



## A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT BARRY EDWARDS

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July 30, 2020

Good afternoon BISD families,

It's hard to believe we are knocking on the door of August with the 2020-21 school year just around the corner! Even in the midst of almost daily changes from state and local authorities, we are so excited for school to begin.

You may have seen that Attorney General Paxton issued a surprise ruling Tuesday afternoon that local health agencies do not have the authority to close schools as a preemptive measure. On the heels of that ruling, the Bastrop County Health Authority rescinded its July 21 order yesterday. Because we had made our decision to have a virtual start even before the health authority order came down, we remain steady and confident in that decision and will have a 3-week virtual start.

We are optimistic that with our citizens' help and cooperation regarding wearing masks, washing hands, and social distancing, we will see a reduction in the spread of COVID-19 within our community. This will enable us to be more prepared to safely welcome back our students who have chosen Onsite Learning beginning September 9.

For parents who want their children to continue with online learning, please know that high-quality virtual instruction by certified teachers from Bastrop ISD who use rigorous, top-notch curriculum and resources will continue to be available for the entire 2020-21 school year. Children in grades PK-4 will use Seesaw as their platform. Students in grades 5-12 will use Google Classroom.

With that being said, I need your help and have some news to share with you that I've outlined below.

1. An updated [Return to School Guide](#) has been posted on our website. We've denoted any updates with a yellow box that says "New 7/30/20" to reflect new information.
2. The [Back to School Form](#) is now available in Skyward Family Access to allow you to select either ONSITE or ONLINE learning for 2020-21. **We are asking you to make your selection by August 9.** I know this is earlier than the original date, but I ask you to please partner with us to make your selection by this date. It will be very helpful as we plan to open schools safely and assign teachers and students to each other. You will have the flexibility to make a different choice

at a later date if you need to. On this same form you can also tell us if your student needs a device, if your home lacks internet access, and whether your child will need transportation.

3. We have many students whose parents have not completed the **Student Information Verification** process in Skyward. When you log into your account to select ONSITE or ONLINE, please take those 5 minutes to update your child's information. Remember -- having accurate information on your child, including emergency contacts, is more important than ever! Thank you for helping us keep your child safe. You can [log in here](#).
4. Our annual **Stuff the Bus** event is **Saturday, August 8**, but it will look a little different this year. We are giving out 1,600 backpacks filled with school supplies at six different locations along with some goodies from local businesses in town. It's first come, first serve and starts at 8:00 am. It will be a drive-through distribution similar to how we did device and food distribution in the summer. You can find more information [here on our website](#).
5. **Returning Old Devices August 6 & 7** - If you currently are borrowing a BISD computer, please return it August 6-7 to your child's campus. We will have the device disinfected and updated with new software and utilities in preparation for the new school year.
6. **Reissuing New Devices August 14 & 17** - We will reissue fresh devices to students who need them on August 14 and 17 beginning at 10:00 am each day.

With that being said, we are eager to welcome back our teachers and staff, and we look forward to having them back in the classroom preparing amazing lessons for your children. We've been through an incredibly difficult time together these past few months as parents, teachers, students, and leaders, but I believe we will come through this challenge as a stronger school district and in even more resilient service to you and our community at large.

On behalf of all of us in Bastrop ISD, we appreciate your support. Know that we are working diligently each and every day to create a wonderful, nurturing and healthy place that you and children will want to be a part of. Stay safe and well!

Sincerely,

Barry Edwards  
Superintendent