

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Fort Stockton ISD to return to “Face-to-Face” Instruction only**

The Fort Stockton Independent School District will be returning to 100 percent “Face-to-Face” instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. Remote online instruction has been discontinued for the upcoming school year in accordance with state lawmakers’ decisions. Classes begin 8am, Monday, August 16, 2021.

The decision was discussed at the July 26<sup>th</sup> FSISD School Board meeting and is effective immediately. Two meetings were held the previous week to get the input of teachers, administrators and school personnel. Nearly ninety percent of the school personnel that gave input were in favor of discontinuing remote instruction and moving entirely to “Face-to-Face” instruction. School personnel felt strongly that this decision would be the best plan to both protect our students and faculty/staff, while also providing that ALL of our students receive the best and most effective education possible.

Both Statewide and local testing data shows that on average those students that received in-person “Face-to-Face” instruction performed significantly better in all tested subjects than their counterparts that remained on remote instruction. In general, the longer the student was on remote instruction, the lower their test scores were. This data and conclusions were released earlier this summer by Mike Morath, the Texas Commissioner of Education.

The decision was also predicated by actions taken (or rather not taken) by the Texas Legislature in the Spring of 2021. The Texas Legislature failed to address the issue of continuing to fund remote instruction statewide. The legislation to fund remote instruction had not been passed prior to the democratic members of the legislature ending the session by walking out over objections to more controversial legislation. The matter was not brought up in the special session that occurred this summer. Presently, there are no state funds allocated to fund remote instruction at school districts in Texas. As a result, Texas school districts are discontinuing remote instruction.

Fort Stockton ISD will maintain the ability to return to remote instruction if it is deemed necessary in the event of an Emergency Executive Order by the Governor, Commissioner of Education, Texas State health officials, or actions by the FSISD School Board or Superintendent.

**As a result, FSISD will be returning to “face-to-face”/in-person instruction beginning the first day of instruction this coming 2021-2022 school year.**

**Masks-**

Masks are encouraged, but neither students, nor adults, will be required to wear masks on campus or on school transportation. Any student or adult on campus that chooses to do so, will be allowed and encouraged to do so. Principals and teachers are to ensure that no masks bullying/shaming takes place between students or adults either for mask wearing or against it.

**COVID Shots-**

COVID vaccine shots are encouraged, but not required for those that qualify. FSISD will not restrict access to COVID vaccinated or unvaccinated individuals. This is in compliance with Texas State Law and Governor Abbott's Executive Order on the subject. FSISD maintains information on where individuals can go to receive a free COVID vaccination. Please contact the district offices or school nurse for more information.

**COVID Temperature checks-**

FSISD will NOT be checking the temperatures of students, unless asked to check specific individual students by parents, teachers, administrators or other school personnel.

**COVID Cleaning protocols-**

Cleaning procedures will stay in effect for FSISD facilities, buses, classrooms,...

**Athletics-**

With ALL FSISD students returning to "Face-to-Face Real-Time" instruction, FSISD will no longer be allowing "remote only" students to participate in UIL activities/practices. Because there will be no more "remote only" students and thus there is no need to continue this policy.

**Outbreaks-**

If individual students do happen to acquire COVID-19, then they will need to be quarantined for 10 days as ordered by a doctor. These students will not attend remotely. Their work will be sent home for them to complete the same as any other absence.

If a significant number of school personnel or students are quarantined, then the Superintendent, Commissioner of Education and/or Governor may reengage the distance learning program "as needed" in their professional judgement.