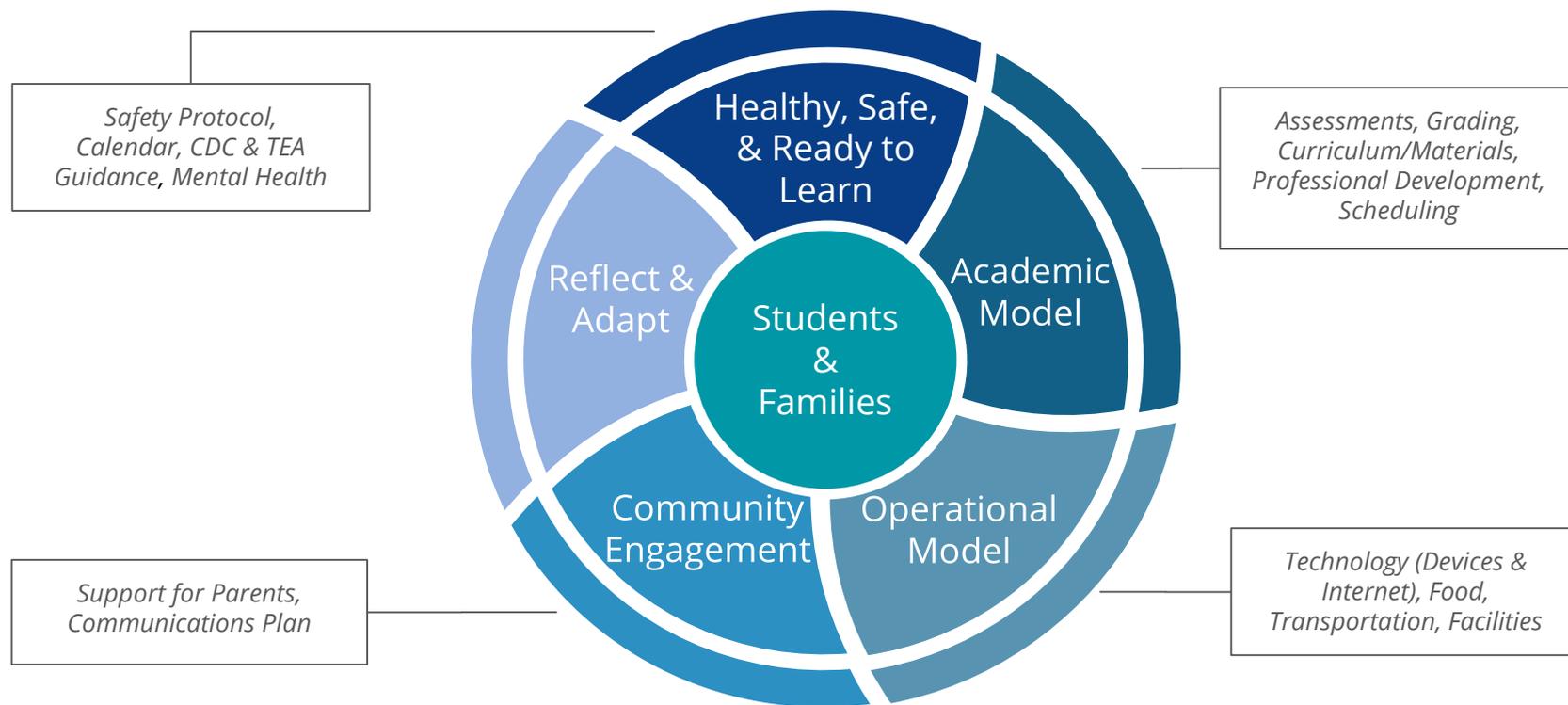
FLEXIBILITY

We create flexibility. When **in-person learning** can occur **safely**, it will be included in our plan. If necessary, we will **quickly and seamlessly** become **fully remote**.



**Framing &
Planning Process**

Re-Entry Framework



Re-Entry & Recovery Task Force

- Committee of 40+ that met weekly to plan for the 2020-2021 school year
- Formed three subcommittees: Academics, Operations, and Health & Safety
- Task Force members included district leadership, campus principals, and other specialists
- One of the first Task Force actions was to move up the first day of school to maximize learning time (please see [revised calendar](#))

Guidance Documents

The Re-Entry Task Force consulted guidance and recommendations from a wide variety of sources, including:

- Surveys of families, students, and staff
- Local health officials
- Benchmarking of plans from other districts/states
- [Texas Education Agency](#)
 - [Attendance & Enrollment FAQ](#)
 - [Public Health Guidance](#)
 - [Remote Instruction Overview](#)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Harvard School of Public Health](#)

Family & Staff Survey Data (as of 7/15)



SURVEY COMPLETION

- July Re-Registration: **21,123 students** (47% of AISD students)
- July Survey: **4,900+ staff**
- June Survey: **3,401 staff, 3,264 parents, 1,668 students** (grades 7+)



OPERATIONS

- *Of Re-Registered Students:* **8%** need Internet access and **20%** need a device
- *As of June:* About 40% of families will rely on buses to get their kids to school this fall



READINESS to RETURN

- *As of June:* **68%** of parents were “not very” or “not at all” comfortable sending their children back to school in-person
- *As of July:* **41%** of campus staff are willing to return in-person, with students. **23%** are willing to teach remotely from school buildings.



ACADEMICS

- *As of June:* About 60% of students (mostly high schoolers) thought online learning was harder than regular school. About 50% of teachers found online teaching challenging.

Spring 2020: Progress Made

In March 2020, Alief ISD quickly and effectively transitioned to fully virtual learning due to COVID-19. In that time, we:

- Launched Alief Learns, our online learning platform and curriculum
- Contacted thousands of families
- Provided 3,500+ meals per day from March-May
- Checked out 2,000+ devices to 1st-12th grade students enrolled in virtual summer school

Spring 2020: Lessons Learned

Our experiences last spring will directly inform our work for the fall, ensuring that we build on our progress and offer an even stronger and more robust educational experience for our families. Specifically, we will:

- Ensure that all families have access to the Internet and a device
(65% of families had at least some tech/internet issues this spring)
- When health conditions allow, provide families a choice in how their students learn (in-person or virtually)
- Build out our virtual learning platform to ensure it is academically rigorous and engaging
 - Ensure every lesson is paired with digital materials, activities, and resources
- Maintain clear lines of communication between schools, staff, and families to ensure we can adjust throughout the year as necessary



School Start Overview

2020-2021 School Start Overview (1 of 3)

As of 7/21, what is Alief ISD's school start plan?

- First Day of School: 8/6
 - *All Students (Grades PK-12) Learning Virtually*
- After virtual launch window ends, families will have two choices:
 - *In-Person Learning (5 days a week in classrooms)*
 - *Virtual Learning (5 days a week from home)*
- Families can switch between learning modes each grading period

2020-2021 School Start Overview (2 of 3)

As of 7/21, what will a strong virtual launch look like?

- Every student will have connectivity and a device
 - *Technology distribution begins this week for those without a device or connectivity*
- Students, teachers, and parents will access Alief Learns at Home
 - *Alief Learns is Alief ISD's comprehensive, rigorous PK-12 curriculum that seamlessly supports both virtual and in-person learning*
 - *In a single platform, it provides digital lessons, materials, and an online classroom hub for every Alief course for the entire year*
- Structured virtual learning through online schedules and attendance-taking
- Families will access curbside meal pickup at 38 school sites (all elementary/intermediate/middle and Taylor/Elsik)
- Essential staff will return to campus to assist with registration, technology distribution, and classroom set-up. Teachers who wish to teach remotely from buildings may do so (cap at 20% of staff)
- No extracurricular activities and/or UIL during virtual period

2020-2021 School Start Overview (3 of 3)

What will a return to in-person learning look like?

- When the virtual launch window ends, families who wish to send their children to school in-person may do so
 - *Registration for in-person learning is in progress*
- Students and staff will abide by rigorous health and safety protocol in school and on the bus, including:
 - Masks
 - Increased facility/bus cleanings
 - Self-screening for COVID-19 symptoms
 - Social distancing as feasible
- UIL/extracurricular activities may begin, pending guidance
- Most staff will return to campuses



Health & Safety

Health and Safety Model (1 of 5)

- Health and Safety is our top priority. Our plan:
 - Covers safety in school buildings/facilities and safety on school buses
 - Focuses on communicating clear expectations, preventative measures, responding to possible outbreaks, and mitigating the possible spread of COVID-19
 - Is in compliance with recommendations provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Texas Education Agency, and local health authorities
- The following slides provide an overview of major health and safety topics; Alief ISD has created a full protocol, which covers additional areas

Health and Safety Model (2 of 5)

General Hygiene Practice

- Schools will provide hand sanitizer in every classroom and office area and provide sanitizer stations in high traffic areas such as entrances, gymnasiums and cafeterias
- Classrooms will be provided cleaning supplies to disinfect high touch areas in the classrooms during breaks
- Students, staff and visitors will be encouraged to sanitize and wash hands frequently
- Schools will provide signage and posters throughout the building promoting handwashing techniques, social distancing recommendations and mask requirements
- Schools will teach students and staff general hygiene practices on the first day of instruction regarding the following: handwashing techniques, how to cover coughs and sneezes, how to properly wear a mask, and will review the district's prevention and mitigation protocol

Masks

- All staff and visitors must wear a mask while on campus
- Students must wear a mask during school and upon entering Alief ISD buses. Campuses may provide defined breaks for students to remove masks while adhering to social distancing requirements. Accommodations may be made for students with special needs

Health and Safety Model (3 of 5)

Screenings & Response to Cases

- School staff will self-screen daily prior to entering the building, and parents will screen their students at home
- Our plan includes a protocol for case reporting and for responding to positive cases of COVID-19

Social Distancing

- Schools will place student desks a minimum of six feet apart in classrooms where possible. Campus leaders will utilize a variety of spacing options to support social distancing
- Schools will allow for more frequent hand washing and/or sanitizing when social distancing is not possible
- Schools will use non-classroom spaces when feasible/appropriate in order to support social distancing
- Sinks and urinals less than six feet apart will be inoperable to enable social distancing

Health and Safety Model (4 of 5)

Facilities

- Custodians will provide more frequent cleaning and provide cleaning supplies for teachers to clean high-touch areas in their classrooms during the day
- Custodial schedules will be arranged for additional cleaning and disinfecting of high touch areas such as door handles, stair handrails, tables and desks, computers and laptops
- Custodial staff will disinfect restrooms and other common spaces more frequently throughout the day
- Custodial staff will sanitize rooms at the end of every school day
- Maintenance will continue to maintain/change air filters to improve air quality and will ensure fresh air supply units are working properly
- Barrier shields will be installed at front receptionist areas and high traffic office areas at all campuses and support buildings
- Maintenance will make drinking fountains non-operational until they are retrofitted to become bottle fillers.

Health and Safety Model (5 of 5)

School Bus

- Students are required to wear masks upon entering (and while being transported on) the bus
- Hand sanitizer will be provided upon entering and departing the bus
- Students will sit one student per seat whenever occupancy allows. Siblings may sit together during transport
- Whenever weather permits, bus drivers will open windows for air circulation
- The district will encourage families to drop off and pick up students, carpool, walk with their children to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 exposure on buses
- Bus drivers will disinfect high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, knobs, door handles, steering wheel and driver's area after each run
- Bus drivers will clean and disinfect the bus after the end of the school day. A video outlining the cleaning routine for buses can be found [here](#)



Academic Model

Academic Model (1 of 7)

- Alief ISD will provide 100% of its students, whether learning virtually or in-person, with the following supports:
 - Alief will provide **access to Internet connection and a learning device** for students who do not have a device or connectivity.
 - All Alief students will be **assessed for learning loss**.
 - All Alief students will have access to a **high-quality curriculum and teacher attention**.
 - All Alief students will be **enrolled in an Alief campus**.
 - Alief students will be monitored for their **social-emotional health**.
 - All Alief students will **get what they need to learn** and grow.
 - All Alief families will receive **clear and frequent communications** from schools.

Academic Model (2 of 7)

Virtual Learning

- All PK-12 students will use [Alief Learns](#), our comprehensive district-wide curriculum. For virtual students, this platform will be known as Alief Learns at Home.
 - If a student switches from one learning mode to another at a transition window, the student will be able to pick up right where he/she left off, studying the same topics and completing the same assignments. The only change will be the format of instruction.
- Teachers will use Alief Learns to access pacing guides, unit plans, individual lessons, and course materials. They can customize and share these materials with students for each of their classes. They can also use Alief Learns to interact with students, collect assignments, and assess student growth.
- Parents can log on to Alief Learns to learn more about their child's courses and to communicate with teachers.
- Grading
 - Numerical grades will be taken and count toward passing standards. Grading guidelines for virtual and in person learning will be the same.
- Virtual instruction in Alief Learns will be **asynchronous with synchronous elements**. This means that classwork and learning on any given day can be completed by the student at his/her own pace. There will be certain synchronous, or "live," elements, such as lessons conducted via webcam or Zoom; this will vary based on the subject and grade level.

Academic Model (3 of 7)

TEA Requirements - Remote Asynchronous Learning

- **Letter of Intent** due by 8/6
- **Full Remote Asynchronous Plan** due by 10/1, including:
 - **Attestations**
 - *Instructional Schedule*
 - *Material Design*
 - *Student Progress*
 - *Implementation*
 - **Open Response**
 - *Allows district to differentiate plan by grade band*
 - **Final Attestation**
 - *Superintendent and Board approval*

Academic Model (4 of 7)

TEA “Look Fors” - Remote Asynchronous Learning

- **Instructional Schedule**

- Daily interaction with academic content at defined times (approximately a full day of academic content daily)
- Clear expectations and pre-planned times for teacher/student interactions, differentiated for students with additional learning needs

- **Material Design**

- TEKS-aligned instructional materials and assessments
- Instructional materials/assessments designed for asynchronous instruction. Coherent sequence of learning, and materials reinforce concepts as students move between learning environments
- Resources for students with disabilities and ELs

- **Student Progress**

- Defined expectations for daily student engagement consistent with progress that would occur on campus
- System for tracking engagement/progress and providing weekly feedback to students

- **Implementation**

- Calendar with ongoing job-embedded development opportunities to help educators implement asynchronous curriculum and respond to data
- Communication to families on expectations for asynchronous instruction, with reasonable expectations for family support of students; additional training for families who need support

Academic Model (5 of 7)

Virtual Support for Special Education Students

- ARD committees will determine how students' special education services will be adapted, accommodated, or modified in times of virtual learning. A continuum of special education services will be available to implement student IEPs such as curriculum accommodation and modification, virtual direct instruction with a special education teacher, or individualized learning experiences.
- Related services will include consultation and virtual speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and adapted physical education.

Virtual Support for English Learners and Bilingual Students

- Teachers will use sheltered instructional components and features such as content and language objectives, sentence stems, intentional small group configurations, etc. to help ELs develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in English.
- ELs new to the country or beginning level in English in grades 3-6 will receive English Language Development services by the campus ESL Interventionist using digital platforms such as ESL Reading Smart.
- Bilingual Teachers PK-6 will have access to bilingual lessons, cross-curricular content and links provided by textbook publishers as well as district translations.

Academic Model (6 of 7)

In-Person Learning (When Safe to Offer to Families)

- All classrooms will abide by the AISD health and safety protocol.
- Depending on the number of students in the grade, staffing numbers, and the size of classrooms, students may be split into smaller groups for various parts of the day. Our goal is to minimize student movement throughout the school (in order to prevent the potential spread of the virus) while also keeping groups as small as possible, in order to maintain social distancing between students' desks. When possible, teachers may be the ones moving between classrooms, rather than students.
- All teachers will be using the Alief Learns curriculum, and even though in-person learning will take place in the school building, students will have technology regularly incorporated into their learning experience.
- Due to health and safety concerns, certain high-contact activities (e.g. group projects, team sports, lab experiments) may be altered or put on hold. Moreover, many of our family and staff touchpoints that used to happen in person, from department meetings to parent-teacher conferences, may transition online.
- We are awaiting guidance from UIL before making decisions on in-person extracurricular activities.

Academic Model (7 of 7)

Staffing

- We are prioritizing the health and safety of our staff while also ensuring our students have access to the academic and social-emotional support they need.
- All instructional staff will begin remote instruction on 8/6. The vast majority of staff will be conducting this work from home. Buildings will have no more than 20% of staff (who are either essential or would prefer to teach virtually from campus) on-site.
- When AISD begins offering in-person learning, most staff will be required to return to campuses. A certain number of virtual teaching roles will open, and interested staff can apply for those roles.
- All campus staff will be provided masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies for their spaces. Staff who are more likely to have direct contact with students (e.g. certain special education teachers) will be provided additional PPE.
- When possible, staff meetings and professional development will take place either in a socially distanced manner or virtually.
- If a staff member has an underlying health condition that would make him/her unable to return to school buildings due to the risk of COVID, he or she will contact the HR Department/Risk Management Office for further guidance.



Operational Model

Operational Model (1 of 5)

The Operations Committee addressed the following areas:

- Technology resources (devices, connectivity, delivery) and support
- Transportation of students attending in-person
- Data and IT functions such as registration, scheduling, attendance tracking
- Meal service (breakfast and lunch) for on-campus and remote learners
- Building operations, including use of space for distancing, cleaning, and flow of people
- Communications tools and technology for remote and on-site (phones/messaging)
- Procurement and distribution of PPE, safety devices/equipment, and supplies

Operational Model (2 of 5)

Funding and Attendance

- Alief ISD uses AliefHub (a ClassLink product) and Schoology (a PowerSchool product) as the centralized platform to provide virtual learning to students.
 - AliefHub provides resources from many textbook vendors, digital research tools, and online periodicals subscriptions together in a menued solution that links teachers with their students.
- We are currently working with both partners to ensure that the system will automatically track login times, engagement times, and assignment completion for every student, for every course, every day. Specific procedures are under development by the District Attendance Office.

Operational Model (3 of 5)

Transportation

- All school buses will be equipped with three bottles: glass cleaner, multi-purpose cleaner, and disinfectant. Drivers will be trained on how to use each item.
- The department will also incorporate relevant COVID-19 signage that will be affixed within the step well of each school bus that will communicate bus ridership expectations during this pandemic.
- All school buses will be equipped with hand sanitizing stations.
- The Department is evaluating an alternative methodology that is being implemented by Houston Metro regarding affixing hand sanitizing stations via PVC material to provide enhanced product feasibility and a better approach to secure the hand sanitizing station.
- The Department has acquired fogging equipment that will be used to supplement cleaning efforts and initiatives by transportation employees. Both items are in place at the Synott facility.
- The Department will formulate a plan, team, and schedule for random fogging on top of cleaning and disinfectant initiatives by transportation employees.

Operational Model (4 of 5)

Technology

- AISD is in the process of obtaining 16,000 hotspots and approximately 27,000 devices to ensure every child has connectivity for the 2020-2021 school year
- Device distribution begins this week; AISD has created detailed check-out protocols and process flows
- Staff who need Internet and/or device access will also be able to access district-purchased technology

Operational Model (5 of 5)

Nutrition

- Nutrition will provide curbside meals to enrolled students at all Elementary, Intermediate & Middle Schools, Taylor and Elsie, beginning 8/6/20
 - ES/IS/MS students will pick up meals at site where student is enrolled
 - HS students may pick up meals at Taylor or Elsie
- Curbside meals (breakfast and lunch provided at same time) will be distributed Monday through Friday from 5-7 p.m. (intended for next day's consumption)
- Students must bring student ID, know Student ID # or have an official school letter stating they are enrolled at the campus
- Parent/guardian may pick up meals for their enrolled student with appropriate ID
- Meal applications available at technology distribution, curbside meal distribution, and Federal Meals Office
- Paid students (breakfast is free; paid lunch \$1.00) – Parents will prepay online
- Upon students returning to in-person learning or a combination of in-person and remote learning, this plan will be modified