



IST together

Reopening Plan
Fall 2020

A Letter from the Head of School & Board Chair

Dear IST Community:

We have always believed that an International Baccalaureate education at IST prepares students uniquely for their futures by teaching them to engage in problems, ask hard questions, design creative solutions, and collaborate to implement them for the greater good. Now, more than ever, our students and teachers have had to adapt and improvise and problem solve to deal with the constantly evolving circumstances that we are all facing. We hope that you are as inspired as we are by the collective creativity, optimism, and determination that our students and teachers have demonstrated. They are truly Trailblazers, and we couldn't be more proud!

As we look ahead to the 2020-21 school year, we know that it is critically important that we provide a safe environment so that our students can continue their growth as learners and leaders. To that end, IST leadership, the Board of Trustees, and the Preparedness Team have worked tirelessly to prepare **IST Together**, our plan for reopening IST for on-campus and remote learning on **September 8, 2020**.

We have developed extensive health and safety protocols based on guidance from top experts in the fields of pediatrics and public health. We are also committed to remaining flexible, as we know the ability to adapt to changing circumstances is one of our most invaluable tools.

Most importantly, we have designed **IST Together** to keep our students, families, and teachers safe. We are bound together by our dedication to our children. And now, that dedication includes a shared commitment to their safety. This commitment falls on the shoulders of each and every member of the IST community. By working together to take reasonable precautions both on and off campus, we can reopen our doors and reignite the special magic that happens when our students and teachers are together in our IST classrooms.

Thank you for your dedication to the IST community and to our children. Together, we are here to make sure that they lead the way, today, tomorrow, and into the future.

Sincerely,

Tim Reilly,
Head of School

Chad Anson,
Chair, Board of Trustees

OVERVIEW

Together, we can do this.

We believe that having students on campus for in-person instruction is in the best educational and developmental interests of our students. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as well as a super-majority of IST parents surveyed also support this view. However, we also recognize that some IST families may not feel comfortable being on campus at this time.

To that end, IST Together presents two options for the fall:

(1) Live, on-campus instruction at our Hudson Bend campus for (Junior PreK to Grade 4) or our new Bee Cave campus (Grades 5 to 7); or

(2) Remote learning, which enables students to remotely log in and view / participate in their class's live, in-class instruction.

It is our goal to maintain a flexible and nimble approach to support the overall health and well-being of our students, families, and staff. We will be prepared for all contingencies, including the need to switch to a high-quality Distance Learning Program.

We want to be clear: our Reopening Plan is intended to reduce, not eliminate, risk. The AAP states, "[n]o single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, but implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk."

By taking the precautions and implementing the protocols outlined in this Reopening Plan, we believe that IST can create an on-campus learning environment that allows students and staff to thrive, while maximizing safety.



CORE VALUES OF IST TOGETHER

CREATE

We are committed to creating an **on-campus** learning environment that allows students and staff to thrive, while maximizing safety. Our community works best when we can rely on one another for safe practices both on-campus and off-campus.

PROVIDE

We are committed to providing an enhanced **remote** learning experience. We recognize that not everyone is comfortable returning to campus, and we will ensure that students are able to learn from home and engage meaningfully with teachers and friends.

PREPARE

We are also committed to preparing a world-class **distance learning** offering. In the event that students need to return to 100% at-home learning, IST is committed to providing a continuation of its successful Distance Learning Plan from Spring 2020.



CREATE A SAFE ON-CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

We are committed to creating a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility in the IST community.

STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK!

Simply put, staff and students must stay home if they have any symptoms or diagnosis of illness.

FACE COVERINGS

Students and faculty will wear face coverings inside, when age-appropriate (Grade 1 and higher).

CLEAN HANDS

We will emphasize hand and face hygiene, and work with our younger students to help them develop and use best practices.

CLEAN AIR

We will use multiple devices including HEPA filters and UV air purifiers to clean the air in our buildings.

NATURE'S CLASSROOM

We will use our 18+ acres of beautiful hill country views for outdoor learning.

MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE

We will use every inch of our 25,000 square feet of indoor building space to spread out to protect individual health.

MAINTAIN A SOCIAL DISTANCE

We will separate students into cohorts and maximize distancing between cohorts to slow transmission chains.

LIMIT ON-CAMPUS GUESTS

We will limit guests and visitors to campus.

CLEANING & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

We will implement enhanced cleaning and safety protocols.

CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE GUIDELINES

We will provide clear guidelines for detecting and handling cases of COVID-19.



PROVIDE AN ENHANCED REMOTE OPTION

We will provide an enhanced Remote Learning Experience. We recognize that not everyone is comfortable returning to campus, and we will ensure that students are able to learn and engage from home.

LIVE PARTICIPATION WITH TEACHERS AND PEERS

Students will have a "window into the classroom," as they connect via laptop or tablet to view a live-stream of their classes.

EXCHANGE IDEAS ACROSS LOCATIONS

Remote students can participate in live class via the camera and microphone on their device.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE (REMOTE) DREAM WORK

Parents of remote students will pick up resource packets from campus regularly. This provides our remote students with the tools they need to integrate their learning experience from home.

REMOTE LEARNING ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT

We know that virtual classroom participation can be tough, and takes a team effort between teacher and family to position the remote student for success. Remote Learning families will be asked to sign a Remote Learning Essential Agreement.

WHEN IS REMOTE LEARNING AVAILABLE?

For the 2020-21 school year only, Remote Learning will be available whenever in-person learning is offered.



PREPARE FOR HIGH-QUALITY DISTANCE LEARNING

In the event that students need to return to 100% at-home learning, IST is committed to providing a world-class Distance Learning Program that is of the same high quality as our in-person instruction.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Our Distance Learning Program will leverage the best aspects of our Spring 2020 distance learning, while adding several enhancements to ensure that the Distance Learning Program is as high quality as our in-person instruction.

ADDING EVENTS, ENHANCEMENTS, AND FUN!

We will be increasing the variety of diversity of curriculum areas, building in more opportunities for one-on-one time and feedback from teachers, and adding virtual special events and extracurricular opportunities.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS AND GROWTH

We are actively evaluating how to increase engagement with students during distance learning, maximize the value of synchronous and asynchronous learning, and add new projects and events.

DISTANCE LEARNING ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT

We will require families to sign a Distance Learning Essential Agreement to increase accountability and teamwork between teachers and parents to help students succeed.

WHEN WILL IST UTILIZE DISTANCE LEARNING?

IST's Distance Learning Program will be available when in-person instruction is NOT available.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is "Remote Learning" versus "Distance Learning"?

Remote learning extends the in-person classroom experience to students participating live on a device. Distance learning is a 100% virtual experience that will be offered only when in-person instruction is not available.

Is Remote Learning as good as in-person learning?

We strongly feel that in-person instruction is the best option for our students and is our top priority. However, we also feel that we can provide a remote learning experience that captures the essence of our in-person experience for IST families that are not yet comfortable returning to campus.

How is IST enhancing its Remote Learning Experience?

We are upgrading our technology to enhance each remote student's audio, video, and interactivity. In addition, we will have a Remote Learning Specialist assigned to support our remote learning students with weekly check-ins.

In addition, each remote learning student will have a "buddy" -- a fellow student who has volunteered to help "connect" the remote student with daily schedules, assignments, and just help to make sure they feel engaged and present!

Can I switch between in-person and Remote Learning?

We anticipate being able to offer families an opportunity to switch between learning modalities during the term. However, we want to minimize the logistical impact to our teachers of students switching from one modality to another unexpectedly. While a student who is at home due to illness may participate remotely if they feel able, for students who are choosing their mode of learning, there will be several designated times during the school year when a family may elect to make this change.





Reopening Plan Details



IST PREPAREDNESS TEAM

Chad Anson, Chair, Board of Trustees

Heather Davies Bernard, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees

Tim Reilly, Head of School

Charlotte de la Peña, BSN, RN, Wellness Coordinator & School Nurse

Eleanor Mitchell, Deputy Head of School & IB PYP Curriculum
Coordinator

Brandy Hoopaugh, Director of Finance

Charissa Bates, Director of Admissions & Marketing

Kevin Gallagher, Science and Design Director

Nicola Heard, Lead Teacher, Grade 1

Vanessa Benavides, Lead Teacher, Kindergarten

Ana Barbosa, Lead Teacher, Pre-K

Erin Jones, MPH, Parent

John Weaver, Parent



SUPPORTING GUIDANCE

- American Academy of Pediatrics, "[COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)" (Updated 25 June 2020)
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, "[SCHOOLS FOR HEALTH: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools](#)" (June 2020)
- Texas Education Agency, "[SY20-21 Public Health Planning Guidance](#)" (17 July 2020)
- Office of the Texas Governor, "[Executive Order GA-29 relating to the use of face coverings during the COVID-19 disaster](#)" (2 July 2020)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "[Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020](#)" (23 July 2020)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "[Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings](#)" (Updated 28 June 2020)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "[Quarantine If You Might Be Sick](#)" (Updated 7 July 2020)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "[Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing](#)" (Updated 30 June 2020)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "[K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs](#)" (Updated 3 June 2020)
- Texas Health and Human Services, "[Open Texas Checklist for Child Care Operations](#)" (Updated 2 July 2020)
- IST Parent Survey, 10 July 2020
- IST Preparedness Team
- Texas Association of Private Schools

Our health and safety are a shared responsibility.

The healthier we are as a group, the more our students will be able to thrive and learn together, in person.

IST families and staff will be required to acknowledge their agreement and intent to comply with IST safety procedures and protocols, and also to take reasonable precautions outside of school for the good of our collective community.

We will incorporate health, safety, and well-being into our daily teaching routines. We will educate our families to maximize our collective safety. Teachers and staff will be trained on all protocols found in **IST Together**, and will also receive general COVID-19 training. In addition, several staff members will become certified contact tracers by completing online contact tracing coursework to give IST a greater understanding about how COVID-19 spreads at a community level.

For the 2020-21 school year, we are adding a mandatory \$485 Reopening Safety Fee per student, whether attending in-person or via the remote learning option. While this does not fully cover our investment in implementing the extensive health/safety protocols and enhancements outlined in **IST Together**, it enables IST, as a non-profit school, to operate safely without having to make significant cuts to staffing and/or our curriculum.

**We will be transparent.
We will communicate
regularly and honestly
and expect families and
staff to do the same.**



Emotional wellness is an important part of overall health.

In addition to the impact COVID-19 has had on our day to day activities and practices, we also recognize that our children have experienced disruption and worry. IST cares about whole child wellness and recognizes that some of our students may have strong emotions and unfamiliar feelings about returning to school or a wider scope of the world after several months of restricted activities.

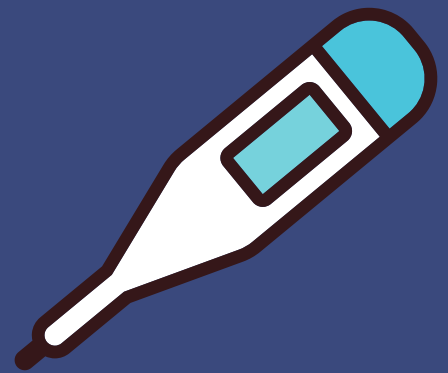
We will develop age-appropriate activities and conversations to help our students process their emotions, feel empowered to care for themselves and their community, and regain their sense of balance and joy.

The first line of defense is mandatory daily home screening.

Our first line of defense as a community is screening at home each day. Before coming to campus every morning, IST families are responsible for screening their children and keeping symptomatic children at home, especially those with a temperature of more than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit. This same protocol applies to all staff members.

It is critical for the health of our community that sick students and staff members remain at home.

Students will be screened with an infrared contactless thermometer each morning as they arrive at school.



The second line of defense is daily screening upon arrival at IST.

Any child who registers a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will be instructed to remain in their vehicle and the family will be given instructions to park for further assessment. If a student is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, they should remain home until the Re-Entry Criteria are met.

Families and staff agree to notify the school if a student, staff or household member receives positive lab-confirmation results or has close contact with an individual who is presumptively ill or diagnosed with COVID-19.

IST's daily screening questionnaire will comply with all privacy laws and regulations; the information will be used only to permit access to campus and no medical data will be kept on file.

Students in Grade 1 and up are required to wear face coverings.

For now, IST will be requiring the use of face coverings for all students in Grade 1 and higher while inside an IST building. TEA guidance has specified that it is not developmentally appropriate for children in Kindergarten and below to wear face coverings. We will monitor the situation closely and adjust as needed as we recognize that this may be challenging for our younger students.

In classrooms, students and staff will wear clear face shields. Face shields are an approved face covering under TEA guidance and provide a much more interactive learning environment for the teachers and students. They are also more comfortable for long-term use and easier to ensure that they are being worn properly. This is especially true for younger children.

While "in transit" -- entering, exiting, and anytime outside of the classroom -- G1 students and above will wear a face mask (or a face shield if a mask is not available).

Families will be responsible for providing masks and face shields that best fit their child(ren). We encourage students to choose masks that they are comfortable in and to choose designs that foster self-expression.

Students will have face covering breaks during the day, coinciding with outdoor break time.

Students and staff will wear face shields in the classroom for safety, comfort, and the ability to see one another's faces.



Face coverings are required for all staff and visitors.

All staff must wear face coverings at all times while indoors. Any other adults on campus must wear face masks, including parents at drop-off and pick-up. IST will have disposable face coverings available in case they are needed.

Anyone may continue to wear a mask at their discretion, even if they become optional.

Face and hand hygiene is of paramount importance.

The American Academy of Pediatrics states that frequent hand washing / use of hand sanitizer is a better way to mitigate risk than cleaning and disinfecting surfaces all day long.

Touchless hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed at all building entrances/exits and in all classrooms. Our teachers will incorporate regular student hand sanitization or washing breaks throughout the day.

Touchless hand sanitizer stations are located at each entrance and exit and in every classroom.



Students will not share supplies or water bottles.

IST will provide each student with their own personal set of supplies and educational materials to be used throughout the term. Students will not be permitted to share supplies.

Students will be required to bring full water bottles to school each day as all IST water fountains will be closed.

At IST's Bee Cave campus, students may use the water bottle filler.

IST has invested in technology to clean the air indoors.

IST is adopting several of the measures listed in the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health "[Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools](#)" guidance to improve the quality of indoor air to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

For example, where possible, we are increasing the amount of fresh air in our buildings. We will also be providing a portable HEPA air purifier for each classroom.

In addition, we will be upgrading all of IST's HVAC systems to add ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI). The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health guidance identifies UVGI as an advanced air cleaning technique for addressing COVID-19, with a proven track record against bacteria and viruses such as influenza.

We will be cleaning and purifying the air in every classroom.



Students will learn and play outdoors as much as possible.

Numerous studies have shown that COVID-19 transmission is greatly reduced in the outdoors, and IST is blessed with nearly 20 acres of beautiful Hill Country property between its two campuses. Teachers will be encouraged to use outdoor learning spaces as much as possible, and will be provided with resources including rolling mobile glass boards to facilitate outdoor teaching.

Outdoor free / play time will be a key part of all students' daily schedules. Our emphasis will be on hand hygiene, rather than trying to 'sanitize' playgrounds between uses. Guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that outdoor areas like playgrounds and parks require normal maintenance, but do not require disinfection.

We are encouraging practical physical distance between students.

We are aware of the benefit to physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but we will not require our students to maintain a specific distance of 6 feet from one another.

We believe that the benefit gained by such distance is greatly outweighed by the potential social-emotional harm to our students. Our staff and adults on our campus will do their best to maintain a distance of six feet from one another.

We are using all available space in our buildings, including common spaces, for our classes.



Class locations have changed to maximize each student's space.

We will use every inch of our indoor building space to allow our students and teachers to spread out. To give each student the most available space, classrooms have been reallocated for the most efficient placement. For example:

Grade 1 will be split into two smaller classes for this year only. Our Grade 1 total enrollment has grown to more than 18 students, since we are able to accommodate a few additional students this year. There will be a waitlist as next year's Grade 2 begins reenrollment for 18 spaces.

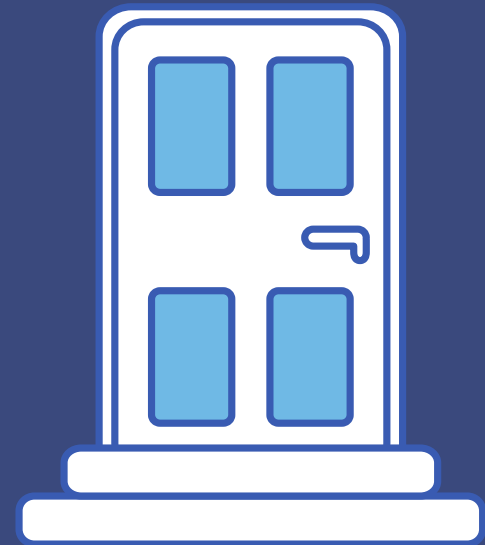
Grade 3 will use the Assembly Hall as its classroom. Kindergarten will be in the large Lower School classroom and will also utilize that room's outdoor patio space.

Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up will look different.

For drop-off each morning, families should remain in their cars. Families of Junior Pre-K and Pre-K students only may escort their children to a designated outdoor entrance to meet their teacher, who will escort them to the classroom.

For afternoon pick-up, families should remain in their cars in designated pickup lanes. Students will be released from their classrooms and escorted, as needed, by staff to their family's vehicle.

On our Hudson Bend campus, each classes will have a designated entrance to the building.



Classes will function independently to maximize social distance.

On our Hudson Bend campus, classes will be separated into cohorts and measures will be in place to limit interactions between cohorts. On our Bee Cave campus, there may be some limited mixing of grades due to the nature of the MYP classes but other precautions will be taken.

We will actively limit shared spaces and shared activities. Lockers have been removed from the Upper School. Water fountains are turned off. Outdoor breaks and playtime will be scheduled to keep classes from breaching social distance.

On our Hudson Bend campus, each class will use a separate entrance/exit. In the Upper School building, each class will have its own assigned restroom. In the Lower School building, Junior Pre-K and Pre-K will use the existing student restroom, while Kindergarten will use the restroom in Mr. Reilly's office, and will access it from the patio.

IST's Balanced Eating Program will continue, safely.

We are excited to partner with Daily Spread, a locally owned business, to provide healthy meals for our Balanced Eating Program. Meals will be individually packaged and delivered to students and staff members. Snacks will be provided in individual divided portions. On our Hudson Bend campus, meals will occur in classrooms or separate designated spaces, while on our Bee Cave campus, students will eat outside or with physical distancing.

Families that elect for Remote Learning will not be required to pay for the Balanced Eating Program. For all other families, the program is compulsory. Please note that IST will be offering an opportunity for families to receive a refund for days that IST is not open for in-person learning.

We are proud to continue providing healthy lunches and snacks under our Balanced Eating Program.



PYP Specialists will rotate to classrooms while maintaining physical distance.

IST's specialists provide an integral part of our curriculum, and we are proud that they will continue to do so with additional safety measures. Specialists will rotate to classrooms to teach, and will remain in the front of each classroom to preserve physical distance.

Classes will continue to use the STEM Lab, but will do so on a schedule which allows the lab to be disinfected between uses. Music classes will occur in each classroom or outside, when possible. Physical Education will be conducted outside, when possible.

Learning Specialists can pull students out for one-on-one work in small classrooms not being utilized for classes this year, and those spaces will be disinfected between student sessions.

Visitors are only permitted on campus during the school day if absolutely necessary.

While we recognize that the IST community includes our families, neighbors, and friends, we are choosing to restrict visitor access to our campus to prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff.

Campus visits will be conducted either virtually or during non-school hours. All other requests to visit campus will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Of course, all medically necessary personnel are permitted on campus, with the appropriate face covering.

To keep our students and staff as safe as possible, visitors are not allowed under most circumstances.



Enhanced cleaning protocols include the use of electrostatic disinfection.

We have chosen to maximize our cleaning and sanitization protocols by hiring additional, part-time staff for light cleaning and sanitization throughout the day of commonly touched surfaces. We have purchased additional cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) for each campus building.

We will also be using electrostatic sanitizers to deploy EPA-approved disinfectant that provides protection against COVID-19.

At the end of each day, cleaning protocol requires all surfaces to be wiped down. Each classroom will be equipped with cleaning kits using safe, EPA-approved products.

We have established clear guidelines for identifying and responding to cases of COVID-19.

IST's guidelines are based upon the Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidelines for identifying and responding to possible COVID-19 cases on campus. This reopening plan includes a summary of the guidelines. The full **Family and Staff COVID-19 Protocol Guidance** may be downloaded [here](#).

Any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school will be separated into a designated isolation area while waiting for a family member to pick them up. Any student feeling feverish will be given an immediate temperature check. Any areas used by a symptomatic student will be cleaned and disinfected immediately.

Our school nurse has full personal protective equipment to safely interact with anyone who is potentially sick.



It is important to know and look for the symptoms of COVID-19.

We will use the [CDC's list of COVID-19 symptoms](#) to evaluate an individual feeling symptomatic in a way that is not normal for them.

- Feeling feverish, or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- 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
- Nausea or vomiting

We will quickly and safely respond if there is a test-confirmed case of COVID-19 at IST.

If an individual who has been in school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, IST will 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 the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Areas that are heavily used by the test-confirmed individual will be closed off until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected.

IST will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students if a test-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among anyone on campus.



Individuals with close contact to a diagnosed COVID-19 patient will be required to quarantine for 14 days.

If a test-confirmed COVID-19 individual has had close contact with any faculty, staff, or student, they may not return to campus until the end of a 14-day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (unless they otherwise meet the Re-entry Criteria below). We will generally assume for purposes of this rule that members of the same household have close contact with one another.

“Close contact” is defined as 15 minutes of uninterrupted or sustained contact with an individual who is test-confirmed to have COVID-19 during the infectious period of the case. We will be working closely with the Travis County Health Department to identify close contacts if we have a test-confirmed COVID-19 case on campus.

Individuals are presumed infectious two days before symptom onset. Asymptomatic individuals are presumed infectious for two days prior to a test confirming COVID-19.

Following a COVID-19 diagnosis, IST will apply strict Re-entry Criteria.

Any individuals who are either (1) test-confirmed to have COVID-19 or (2) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 must stay at home throughout the infection period and cannot return to campus these re-entry criteria are met.

For an individual who was test-diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when **all** three of these criteria are met:

- At least 24 hours have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

For an individual who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and who has not been tested for COVID-19, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until they have completed the same three-step criteria listed above.

If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the 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
- Obtaining an acute infection test that comes back negative for COVID-19 and the individual has been fever-free for 24 hours (without medication)

IST is pausing various school activities until further notice to enhance our safety.

IST is pausing the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Before school clubs | • Choir |
| • "Early Bird" drop off (although morning drop off period may be extended, students will proceed directly to their classrooms) | • Field trips |
| • After school clubs and sports teams | • Class Trips |
| | • In-person social activities (Popsicles on the Playground, etc.) |
| | • All parent gatherings will be held virtually |

Morning and afternoon transportation options for students will be extremely limited. Reach out to Brandy Hoopaugh (b.hoopaugh@istexas.org) as soon as possible if this is a critical need for your family.

The planned shuttles between our Hudson Bend and Bee Cave campuses will be paused. Be assured that as we plan our new afternoon pickup procedures, we know that we have families with children at both locations.

It is our hope to be able to offer certain activities again as the school year progresses, if and when we feel that we can do so safely.

IST will be continually evolving our health and safety protocols.

We have all seen how quickly circumstances can change at the national, state and local levels. IST will continue to monitor and adjust the protocols and measures detailed in the **IST Together** Reopening Plan. If things get better, we may be able to reduce some of the precautions. If they get worse, we may need to implement additional or more stringent measures.

The point is that the "Plan" is not set in stone. One of IST's greatest strengths is our flexibility -- we can and will be nimble. If something isn't working, we can change it. If we need to pivot quickly to tackle a new challenge, we will do that.

Over the coming days, weeks and months, we will continue to communicate with you as we add details re: logistics, new protocols, or changes. We believe that open, candid lines of communication are critical.

Our Revised 2020-21 School Calendar.

We have worked with our accreditation agency, TAAPS, to revise our 2020-21 School Calendar to allow the last day of school to remain as originally scheduled on June 3. We were able to do so by eliminating a handful of holidays and teacher PD days. Further, since we are pausing field trips, class trips, choir practices / performances and other school-wide group activities in the fall and likely into the spring, we are able to offer an equivalent amount of instruction with the revised calendar. Of course, we will continue to evaluate whether additional changes to the school calendar are beneficial to our community.

The full 2020-21 School Calendar may be downloaded [here](#).

Key Dates: changes from original calendar are in red

- First day of school: **Sept. 8**
- Last day of school: June 3
- Thanksgiving Break: **Nov. 25-27**
- Winter Break: Dec. 21 to **Jan 4**
- Spring Break: Mar. 15 to 19
- Rescheduled: **4/2 to 4/23**
- Tuition starts: **Aug. 1**
- Reopening Safety Fee due: **Sept. 1**
- Deadline to elect Remote Learning for start of school: **Aug. 7**
- Eliminated holidays: **10/9, 10/12, 11/23, 11/24, 1/4/21, 2/12, 2/15**

If you have questions.

We are here to answer them! The easiest way to ensure a speedy response is to email:

prepared@istexas.org

WE CAN DO THIS. TOGETHER.

It will take patience, courage, and teamwork.

Our children have limitless capacity -- for joy, for knowledge, for developing solutions to problems that we haven't even identified yet. As IB students, they gain the courage to ask questions, the agility to adapt to changing circumstances, and the skills to work together and design solutions.

Together, we can emulate the courage and teamwork demonstrated by our students to reopen safely. As we educate the leaders of tomorrow, our future depends on it.

We are IST, Together.

