

SCC Campus Reps Q & A

Questions Received the Week of 4/1

Hardeman Elementary

1. **Would the district consider moving to a 9-week grading period like other districts in the metroplex have done already?**

This would help with having more time for students to learn the concepts and have more intervention prior to a grade posting. With only having a total of four grading periods for the year, this would reduce the workload for teachers as there would be less progress reports and report cards to prepare throughout the year.

- A. We are not looking at making any changes for the 2021–22 school year. However, we will continue to evaluate options with the new superintendent.

Porter Elementary

2. **What is the reasoning on requiring teachers to do even more data collection with progress monitoring with F&P?** Middle of Year data has already ended and in the midst of online learning, in person learning, STAAR prep, 504s, and any other meetings we have, we are required to gather more data. We are working very hard to make sure our students feel safe, are learning, and that we are seeing growth. This is something we do every day and are consistently monitoring growth. **There are many things given to us that we do not have control over, could this be something that is taken off of our plate? Or even only required for tier students?** Elementary teachers do not get any extra planning time or periods daily like in middle or high school.

- A. Teachers certainly have many important responsibilities during this time of year and the challenges of COVID have heightened the difficulty of many of these responsibilities. As we know that monitoring student progress is an essential part of the guided reading process, which is ongoing throughout the year, we did limit the number of times this information has to be recorded in AWARE. Progress monitoring answers important questions such as “Are they making adequate progress?” and “Does their instruction need to be adjusted?”

Progress monitoring is structured to be an essential part of guided reading and does not sit aside as an “extra” assessment like the BAS. It is a quick warm read of a book that has been taught and one summary question is given to check for comprehension. For struggling students, the Rtl Handbook states that a running record (progress monitoring) should take place every four weeks. For all students, a running record should be taken every six weeks. This ensures student placement in small group instruction is appropriate. We have only required that one progress monitoring be recorded in AWARE. This record in AWARE only asks for the genre, the current instructional level, accuracy percentage, and a score of 1 to 3 on the single comprehension question. As this information should be gathered during guided reading frequently (as indicated in the Rtl Handbook), it is simply a matter of recording the work we know you are already doing.

Green Valley Elementary

3. Since it has already been announced that Reading Academy for next year will be more of a blended approach, can this model be used for what remains of the current K–1 Reading Academy? Possibly even for this Friday, April 2?

A. Birdville ISD is under a contract with ESC 11 and TEA, which dictates the type of offerings/settings we must provide. We are currently under the comprehensive model and are held accountable to provide this model for the remainder of the school year with the modifications (Zoom presentations) which have been approved by TEA. The one time we were permitted to utilize the blended format was in response to the inclement weather event and that was approved by TEA. See the answer to question two above for more information on how the blended format will be established for 21–22.

4. Is there a timeline when we will be getting rugs back for K/1? Also, flexible seating?

A. We will be bringing rugs back next year. As far as flexible seating, this is allowed for any seating that is made out of any hard material. Fabric seating will be allowed back next year.

Shannon

5. Is Birdville considering using the TEA waiver to suspend teacher evaluations for this school year?

A. Not at this time. Last year (2019–2020) we suspended evaluations so if we suspended them again this year, employees would effectively perform their duties without that standard of feedback for more than two years. While we understand the rigors of evaluations, it is important to provide valuable feedback to our employees as they strive to continue to grow and lead in our profession.

Hardeman

6. My question is after looking into other districts, many or actually most of them provide Pre-K availability to the teachers as a perk of being with their district. Being with the district allows them to qualify for Pre-K even though we barely miss the income qualifications. I think this is very helpful to teachers, since the cost of private Pre-K's can be costly on a teacher's income. I was wondering if this is something Birdville ISD is going to do next year since they are going full day with many Pre-K classrooms. I would love to be allowed to bring my daughter to Pre-K here at BISD next year.

A. We are looking into the possibility of providing tuition-based pre-K. It won't be in place for this coming school year; however, we are looking at planning it for the following school year at a couple of campuses.

Richland Elementary

7. Will the district continue to require adults/staff to wear masks in the 2021–2022 school year?

A. It is too early to determine. We will evaluate Tarrant County's case rate, seek their guidance along with recommendations from CDC.

8. If you are vaccinated, will you still require a mask?

A. We're still learning how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people; how well the vaccine keeps people from spreading the disease and how well they protect us from the variants. Currently, vaccinated individuals are still advised to wear a mask, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces and stay six feet from others. The only allowance for vaccinated people to remove their masks includes gathering indoors with unvaccinated people from another household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together) without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

9. Does the district have a plan regarding staff members that refuse to get the COVID 19 vaccine? I do not want an unvaccinated staff member that is not required to wear a mask in my room as the virus can obviously still spread to everyone.

A. BISD, the State of Texas, TEA, Tarrant County and CDC do not currently mandate an employee of a school district to obtain a vaccine. All vaccines are currently optional for our employees; therefore, imposing a different rule for someone who is not vaccinated would need to be reviewed by our legal department and be an unprecedented action in education. At this time, TEA nor Tarrant County have mandated a vaccine for school personnel; however, we will closely monitor any advisements or regulations. Socially distancing (six feet) and self-vaccination are still regarded as good efforts to protect one's self in the event a person is at high risk and wanting to protect themselves.

10. If masks are not made mandatory, can there be certain special dispensations made to require unvaccinated staff wear masks in the room, i.e. pregnancy, immunocompromised, chemo treatments?

A. We will review our policies and practices as more information becomes available. We will continue to review CDC, Tarrant County Public Health and state mandates and guidelines to review policies as necessary.