

# WEST OSO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CONRADO GARCIA – SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



## SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL COVID-19 PROTOCOLS & GUIDELINES



2021-2022  
SCHOOL YEAR

BOARD APPROVED  
DATE: AUGUST 16, 2021

UPDATED  
DATE: SEPT. 3, 2021

*PERSONALIZATION. COLLABORATION. TRUST.  
EVERY STUDENT. EVERY HOUR. EVERY DAY.*



# WEST OSO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

BOARD APPROVED  
DATE: AUGUST 16, 2021

### SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL COVID-19 PROTOCOLS & GUIDELINES 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

West Oso ISD will welcome back all students for in-person instruction on Monday, August 23, 2021. With the health and safety of all students and staff in mind, the district has created a Safe Return to School COVID-19 Protocols & Guidelines for the 2021-2022 school year.

The district will communicate the Safe Return to School COVID-19 Protocols & Guidelines directly to parents, staff, and community members through its numerous social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and Robocalls.

This plan outlines a number of safety protocols including separate building entrances for arrival and dismissal, maintaining at least three feet of physical distance as much as possible as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, encouraging frequent hand washing, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces in school buildings and buses.

In addition, the district will require all vaccinated and unvaccinated students and staff members to wear a mask. Students and staff will also be urged to stay home when sick or exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms as listed in these guidelines.

Below are the following guidelines:

#### ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

When possible, the following protocols should be implemented for arrival:

- Separate entrances will be utilized for car riders, bus riders, and walkers. (Procedures may vary based on the number of campus entrances and exits).
- There will be bus procedures, based on campus-specific needs.

#### BUSES (SEE TRANSPORTATION DEPT)

#### CAFETERIA

All campuses will return to eating lunch in the cafeteria. Students will be socially distanced. Cafeteria tables will be sanitized between lunch shifts.

Hand washing or using hand sanitizer will be required before going through the food line and eating areas will be cleaned between lunch periods. Hand sanitizing stations will be located throughout the cafeteria for easy access during breakfast and lunch periods.

#### CAMPUS VISITORS

Campus visitors must take a COVID-19 self-assessment upon entering the receptionist area. If the visitor displays or experiences any symptoms related to COVID-19, we encourage visitors not to enter the facility. To maintain safe social distancing, West Oso ISD will not permit visitors during breakfast or lunch at this time.

## COVID-19 TESTING

Please contact the local county health department or your primary care physician for more information concerning COVID-19 testing.

Corpus Christi Nueces County Health Department COVID-19 Testing Information:

<https://www.cctexas.com/services/general-government/coronavirus-community-resources>

## COVID-19 RAPID TESTING

### GOAL OF TESTING:

With guidance from the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM), Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), West Oso ISD will be implementing BinaxNOW rapid COVID-19 testing. Rapid antigen-based testing will potentially give West Oso ISD the ability to quickly identify and isolate positive individuals before they can transmit the virus to others.

In turn, this will help reduce the amount of absences for individuals waiting on test results and help to fast track treatment and quarantine for positive individuals and their close contacts. *Participation in BinaxNOW rapid COVID-19 testing is voluntary according to each individual's preference.*

Testing coordinator and testing administrator were chosen from guidelines provided by TEA.

Testing Program Coordinator: JoAnn Garcia, RN, District Health Services Coordinator

Testing Program Support: RJ Alvarado, Executive Director of Student Services

Test Administrators (Overseer of Testing): District Nursing Staff

JFK Elementary School: Bunny Fira

West Oso Junior High School: Tanya Whitehead

West Oso Elementary: JoAnn Garcia

West Oso High School: Grace Arriaga

By conducting OPTIONAL tests on campus, West Oso ISD can:

- Use tests as an additional screening tool in some cases to prevent the virus from coming on campus.
- Provide another source of testing to which the school can quickly respond by removing the individual before they can spread COVID on campus.

### TEST TYPE:

Testing provided by Abbott Laboratories. Tests will be BinaxNOW tests provided by the state and federal government.

- Sensitivity (true positive rate) of 97.1%
- Specificity (true negative rate) of 98.5%

### TESTING SPECIFICS:

- Testing must be optional.
- Results within 15 minutes.
- Tests are administered with a nasal swab (to the shallow front of the nostrils only).
- Adults will be able to self-administer with the oversight of a test administrator.
- Available to only district employees and/or students.
- Legal guardian consent required for students under the age of 18.
- No charge for student/staff testing.

## COVID TESTING PLAN

### GROUP 1:

Rapid COVID-19 testing for symptomatic students and staff members. Individuals less than the age of 18 must have parent/guardian permission before testing can be performed.

### GROUP 2:

Rapid COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic students and staff identified as being exposed to COVID (close contact).

### GROUP 3:

Rapid COVID-19 testing to be used as a voluntary screening of students and/or staff for specified purposes (i.e. athletic teams or extracurricular organizations).

## GROUP 1 PROTOCOL:

### VOLUNTARY SYMPTOMATIC STUDENTS OR STAFF MEMBERS

Voluntary testing for symptomatic students and staff members at West Oso ISD. No one will be required to take a test. Symptoms must be consistent with the current guidelines from the CDC and the Nueces County Health District (NCHD).

#### *Symptomatic Students:*

Voluntary testing of symptomatic students at West Oso ISD: Symptoms must be consistent with the current guidelines from the CDC and NCHD. No student will be required to take the test and all students under 18 must have parent permission prior to having the test performed. Parent permission may be received over the phone by two staff members. Parent permission slips will be available online, in the nurse's office and will be sent home with information about the test if requested. If a form is filled out in advance, the parents will still be notified prior to any testing.

- If the test result is negative, the symptomatic student will be sent home following symptomatic protocol. The student should still follow-up with their healthcare provider to rule out COVID or receive an alternative diagnosis.
- If the test result is positive, according to **TEA Public Guidance Released on August 19, 2021: Students or staff members** who test positive for COVID-19, whether they are vaccinated or not vaccinated, are required to:
  - Report results to supervisor and RJ Alvarado. They will need to quarantine.
  - Nurses will report students results to parents, students and appropriate staff
  - If symptomatic, stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications.
  - If asymptomatic, stay home until 10 days after testing positive initially.
  - Receive a negative test in order to return to work or school

#### *Symptomatic Staff Members:*

Voluntary testing for symptomatic staff members at West Oso ISD: No one will be required to take a test. Staff may voluntarily receive the rapid antigen BinaxNOW COVID-19 test after scheduling with West Oso ISD Nursing Staff at a time when a test administrator is available. Symptoms must be consistent with the current guidelines from the CDC and NCHD. Symptoms are listed below.

1. Sick at Home: If a staff member is sick at home and they want a test, they may call the Nurse's Office and schedule a test. Test administrators will be provided PPE to reduce the risk of exposure.
2. Sick at School: If a staff member gets sick while at school, they will be asked to immediately go to the **isolation room** in the Nurse's Office, and may volunteer to receive a test. If they choose not to test or wish to go home, they may do so immediately. This must be done quickly to reduce the spread of the virus.
  - If the test is **negative**, the staff member should still follow-up with their healthcare provider to rule out COVID or receive an alternative diagnosis.
  - If the test is **positive**, the staff member will be required to stay home for at minimum 10 days and must adhere to return to work protocols. Staff will also be encouraged to contact their healthcare provider.
  - According to **TEA Public Guidance Released on August 19, 2021: Students or staff members** who test positive for COVID-19, whether they are vaccinated or not vaccinated, are required to:
    - Report results to supervisor and RJ Alvarado. They will need to quarantine.
    - Nurses will report students results to parents, students and appropriate staff
    - If symptomatic, stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications.
    - If asymptomatic, stay home until 10 days after testing positive initially.
    - Receive a negative test in order to return to work or school

## GROUP 2 PROTOCOL:

### VOLUNTARY ASYMPTOMATIC STUDENTS AND STAFF MEMBERS

*Asymptomatic Students Who Have Been in Close Contact with an individual who is suspected or been confirmed as positive for COVID-19*

Voluntary testing of asymptomatic close contact students: Close contact is defined as:

- a) being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
- b) being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Students in this group are not required to have symptoms. Parent permission must be provided prior to any testing. Parent permission may be received over the phone by two staff members.

Parent permission slips will be available online, in the nurse's office and will be sent home with information about the test if requested. If a form is filled out in advance, the parents will still be notified prior to any testing. Voluntary testing will be available as long as testing kits are available. These tests will be scheduled when a test administrator is available.

- If test results are negative, the student is asymptomatic and has been vaccinated, they can return to school.
- If the results are negative, the student is asymptomatic, and the student has not been vaccinated, they must remain at home for 10 days from initial exposure. They must produce a negative test result to return to school.

- If the results are positive, the student must follow quarantine protocols. The student will be asked to follow-up with their healthcare provider, and must remain at home for 10 days or until the return to school protocol has been met.
  - According to **TEA Public Guidance Released on August 19, 2021:** **Students or staff members** who test positive for COVID-19, whether they are vaccinated or not vaccinated, are required to:
    - Report results to supervisor and RJ Alvarado. They will need to quarantine.
    - Nurses will report students results to parents, students and appropriate staff
    - If symptomatic, stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications.
    - If asymptomatic, stay home until 10 days after testing positive initially.
    - Receive a negative test in order to return to work or school
1. Staff and students who are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19:
    - Staff is required to test.
    - If staff tests negative and has no COVID-19 symptoms, staff may return to work. Staff is required to continue to monitor symptoms.
    - Staff is required to get a rapid COVID-19 test every five days until 10 days after the close contact has passed.
    - Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period.
  2. Staff who are not vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive:
    - Staff is required to get tested.
    - Staff remains home for the 10-day period.

### GROUP 3 PROTOCOL:

#### VOLUNTARY SCREENING OF STUDENTS AND/OR STAFF FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Voluntary rapid COVID-19 testing to be used as a screening for students and/or staff for specified purposes (i.e. athletic teams or extracurricular organizations) in West Oso ISD: When warranted, voluntary screening of extracurricular programs will be conducted. Student and staff participants will be tested in order to ensure the health and safety of students and staff in West Oso ISD. Protocols for screening will be similar to those for Group 2: Asymptomatic Students and Staff.

## COVID-LEAVE FOR WEST OSO ISD EMPLOYEES

1. Staff who are fully vaccinated and need to quarantine based on criteria above will be granted five days of COVID leave if they provide documentation of their vaccinations. This documentation needs to be provided to RJ Alvarado. After five days, fully vaccinated staff members will need to utilize their own sick days.
2. Staff who are not vaccinated and need to quarantine based on criteria above will be need to use their own sick leave.
3. Staff who have not followed protocols stated above will not be granted five days of leave. Staff must report to their supervisor and RJ Alvarado their need to quarantine **in advance** in order to receive leave.

## INFORMING OF THE PUBLIC AND REPORTING

West Oso ISD plans to implement testing as deemed appropriate over the course of the next few months. We will continue to address and educate our staff and community about the type of testing, the science behind it and the recommendations and policies West Oso ISD has put in place as directed by NCHD, CDC and TEA.

All test results will be reported in a timely manner in accordance with procedural guidelines. In addition, West Oso ISD will comply with reporting requirements to the NCHD, DSHS, TEA, and TDEM as required.

## COVID-19 VACCINES

The COVID-19 vaccine helps to lower your chances of contracting COVID-19, spreading it to others, and lessens your chances of being seriously ill or hospitalized. The district continues to partner with local organizations to provide COVID-19 vaccine opportunities to students, staff, families, and the community. Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is not required, but strongly encouraged.

## EXTRACURRICULAR

UIL practices and contests will be conducted following safety protocols provided by guidance from UIL and TEA.

## FACE COVERING, MASKS/PPE

We know that the number one way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is masking. We are therefore requiring all staff, students, and visitors to wear a mask when indoors on all WOISD campuses.

On July 27, 2021, the CDC updated guidance in order to prevent further spread of the Delta variant and recommended all fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals to wear a mask indoors in areas with high COVID-19 transmission.

On August 19, 2021, TEA released guidance to school districts regarding Governor Abbott's ban on mask mandates. TEA stated that the ban on mask provisions of GA-38 are not being enforced as the result of ongoing litigation. Further guidance will be made available after the court issues are resolved.

## QUARANTINE

Anyone who is unvaccinated and has had contact with someone that has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 10. Vaccinated individuals will not need to quarantine if they come in close contact with someone who tests positive as long as they follow testing and monitoring protocols stated previously.

## SICK INDIVIDUALS

If you or your child are feeling sick, regardless of whether you're vaccinated or not, please stay home and contact your physician and campus as soon as possible. Anyone who is sick will need to isolate at home for 10 days. Those who show symptoms can return early if they receive a doctor's note stating they do not have COVID-19 or receive a negative result from a COVID-19 test.

## SANITIZATION PROTOCOL

Classrooms, offices, and restrooms will be disinfected daily and in between class periods. In addition, all high-touch areas will be disinfected daily, and the cafeteria will be disinfected during and between lunch periods.

Appropriate custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance staff will be trained on how to properly disinfect classrooms, and they will have access to disinfectant to sanitize working surfaces, collaboration areas and shared objects after each use and during breaks of instruction.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Since this is an ever-changing situation, the district may need to change protocols at any time to address specific needs based on the recommendations of the CDC, Texas Education Agency (TEA), Corpus Christi Nueces County Health Department or other governmental entities/public health authorities.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available at the main entry to the campus, in classrooms, in the cafeteria and in common areas throughout the campus. Students and staff will be expected to regularly wash or sanitize their hands.

Requirements for handwashing and/or use of district-provided hand sanitizer include:

- Provide hand sanitizer upon entry to classroom.
- Periodic reminders from teachers to use the sanitizer during instructional day.
- Thorough hand washing after recess, before eating and following restroom breaks.

Physical distancing of 3 feet or more will take place when feasible, per CDC guidelines. Plexiglass will be placed in classrooms and across campuses, if applicable.

In addition, we will be providing an air ionization inside the air handlers throughout all West Oso ISD campuses. An air ionizer is a type of air cleaner that purifies the air by adding an electrical charge to the molecules in the air. Air ionizers use ionization to clear the air of dust, germs, and odors.



## SCREENING AND TEMPERATURE CHECKS

We strongly encourage all individuals to [screen for symptoms per CDC guidelines](#) before coming to campus, as the [CDC recommends](#) screening should happen before leaving home. Anyone who is sick should stay home and contact their campus immediately. West Oso ISD will be performing temperature checks upon entry to facilities.

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

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. Do you have a fever of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher?
2. Have you had any of the following?
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Shortness of breath
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Sore throat
  - Shaking or exaggerated shivering
  - Significant muscle pain or ache
  - Diarrhea
3. Have you been around anyone exhibiting these symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 7 days?

## TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

### BUSES:

Buses will return to operating at full capacity. However, seating charts will be required, hand sanitizer will be readily available, students in the same household will be allowed to sit together, and daily cleaning will continue. We encourage all students (vaccinated & unvaccinated) to wear masks while on the bus.

To provide a safe bus ride for students, the following guidelines will be implemented:

- Parents will be highly encouraged to drop off or walk with students to school.
- Hand sanitizer will be available to all passengers as they enter the bus.
- If weather permits, the school bus windows will remain open for better air circulation.
- Bus drivers will wipe down high-touch surface areas between routes. Each bus will be sanitized at a minimum of twice a day with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectants. The buses will also be disinfected weekly using a Victory Disinfectant Fine Mist Sprayer that utilizes EPA-approved disinfectants as well.

### PLEASE NOTE:

*While we do not expect many or any changes to the above protocols, we will continue to adjust protocols and communicate any changes as new governmental mandates and health authority recommendations are given.*