



# Greencastle Community School Corporation Return to In-Person Instruction Plan

The following guidelines will be in effect as of January 13, 2022. The updates to the GCSC Return to In-Person Instruction Plan are a result of ongoing collaboration between district officials, the GCSC Board of School Trustees as well as local and state health officials.

## **STUDENT AND STAFF HEALTH PROTOCOLS**

As a public school corporation we have a high level of responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff. We have developed procedures and protocols for this purpose.

Indiana statute provides public schools the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9). In addition, the Putnam County Health Department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students or staff to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6).

### **Student and Staff Self Screening Protocols**

Parents will be the first line of defense in keeping our schools healthy. All parents are required to daily screen their student(s) before sending them to school. All staff are required to self-screen before coming to school. Students and staff should not attend school, and will be excluded from school, if they test positive for COVID-19, or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, not otherwise explained based on ISDH guidelines. The school nurse will be the primary employee in making final COVID-19 determinations.

### **COVID Positive Students**

Individuals or households with positive COVID results will be quarantined by the local or state health department for a given number of days following state and local health department guidelines before returning to school. Please report positive COVID results to your students' school. The attendance officer at each school will notify the school nurse and building administration.

### **Symptomatic Students**

Students and families are required to conduct a self-check each day for COVID symptoms. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and be symptom-free for a given number of days following state and local health department guidelines before returning to school.

### **Isolation and Quarantine Guidance**

#### **Medical Inquiries**

Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic more leeway has been provided to schools in this circumstance

to make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than would otherwise be allowed. When calling in to report your child sick, you will be asked if your child is experiencing COVID related symptoms.

- If a parent reports that a student is ill, we will ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If a staff member calls in sick or appears ill, we will inquire as to whether the staff member is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a person (student, staff member or visitor) is obviously ill, GCSC will make additional inquiries and may exclude the person from school property.

### ***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Students and Staff***

#### **Grades K-12**

Masks will be recommended but not required in GCSC facilities. Masks will be required on buses per the federal mandate regardless of GCSC's metrics. The metrics for requiring masks are as follows:

- Schools with a weekly COVID-19 positivity rate **above 5%** will be **required to wear masks** indoors, regardless of vaccination status, until the weekly positivity rate drops **below 4%**.
- Masks will be required when Putnam County is "Red" according to the ISDH COVID-19 Dashboard (<https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/>). When Putnam County is no longer "Red", masks will return to being recommended. Any change in status will go into effect the following Monday.

The following categories of people continue to be exempt from the requirement to wear a mask:

- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.);
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

### ***School Health Clinic***

It is common for students and staff to display non-COVID-19 related symptoms throughout the day. This includes injuries, chronic health conditions, specialized daily medical treatments and/or plans. These individuals will continue to be seen and treated in the nurse's clinic.

Each school has created a location separate from the nurse's clinic where students or staff, who are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, are evaluated and/or waiting for pick-up. All waiting students and staff will be required to wear a mask. Only GCSC staff assigned to the room may enter, except for emergency situations.

Each school will maintain a record of all persons who entered the room and the room will be disinfected following each use. Strict social distancing will be maintained and GCSC staff must wear appropriate PPE. Students who are ill will be walked out of the building to their parent(s) or guardian.

## **Immunizations**

Immunization requirements will remain unchanged. Nursing staff will continue to coordinate with local and state health officials, as needed.

## **BianaxNOW COVID Testing**

Symptomatic staff and students (**with parental consent**) are eligible for free rapid testing by GCSC clinic staff. Symptoms must be verified by clinic staff.

- Results in 15 minutes
- Help reduce the spread of COVID in our school system
- Less invasive test (optional)

## **Return to Play Form (Athletes)**

### **Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 on School Property**

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, GCSC will contact the Putnam County Health Department to assess factors such as the likelihood of exposure to students and non-students in the building, the number of cases in the community, and other factors that will determine building closure.

School officials also collaborate with the Putnam County Health Department to notify close contacts and provide instructions to those involved with the confirmed case, including siblings and other household members regarding self-quarantine and exclusions. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the Putnam County Health Department. If a closure is deemed necessary, GCSC will consult with the Putnam County Health Department to determine the status of school activities including extra-curricular activities, co-curricular activities and access to buildings by staff.

As soon as GCSC becomes aware of a student or non-student who has been exposed to or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the custodial staff will be informed, so that impacted building and bus areas, furnishings, and equipment are thoroughly disinfected.

### **Preventative Measures**

The priority for preventing the spread of disease in the school setting is to insist that sick employees and students stay home. Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. It is possible for some people to be infected with COVID-19, but show no signs of illness even though they are contagious and can spread the disease to others. It is also unknown how contagious people are the day or two before they begin to exhibit illness symptoms. Thus, these employees or students may be present at school, will show no signs of illness, but be capable of transmitting the disease to others. Attention to hygiene such as handwashing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others.

These key times for handwashing will include a modified class pattern to maintain the best opportunities possible while maintaining distancing between students and include:

- During Breakfast and Lunch

- After recess and when using the restroom
- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment

### ***Social Distancing***

GCSC has measures in place to increase social distancing (3-6 ft.) while maintaining a high level of in-person instruction.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

GCSC students are expected to adhere to all existing student handbook policies and procedures. However, corporation-wide policies for the health and well-being of students and staff have been implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. These special policies will supersede those in the approved school handbooks during the crisis period. In addition, students are to follow social distancing guidelines whenever possible. In the event of an exclusion or school closure, GCSC students are expected to continue the educational process through the combined support of teachers and technology.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

For many GCSC students, the school bus is a student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. Thus, GCSC understands the importance of establishing protocols regarding student transportation to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect both students and staff.

### ***Preparation and Cleaning***

In order to provide safe transportation for students, GCSC will:

- Inspect all buses and transport vehicles for cleanliness and safety;
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect all buses and transportation vehicles at the conclusion of each bus route; and

### ***General Transportation Services***

- At the time of registration, parents will notify GCSC of their intention to use school bus transportation to and/or from school;
- Each student is limited to two locations (primary/alternate) for pick up/drop off;
- Students will be assigned a single school bus stop, and seat;
- Students will be required to remain in their assigned seats for the duration of the school bus trip. Failure to comply with seating requirements may result in the loss of school bus privileges for a student;
- Students will not be permitted to change bus arrangements sporadically;
  - If a parent/guardian needs to change a child's transportation method on a given day, he/she will only be allowed to change to a car rider or walker. Students are not permitted to switch to a different bus as all seats are assigned ahead of time in an effort to limit student contact as well as enhance contact tracing, if necessary.

## **CLASSROOM AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTS**

Wherever possible, GCSC will:

- Remove excess furniture from classrooms in order to increase space between students desks (3-6 ft.);
- Face desks in the same direction;
- Use assigned seating arrangement;
- Limit activities that combine classes or grade levels to digital methods;
- Limit, whenever possible, student transitions from room to room;
- Limit sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, school supplies, equipment, etc)
- Avoid sharing electronic devices;
- Increase opportunities for student hygiene activity;
- Encourage the use of outdoor spaces for instruction;
- Encourage the use of larger classroom spaces (gym, cafeteria, etc); and
- Schedule restroom breaks to avoid overcrowding;
- Touchable surfaces disinfected throughout the day and during nightly cleaning.

### ***Cafeteria and Food Service***

- Eliminate self-serve food items;
- Eliminate communal access to napkins and table service;
- Discourage food sharing;
- Ensure personnel handling pay stations do not also handle food;
- Schedule hand-washing for students and non-students prior to food service times;
- Provide access to hand sanitizer;