

This document provides guidance on attendance, enrollment and calendar related topics. For more information on general funding issues, including Foundation School Program ADA calculations and program spending requirement guidance, please see the **General State Funding FAQ** located on the [TEA Coronavirus webpage under Waivers, Finance & Grants](#).

Attendance and Enrollment FAQ: Section Topics

Click on the links below to go directly to that section of the FAQ.

- [School Day Categories](#)
- [Missed School Day Waivers](#)
- [Attendance](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [School Calendar](#)

School Day Categories

School days will generally fall into one of four categories: **Posted March 25, 2020**

- **Closed, Instructing:** Those who cease normal operations, so that children no longer come to the school site at all, but are instead provided support to receive instruction at home / off-site. The staff may be doing this work while on site or remotely or in some combination.
- **Closed, Preparing:** Those who cease normal operations, but campus staff are working (either on-site or remotely) in order to prepare so they can deliver instruction to students while they the students are at home / off-site. Non-instructional staff may also be working during this time, including at least school cleaning activities.
- **Closed, Temporary:** Those who previously announced a short term (likely one week or less) closure out of an abundance of caution, and at the time were not actively working to prepare to deliver remote instruction. Non-instructional staff may also be working during this time, including at least school cleaning activities.
- **Open:** Those who are allowed to re-open at some point, but who may face large absenteeism in terms of in-person student (and possibly staff) attendance.

Missed School Day Waivers

MISSED SCHOOL DAY WAIVERS **Posted March 27, 2020**

For school closure based on COVID-19 related concerns the LEA must seek additional minute waivers from the agency in order to meet the 75,600 operational minute requirement.

Those waivers would be granted as long as the LEA commits to supporting students instructionally while at home. The “Instructional Continuity Attestation While Closed” document located on TEA’s [COVID-19 Support and Guidance](#) web page regarding instructional support will be required to be

submitted with a Missed School Day waiver using the TEAL Waivers application. Please note that if a Missed School Day attestation was submitted by email, it will still need to be included as part of the Missed School Day waiver application in TEAL.

Things to Consider

- LEAs must apply for a Missed School Day waiver for each day they are closed for COVID-19. This includes “Closed, Instructing,” “Closed, Preparing,” and “Closed, Temporary.”
- LEAs have until June 18, 2020, to submit Missed School Day waiver applications in TEAL.
- Missed School Day waivers require board approval.
- Missed School Day waivers cannot be submitted proactively* (future dates cannot be accommodated by the TEAL Waivers application).

For each day a Missed School Day waiver is granted, an LEA should leave these days as designated instructional days in their attendance accounting software. These days should be counted in terms of total minutes of operation the same as they would have been if the LEA had been able to operate normally.

*As the waiver system cannot accommodate submitting a Missed School Day waiver for days not yet missed, it cannot accurately collect information for dates in the future that are necessary to reconcile PEIMS reporting. LEAs are encouraged to submit one waiver, subject to the information above, inclusive of all days missed after the LEA opens again or after further guidance is provided by the agency with respect to the length of the current academic year. If you have questions regarding this guidance, please contact the State Waivers division at waivers@tea.texas.gov or 512-463-9630.

Attendance

1. How do I document student attendance for days I am “Closed, Instructing”? *Posted April 28, 2020*

You do not need to document student attendance for days you are “Closed, Instructing”. You will need to apply for a Missed School Day waiver when the campus is Closed, regardless of the status of closure. Leave these days marked as instructional days in the calendar. Leave the total minutes of operation for these days the same as they were if you had been able to operate normally.

Guidelines for reporting attendance in the 2019-2020 PEIMS Summer Submission:

1. Change the end date of the 4th six-weeks reporting period to the last day of instruction before the campus closed due to COVID-19.
2. Change the begin date of the 5th six-weeks to the first day the campus was closed (this includes Closed, instructing, Closed, preparing, and Closed, temporary).
3. Report the end date of the 5th six-weeks and the begin and end dates of the 6th six-weeks as originally designated for the 2019-2020 school year.
4. Individual student attendance will be reported with no absences during this timeframe (the 5th and 6th six-weeks)..

NOTE: If the LEA's System has already been updated to only report the 5th six-weeks and not the 6th six-weeks based on previous guidance, there is no need to make any additional updates. Reporting the 5th six-weeks as beginning on the first day the campus was closed and ending on the last day of instruction for the school year is also acceptable.

2. What documentation should I retain, in anticipation of any future audits, to prove that I have been providing instruction while closed? [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

- a. For campuses that are "Closed, Instructing", teachers will be continuing to review student work while they support the instruction being delivered off-site – whether done via an on-line learning system or from periodic phone check-ins with the students or parents. Schools should attempt to retain some documentation that instruction is happening. This could be grade books. For days when work isn't being graded, this could also be done by retaining a small representative sample of student work (with appropriate notations for the date). In terms of what a small representative sample might mean, it could be a copy of one student's work per grade level subject team per school per day, with attempts to add an example for students from different program types (e.g., bilingual). If you have on-line learning systems, it's possible this would be done automatically in those systems.
- b. In the event there are any campuses that are "Open", there may be significant absenteeism. As described for the "Closed, Instruction" scenario, teachers will continue to review student work while they support instruction being delivered off-site. Schools should attempt to retain some documentation that instruction is happening for these students who remain home. The guidance on what that documentation should be is the same in these cases as for campuses as noted above for the "Close, Instruction" scenario.

3. I may need several days to prepare to deliver instruction to students while they are at home or otherwise off-site. How many days can I operate as "Closed, Preparing" and still maintain compliance with the 75,600 minutes requirement? [Posted March 25, 2020](#)

When considering the year in total, schools will still need to meet 75,600 minutes of operation. Some schools will have sufficient minutes in their calendar when accounting for this (including by counting "Closed, Instructing" days as noted previously). If, however, when accounting for the year in total, you will need more time to prepare to make the instructional shifts to support students, you can apply for Missed School Day waivers for this purpose as well. The TEA wants to ensure districts have the time they need to prepare properly for the new instructional delivery method.

4. How will districts take attendance for students that were participating in the Optional Flexible School Day Program (OFSDP) but are now receiving online/distance learning provided by the district while the campuses are closed? [Posted April 21, 2020](#)

For districts/campuses that are "Closed, Instructing," districts with students that were participating in the OFDSP will not be required to track minutes and should not report

minutes of instruction for the 5th six-weeks reporting period. Schools in this situation will still need to submit an attestation indicating how OFSDP students are being served and supported. [Previous guidance indicated OFSDP programs would continue to report attendance as normal.] LEAs should continue to code these students with their OFSDP ADA eligibility code during the closure period.

5. Can we please receive guidance for districts on a 9-weeks calendar? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Attendance reporting has always functioned on a “6 six-weeks” basis. Districts on 9-week academic calendars have always reported attendance on a 6 six-weeks basis. Therefore, the guidance for ADA calculations applies to those districts as well.

6. In response to the closure guidance - Do the days in the 5th six-week reporting period count as waiver days where waiver minute values are being reported or should these days be reported as instructional days with operational minutes? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Days during the 5th six-week reporting period should be reported as instructional days with daily operational minutes matching what your LEA would have reported had your school been open. The LEA must complete the missed school day waiver attestation and submit a missed school waiver application in TEAL for all COVID-19 closure days.

7. Should days the schools are closed due to Governor Abbott’s order be logged as “Closed, Temporary” or “Closed, Instructing” days? *Posted April 14, 2020*

It would depend on what type of business the district was conducting on these days. If the district were closed and not actively working to prepare to deliver remote instruction then (likely one week or less), log as “Closed, Temporary”. If the district was closed and providing instruction on these days, log as “Closed, Instructing”. LEAs should track their closure types locally.

8. For days schools were closed prior to the Governor’s order, should such days be logged as “Closed”, Temporary” or “Closed, Instructing”? *Posted April 14, 2020*

It depends on what type of business you were conducting on these days. These days would only be considered “Closed, Instructing” if your students were receiving home instruction through your instructional continuity plan. LEAs should track their closure types locally.

9. Our 4th six weeks ended Feb. 21st. The 5th 6-weeks began Feb. 24th. Do we need to change the dates of the 5th 6-weeks grading period? *Posted April 14, 2020*

TEA is directing LEAs to update the begin and end dates of the **attendance** reporting periods to reflect the time closed. Grading period begin and end dates should not be updated.

10. How should LEAs handle calendar coding for holidays, bad weather make-up days, and staff development days during the closure period that were originally scheduled to occur as part of the LEA’s board-approved calendar? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

If an LEA has a holiday that was previously built into their calendar, including Spring Break, it should be left as a non-instructional day during the 5th six-week reporting period. The exception to this would be if the day was planned to be used as a bad weather make-up day and the LEA had planned to attend school on that day to meet their 75,600 operational minute requirement. In that case, code the day as an instructional day and plan to educate students on that day through the LEA’s instructional continuity plan. If an LEA has a planned a staff development day, they should leave that day as a non-instructional day and could, with an approved staff development waiver, claim staff development waiver minutes equal to the amount of professional development time that was provided to staff.

11. What guidance can you provide for tracking CTE contact hours for PEIMS and accountability purposes? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

If a district is **“Closed, Instructing”** and applies for the **“Missed School Day Waiver”** regardless of the status of closure, the days should be marked as instructional and the **total minutes of operation** for these days are the **same as they were if you had been able to operate normally**.

- **CTE contact hours** are tracked by **attendance** and the **“V code”** assigned to the student/course.

CTE contact hours should continue to be reported in the same manner during “Closed, Instructing” as they would if normal instruction was occurring.

- If a student in Career Preparation has lost their job or if a student in a Practicum course lost their internship placement due to COVID-19, then an alternative assignment may replace the time missed at the training site therefore not requiring any changes to the V code for contact hours.

12. Can I submit low attendance waivers if I experienced low attendance in the days prior to COVID-19 closures? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

You may request a waiver for days where you experienced low attendance prior to your LEA providing home instruction through your instructional continuity plan.

13. Which code should we use for absences for parents that did not send students to school prior to campuses closing due to concerns for COVID-19? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

As noted above, you may request a waiver for days if you experienced low attendance for the days leading up to COVID-19 closures.

Additionally, if your district has submitted a COVID-19 educational services attestation noting that you provided instructional support for these students at home, then you may count COVID-19 absences as present for the purpose of state funding. When reporting the number of Total Days Absent do not include absences for a student who did not attend school due to concerns related to contracting COVID-19. A student not actually on campus at the time attendance is taken for this reason will be documented as absent, but with a reason code that considers the student in attendance for FSP purposes. Please work with your Student Information System vendor to ensure these absences are associated to an appropriately defined absence reason code and not included in the Total Days Absent reported through PEIMS.

Note: If your district does not commit to providing instructional support to students while at home, then these students may not be counted as present.

14. If my school re-opens, but large numbers of students remain at home, what should my approach to documentation and instructional support be? *Posted April 14, 2020*

With the submission of the “Instructional Continuity Attestation While Open” document located on TEA’s [COVID-19 Support and Guidance](#) web page, a district or charter school can count students present for ADA purposes so long as they provide educational resources through the LEAs instructional continuity plan when the students are absent, whether due to concerns about the potential of illness or actual illness associated with COVID-19. Schools should attempt to retain some documentation that instruction is happening for these students who remain home.

Note: If your district does not commit to providing instructional support to students while at home, then these students may not be counted as present.

15. If my school has a foreign exchange student who returns to his or her home country due to COVID-19, am I required to keep the student enrolled, and what, if any, obligation does my school have to continue educating the student? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Per Texas Education Code, Section 25.001(b)(6), if a foreign exchange student's **placement** in a school district has not ended, the school district in which the student is enrolled must continue to treat the student as enrolled for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, even if the student is forced to return to the student's home country for an indefinite time period due to COVID-19. This would be akin to a student remaining enrolled while the family is on vacation. Normally, a student in this situation would be marked absent. But given the adjustments made to flow ADA during COVID-19, the district must provide instructional support to students while they are not at school. As a result, such a foreign exchange student must be served remotely, as any other student in the district would be served, if the district is providing instructional continuity to its students.

Note: a foreign exchange student who returns to his/her home country and whose **placement** formally ends would be withdrawn from the school system.

16. Will I be required to log the virtual contact time between my teachers and pregnancy related services (PRS) students who are receiving instruction through my school's compensatory education home instruction (CEHI) program during the closure period?

Posted April 14, 2020

Please refer to the ***Pregnancy Related Services FAQ*** on TEA's [COVID-19 Special Education and Special Populations](#) web page.

17. Has TEA waived the 75,600-minute requirement given the Governor's executive order on April 17 that closed school classrooms for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year?

Posted April 21, 2020

No, this requirement has not been waived. LEAs are expected to continue educating students through the end of their 75,600-minute compliant, board-approved calendar year, and LEAs will need to apply for a missed school day waiver for each day they are closed due to COVID-19. Governor Abbott's executive order closed education **in classrooms** for the rest of the year; however, in order to receive funding, LEAs are still expected to provide remote instructional support through the remainder of the school year.

For information on submitting missed school day waivers, please see the Missed School Day Waiver section of this document.

18. How should our district record early release days? If we had early release days built into our calendar, should those early release days remain while the district is offering online instruction? *Posted April 30, 2020*

LEAs should only report an early release day, or shortened day, if they reduced the amount of instructional support for that day by making teachers unavailable to students. In most cases, LEAs are offering full instructional days during the closure period even if they had a previously scheduled early release day built into their calendar. In either case, LEAs should document attendance as if they were "Closed, Instructing" (please refer to Question 1 above).

As stated in Question 17, LEAs are expected to meet a 75,600-minute, board-approved calendar. If LEAs meet the 75,600-minute requirement, early release days will not impact funding during the closure period.

Enrollment

See also the ***Virtual Enrollment Guidance and Best Practices FAQ*** located on the [TEA Coronavirus webpage under Waivers, Finance & Grants](#).

- 1. I have new students enrolling (or withdrawing) from my district for the 2019-20 school year while I am “Closed, Instructing”. How do I handle that? *Posted March 25, 2020***

LEAs should begin serving new students immediately through their educational continuity plan. For enrollment tracking purposes, LEAs should use the first day the student receives services and/or instructional materials for distance/at home learning as the enrollment date for the student who enrolled during the closure period. This should occur during the fifth six-weeks reporting period, or if it occurs after re-opening, would occur in the sixth six-weeks period.

For withdrawals, the LEA should use the next school day after the student last received services/support for online / distance learning as the withdrawal date for students who withdraw during the COVID-19 closure period.

- 2. We enrolled a new student and used the date they started with us, 3/23/20, as the enrollment date. How do we back date it to our last day of actual class if they were a student in another school district during that time? *Posted April 14, 2020***

You do not have to back date the student’s start date to the last day of actual class. You should use the first day the student receives services and/or instructional materials for distance/at home learning as the enrollment date for the student who enrolled during the closure period. Leave the days you are closed as instructional days in the calendar so that you can enroll students on the day services begin.

- 3. May LEAs deny enrollment while schools are transitioning to virtual instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Posted April 14, 2020***

No. Pursuant to Texas Education Code §25.001, schools are required to fulfill all statutory responsibilities concerning enrollment. Even while school buildings are closed, LEAs must have a process in place for enrolling students virtually. Your LEA’s process for enrollment and withdrawal should be prominently placed on your school’s website in an easy to find manner for families, students, and community members.

- 4. Are there any exceptions to immunization requirements for out-of-state students enrolling during COVID-19? *Posted April 14, 2020***

No. The immunization requirements for any student, regardless of where the student comes from, in TEC, Sec. 38.001, remain in effect. Please refer to the Texas Association of School Board (TASB) website on the topic of immunization

here: <https://www.tasb.org/services/legal-services/tasb-school-law-essource/students/documents/immunization-requirements-and-exceptions.pdf>.

As with other enrollment documents, immunization-related records and documents may be submitted electronically or by mail to enrolling schools.

5. How should a school district or charter school address the instructional needs of its students who are temporarily unable to return to Texas due to the COVID-19 pandemic? *Posted April 14, 2020*

A district or charter school has an obligation to provide distance learning to such enrolled students, if the district or charter school is providing distance learning to its students in Texas. Shipping of instructional packets to students is a reasonable alternative for students unable to effectively participate in any online distance learning offerings of the district or charter school.

6. Does TEA have any guidance on foreign exchange student coursework completion? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Per Texas Education Code, Section 25.001(b)(6), if a foreign exchange student's placement in a school district has not ended, the school district in which the student is enrolled must continue to treat the student as enrolled for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, even if the student is forced to return to the student's home country for an indefinite time period due to COVID-19. Furthermore, such a foreign exchange student must be served remotely, as any other student in the district would be served, if the district is providing instructional continuity to its students.

7. What is TEA's guidance regarding parents withdrawing their students from school during this time when they are not attending classes for parents who wish to homeschool their children during COVID-19? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Students should be disenrolled by school officials when they receive written notice either by signing withdrawal forms or a letter of withdrawal. It is not necessary for the parents to make a personal appearance with school officials, present curriculum for review, or comply with any other requirements in order to successfully withdraw their student. For purposes of Leaver Reason Code 60, a signed and dated letter from the parent or guardian stating that the student is being homeschooled and providing the date homeschooling began is sufficient documentation.

School districts that become aware of a student who is potentially being home schooled may request in writing a letter of assurance from the parents that the student is being home schooled. This letter may require assurances that the home-school curriculum is designed to meet basic education goals including reading, spelling, grammar, mathematics, and a study of good citizenship. Please note that a letter of this type is not required each year.

8. For parents who wish to enroll or reenroll their homeschooled students during this time, must they come from an accredited program? *Posted April 14, 2020*

Under 19 TAC Section 74.26(a)(2), students transferring from home schools should be afforded the same treatment as students transferring from unaccredited private schools. Awarding of credit for courses taken may be determined by reviewing the curriculum and/or work of the student or by using appropriate assessments.

When appropriate assessments are used for determination of placement, the passing standard for those students who have been home schooled should be no higher than the standard required of students transferring from unaccredited private schools. As the TEA has stated in the past, school districts may assess students by administering valid and reliable assessment instruments. The determination of whether or not to use such instruments is a local matter. Districts may place students according to a review of the curriculum, course of study, and work of the student coming from a home school environment. Section 28.021 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) requires advancement or credit to be awarded on the basis of "academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter."

If assessments are used for determining placement, the agency would suggest the following guidelines:

1. Elementary students should be assessed by means of a nationally recognized norm-referenced test or by a previously released STAAR assessment for the appropriate grade level.
2. Secondary students may be assessed using credit-by-examination methods for individual subject areas or by previously released STAAR end-of-course assessments.
3. A secondary student assessed using the credit-by-examination method should be given adequate time to prepare for the test, particularly if multiple examinations are required. Under 19 TAC Section 74.24(c), the standard of 70% for students to receive credit for courses they have already taken should be used rather than that the 80% standard for earning credit for courses not previously taken.
4. Under TEC, Section 29.916, school districts are required to allow home school students the opportunity to participate in PSAT/NQMST and Advanced Placement (AP) testing that each district provides enrolled students. The statute also requires districts to notify the public via website or local newspaper of the dates of PSAT/NQMST and AP tests, that home school students are eligible to take the test, and the procedures for registering for such tests. This public notice must be posted or published at the same time and with the same frequency as the notice given to students attending the school district.

9. Can we withdraw students who we have been unable to contact and have not been participating in my LEA's instructional continuity plan? *Posted April 30, 2020*

Parental withdrawals of students are still allowable for those parents who wish to homeschool their children or enroll them in another LEA or private school. Any LEA receiving

state funding while closed due to COVID-19 is prohibited from withdrawing students that the LEA cannot locate as a condition of continued receipt of such funding. If a LEA has already unilaterally withdrawn students that they were unable to contact (un-contactable), the withdrawals must be reversed, and the students will remain enrolled for the rest of the school year.

- 10. Are full-time Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) programs subject to the same student withdrawal protocols as schools with brick and mortar campuses? Our virtual TXVSN campus is operating without interruption and on the published school calendar with no closure. If we have students who are not participating, can we withdraw these students as we would in the course of a normal school year? *Posted May 7, 2020***

Any LEA receiving state funding while closed due to COVID-19 is prohibited from withdrawing students that the LEA cannot locate as a condition of continued receipt of such funding. This prohibition does not apply to a full-time Texas Virtual School Network program.

- 11. Can school districts limit the admission of foreign exchange students due to health-related concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic? *NEW May 19, 2020***

New
5/19/2020

No. TEC, §25.001(b)(6), does not permit a school district to refuse to admit a foreign exchange student otherwise entitled to admission into the district, unless the district has received a waiver from the Commissioner under TEC, §25.001(e). However, the permissible reasons to grant waivers under TEC, §25.001(e), do not address health-related issues such as risks associated with COVID-19. Therefore, a school district must admit a foreign exchange student as it would any other student entitled to admission to the district, subject to any limit on the number of foreign exchange students granted by Commissioner waiver, as well as the limits described in 22 C.F.R. §62.25(f)(6).

Please note that all admitted students, regardless of their permanent residence, remain subject to applicable health requirements and guidelines associated with in-person school attendance.

School Calendar

- 1. If we are able to come back in the summer, could we receive funding to start summer school once we are given the green light? *Posted April 14, 2020***

Summer school is not paid for under the Foundation School Program, and the additional days school year program is not effective until September 1, 2020. However, summer learning is included in federal stimulus funding.

- 2. Is it possible to start the school year early even though we are not a District of Innovation? *Posted April 14, 2020***

The first day of instruction requirement in Texas Education Code, Section 25.0811, remains in effect, unless you have an exemption because of a local District of Innovation plan, because of the adoption of a Year-Round System per TEC, 25.084, or exceptions referenced in TEC, Sec. 25.0811(a)(1) and (2) and (b).