

Gallipolis City School District

Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

(Revised 3/10/22)

First and foremost, the GCSD is taking all necessary steps to protect the health and safety of staff and students for a safe return to school. As a district, we are discouraging activity that may contribute to the spread of the coronavirus. The GCSD is committed to providing options and supports for families in order to meet the educational and special needs of our students. More importantly, we are committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of our community. In order to successfully accomplish these goals, it is important for school personnel and parents to work together collaboratively during this time to find ways to continue to serve and educate all students in a safe environment.

As of August 24, 2021, we will be returning to full in-person instruction with protocols in place to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We will no longer be offering an online option for families as we believe students are best served in the classroom. In light of the current circumstances and incident rates in Gallia County, we feel that this is the best option for our students and families. However, the district may operate under a blended learning model (remotely/online) if an outbreak or calamity would occur. In the event that we would need to serve our students remotely, chrome books will be distributed and connectivity will be provided for those who need it with hot spots.

The Gallipolis City School District Board of Education, administration, and Gallia County Health Department have been working collaboratively in refining guidelines to ensure the safety of our students and staff for our return to school. The following guidelines have been put in place to deter the contraction and spread of COVID-19 in the school setting. We understand the importance of getting our students back in the classroom while at the same time ensuring a safe educational environment conducive of learning.

Throughout this unsettling time, our district has been committed to transparent communications in regards to risks that may exist when students and staff occupy school facilities. Please know that we will continue to refine our plan and protocols with local health officials in order to ensure best practices throughout the school year. Although there is no way of knowing what may happen in the future, we will always be vigilant in our response to protect the community in which we serve.

As always, we appreciate your support and understanding during this time, and we look forward to serving your child this school year.

Expectations for Administrators, Teachers, and Support Staff

1. All school staff members are strongly recommended to wear a face covering made of cloth/fabric that covers the employee's nose, mouth, and chin, unless an exception recognized by the Ohio Department of Health applies. A face shield made of flexible plastic that wraps around the wearer's face and extends below his or her chin may also be an acceptable face covering.
2. All staff will enforce the safety protocols set in place for students and staff during work hours.
3. All staff will follow the guidelines for reporting self-illness.
4. All staff will follow the guidelines for maximizing distance from others while on school property and during work hours.
5. All staff will complete required professional development specific to maintaining the health and safety of students and staff.
6. All staff shall maintain confidentiality of students and staff as it applies to medical and mental health issues.
7. Staff are expected to self-monitor and report any symptoms to their administrative supervisor.
8. Staff that suspect a child may have symptoms of illness should send the child to the school nurse for an assessment.
9. When a school building exceeds 7% of COVID related absences, the staff members in that building will be required to wear facial coverings for 10 calendar days in areas or situations where 6 feet social distancing can't be maintained. Requests for exceptions under this section as well as those necessary for a staff member with a documented health or developmental condition shall be considered by the Superintendent/designee, who may request documentation justifying an exemption. A staff member must have supporting medical documentation of this condition and a face shield may be issued to that staff member.

Blended Learning Option

The GCSD will follow the guidelines for the Blended Learning Model as specified in HB 164. Blended Learning may be used by staff to ensure learning continues in the event that a building closure would happen due to COVID or any other unforeseen circumstances. This will provide flexibility in service distribution and continuity. It will also give us the flexibility to resolve calamity days without extending the school year or cutting into spring break.

According to Ohio law,² "blended learning" means the delivery of instruction in a combination of time in a supervised physical location away from home and online delivery whereby the student has some element of control over time, place, path or pace of learning.

Classrooms/Buildings

1. Classrooms will be free of clutter and unnecessary materials, furniture, etc.
2. Spaces must be easily accessible for regular sanitization.

3. Classrooms will be furnished with sanitizing stations for students and staff, and staff will encourage students to sanitize and wash their hands frequently.
4. Classrooms will be organized to ensure students and staff can maximize distance while learning.
 - a. Kindergarten classrooms may have dividers on the tables to provide additional protection for students.
 - b. Grades 1-5 may have single-seat desks that are spaced to maintain safe distancing. For classrooms with tables, seating may be staggered with dividers in between providing an additional layer of protection for students and staff.
 - c. Grades 6-12 may have single-seat desks spaced to maintain safe distancing and/or dividers on tables.
 - d. Students working from a table or lab area will maintain safe distancing.
 - e. Teachers and students will maximize distance while working together in the classroom.
 - f. Classrooms, restrooms, and pod areas will be sanitized on a regular schedule throughout the day by the building custodians.
5. HVAC systems will receive upgrades, replacements and filtration systems designed to improve indoor air quality and ensure a safe learning environment.
6. New construction on a fitness area and STEAM classroom will facilitate additional square footage which will improve social distancing, enhance learning opportunities and promote overall health in order to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. This can be done through the use of ESSER funds to reduce transmission and environmental health hazards.

Student Face Coverings

1. All students in grades PK-12 are strongly recommended to wear face coverings while: (1) in the hallways and common areas of school buildings, (2) while on district school buses, and (3) in classrooms when physical distancing is not possible.
2. Students with pre-existing health issues or who may be considered high risk in grades PK-12 may request preferential seating in the classroom.
3. Students may request a reusable or disposable mask from the District when needed.
4. Each student will receive one cloth masks at the beginning of the school year.
5. Students can only wear school appropriate face coverings determined by the building principal.
6. School nurses or staff who is caring for individuals with symptoms must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by the district.
7. When a school building exceeds 7% of COVID related absences, the students in that building will be required to wear facial coverings for 10 calendar days in areas or situations where 6 feet social distancing can't be maintained. Requests for exceptions under this section as well as those necessary for a student with a documented health or developmental condition shall be considered by the Superintendent/designee, who may request documentation justifying an exemption. A student must have supporting medical documentation of this condition and a face

shield may be issued to that student. Exemption forms can be obtained through the building principals.

Transportation

1. Students riding a bus **may choose** to wear a face covering or shield.
2. Student ridership may be limited to two students per seat when possible.
3. Students from the same family are encouraged to sit together.
4. Bus drivers may wear a mask or shield while driving.
5. Bus drivers will follow cleaning protocols, i.e.: disinfecting all seats, handles, and other surfaces at the end of each trip.

Student Health Assessment

1. Parents are responsible for monitoring their children for signs of illness and communicating with the school promptly if they think their child might be ill.
2. If a student tests positive for COVID, it is the parent's responsibility to communicate the positive case with the school nurse.
3. If a student has a temperature above 100.4 degrees, they should stay at home.
4. Any student that has the following symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home from school and should see their primary care provider to be assessed for COVID-19: Any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing or two of the following symptoms: fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, GI Issues (nausea and vomiting or diarrhea).

Students/Staff Diagnosed with COVID-19

1. If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID, it is the parent's or staff member's responsibility to communicate the positive case with the school nurse.
2. When there is a confirmed case, the school nurse, in collaboration with the local health department, will communicate with families as appropriate and in accordance with all HIPAA regulations.
3. The GCSO will cooperate with the local health department for social contact cluster tracings.
4. A 5 day stay at home isolation will be required for any student or staff member that tests positive for COVID-19. As long as any symptoms are resolved by day 5, they may return to school on day 6 if they wear a mask around others for the next five days.
5. Staff or students determined to have an "exposure" may return to school if they wear a mask around others for the next 10 days. If staff or students develop symptoms or test positive, they must stay at home. The school nurse will work with the health department to notify the building principal and other stakeholders.
6. Each school will have a quarantine area for students who are suspected of having symptoms related to COVID-19. The student will be quarantined until the parent/guardian can pick up the child.
7. If a student or staff member is suspected of having COVID-19, they must meet the following criteria to return to school: 24 hours with no fever (without using fever reducing medication) **AND** other symptoms.

8. A student or staff member may be sent home if they are experiencing **one** of the following symptoms: constant coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. A student or staff member will be sent home if they are experiencing **two** of the following symptoms: fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, GI Issues (nausea and vomiting or diarrhea).

Test to Play (Extracurricular Activities)

Asymptomatic contacts may continue to participate in extracurricular activities if they do the following:

1. Wear a mask when able. (This includes: transportation; locker rooms; sitting/standing on the sidelines; and anytime the mask will not interfere with breathing, the activity, or create a safety hazard.)
2. Test on initial notification of exposure to COVID-19.
3. Testing on day 5 after exposure is recommended.

Student/Staff Health Issues (not related to COVID-19)

1. Persons with a temperature must stay home for 24 hours and be fever-free (without medication) before returning to school or as directed by the child's physician (physician documentation required)
2. Upon returning to the classroom or work, the individual's temperature may be taken, and a health assessment may be administered by the school nurse. The parent/guardian is responsible for transporting a child home if the student becomes ill while at school.

Vaccination Distribution

Governor Mike DeWine has asked school districts to partner with their local health departments in facilitating vaccinations and boosters for staff and students 12 and older. The Pfizer vaccine is the only vaccine currently authorized for students between the ages of 12 and 17. The Gallipolis City School District will continue to offer the Pfizer vaccination to our students ages 12 and older with a signed parental consent form. As Governor Mike DeWine said, "Vaccinations remain our best offense to the virus and our best opportunity to keep our kids in school and get our lives back to normal."

GCSD Vaccination History:

Onsite Staff Vaccinations: 2/11/21 and 3/12/21

Onsite Student Spring Vaccinations (16 and older): 4/22/21 and 5/13/21

Onsite Student Fall Vaccinations (12 and older): 9/10/21 and 10/1/21

Onsite Staff Vaccinations: (Booster) 12/10/21

Continuity of Services

1. We are offering a Summer Advantage Program (summer school) as a way to close the gap and extend special services for our students. This 21 day program will allow for more educational supports, mental health counseling, tutoring, speech services, interventions, drug prevention, food distribution and stability for our children. Clothing vouchers will be offered to students who have participated in at

least 18 of the 21 scheduled days. Transportation will be provided for all the participants.

2. Due to the increasing need for social emotional supports, we have contracted full-time mental health counselors to serve in each of our buildings. In addition to that, we have hired another guidance counselor at the high school to help support the mental health needs of our students.
3. Nicotine and drug prevention services/programs will be provided throughout the district in grades K-12. These services will be provided in conjunction with Health Recovery Systems, Field of Hope, Hopewell Health Centers, Gallia County Health Department, GJV ESC and GJM ADAMH Board.
4. In order to improve attendance and provide academic growth, a full-time attendance officer has been hired to track attendance, provide interventions and communicate with families.
5. Afterschool programs will be offered as another way to close the gap and extend special services for our students. These afterschool programs will provide extra educational supports, mental health counseling, tutoring, drug prevention, speech services, interventions, food distribution and stability for our children. Transportation will be provided for all the afterschool students.

Food Service

1. All students will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2021-2022 school year.
2. K-5 students may have breakfast served in classrooms. Lunches may be served in the classrooms or in the cafeterias and gymnasiums while maintaining safe distancing.
3. 6-12 students may use the cafeterias and gyms for lunch and maximize distancing while eating. Breakfast for 6-12 students may be grab-and-go.

Recess/Field Trips

1. Large group recess will be permitted outside without masking. Staff may take groups of students on walks or outside for class with prior administrative approval.
2. Field Trips may be permitted with safety protocols in place.

General Provisions:

Failure or refusal to wear a face covering by a staff member or student when required may result in discipline in accordance with other District policies, handbooks, and/or codes of conduct, as applicable. If a student who is required to wear a face covering does not have one, they will be provided an acceptable face covering by a staff member.

This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in other District policies, handbooks or procedures.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to amend and revise these requirements as necessary to meet both federal and state guidelines.