



PUEBLO OF ISLETA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1000 MOONLIGHT DRIVE ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87105
(505) 869-2321 Fax: (505) 869-1625
Principal: Mr. Torrez, Robert
"2020-2021 School Year"



Return to School During COVID-19

Dear Parents and Students,

A big question parents have right now is how students can go back to school safely during COVID-19. The latest news is that students learn best when they are in school. However, returning to school needs careful steps in place to keep students and staff safe.

Why students should go back to school-safely

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidance is based on what pediatrics and infectious disease specialists know about COVID-19 and kids. Evidence so far suggests that children and adolescents are less likely to have symptoms or severe disease from infection. They also appear less likely to become infected or spread the virus.

Schools provide more than just academics to children and adolescents. In addition to reading, writing, and math, children learn social and emotional skills, get exercise and access to mental health support and other things that cannot be provided with online learning. For many families, school is where kids get healthy meals, access to internet, and other vital services.

How to keep Isleta Elementary safe when reopening:

To stay safe, there are several steps IES will take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include the following:

Physical distancing

The goal for IES is to stay at least 6 feet apart to help prevent the spread of virus that causes COVID-19. IES will develop spacing desks at least 6 feet apart and avoiding close contact. Students will wear face mask coverings, temperature is read daily, hand sanitizing frequently, and limited movement in the classroom during instructional time with exception in some elective classes that require physical movement. Teachers and staff will stay a full 6 feet apart from each other and students will continue to keep social distance as well. Teachers and staff will practice with student safety and hygiene daily. Teachers and staff will wear cloth face coverings and limit person meetings with other adults.

Cloth face covering and hand hygiene

Frequent hand washing with soap and water is important and every student, staff, teachers, and guest will practice this. In addition, all adults wear cloth face coverings. Kindergarten and elementary students will benefit from wearing masks if they do not touch their mouths or noses a

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lot. Students with breathing conditions will receive or have face guard/shields available to use to cover their mouth and noses. Staff will support our students continually with practice of wearing a mask throughout the day.

Classroom Changes

Isleta Elementary will limit student interaction outside the classroom by doing the following:

- Have teachers and staff move between classrooms with students to limit contact and keep social distance between students during passing periods. Passing periods will be staggered to support social distance in the hallways and reduce the amount of students going from one class to the next.
- Allow students to eat lunch at their desks with their teacher or in small groups in a A and B staggered lunchroom time. IES will stagger lunch times for students and teachers to keep social distance present.
- Leave classroom doors open to help reduce high touch surfaces such as doorknobs.

Temperature checks and testing

COVID testing of all students is not possible for IES. Taking students' temperature at school also may not be feasible. IES will establish ways to identify students with fever or other symptoms of illness by having Health Assistant check daily on CDC updates, Health reports, and other reports that are related to COVID-19. The Administration and Health Assistant will frequently remind students, teachers, and staff to stay home if they have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher or have any signs of illness.

Cleaning and disinfecting

IES will follow CDC guidelines on proper disinfecting and sanitizing classrooms and common areas. Postings will be in the hallways and in the classrooms to promote safety and hygiene. Splash guards will be in the computer room, nurse office, bathrooms, water fountains, etc.

Buses, hallways, and playgrounds

Since these are often crowded spaces, IES will:

- Give bus riders assigned seats and require them to wear a cloth face covering or face shield while on the bus. Encourage students who have other ways to get to school to use those options. A second staff member will be on the bus to support social distancing and proper use of masks.

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- At school, mark hallways and stairs with one-way arrows on the floor to cut down on crowding in the halls.
- Outdoor activities are encouraged, so students should be allowed to use the playground in small groups. Recess will be restricted for time being and teachers will be able to utilize class time for students to go outside and spend time on playgrounds. Second staff member will be present to support social distancing.

Other Considerations

In addition to having plan in place to keep students safe, there are other factors that IES community need to address:

Pressure to catch up

Students may not have gained as much from distance learning. Some students may not have had access to computers and internet. IES will prepare to adjust curricula and not expect to make up all lost progress but will work diligently to get students caught up. It is important to balance core subjects with physical education, music, TIWA language program, art, and computer class for learning experiences.

Students with disabilities

The impact of IES being closed may have been greater for students with disabilities. They may have a difficult time transitioning back to school after missing out on instruction time as well as school-based services such as occupational, physical, speech-language therapy, and mental health support from Psychologist or Counselor. IES will review the needs of each student with an Individual Education Program before they return to school and providing services even if they are done virtually.

Immunizations:

It is important as students return to school that they are up to date on their Immunizations. It will be critical that students and staff get their flu shot this year to reduce the spread of influenza this fall and winter. Your pediatrician is available now to make sure your child is ready for school.

Exams

If your child participates in State and District testing. They will continue to receive support from teachers and staff during this epidemic with additional study skills and preparation for the assessments.

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Behavioral health/emotional support

Parents and Families, Isleta Elementary will anticipate and be prepared to address a wide range of mental health needs of students and staff. IES will provide mental health support to any student struggling with stress from the pandemic and recognize students who show signs of anxiety or distress. IES also will help students with behavior needs and support.

Nutrition

Isleta Elementary students receive health meals through IES meal program grant. IES will provide meals even if the school closes or the student is sick and stays home from school.

Students at higher risks

While COVID-19, IES policies will reduce risk, we will not prevent it entirely. Even with safety steps in place, some students with high-risk medical conditions may need to continue distance learning or other accommodations. Parents and families please talk to your pediatrician and the school Health Assistant to determine if your child can safely return to school.

Remember

Returning to school during the COVID-19 pandemic may not feel like normal—at least for a while. But having school plans in place can help keep students, staff, and families safe. There is a Re-Opening plan that has the three phases of learning that will or may occur during this pandemic. Isleta Elementary will prepare to close again and temporarily switch to Virtual/Distant learning if there are new waves of COVID-19 infection.



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