

Greenwich Public Schools 2021-2022 School Year Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Updated Plan: December 22, 2021

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LEA Name Greenwich Public Schools

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Table of Contents

Schedule	for Periodic Updates	3
District St	atement	4
Health and	d Safety Strategies	5
Univers	sal and correct wearing of masks	5
Physica	al distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)	6
Handw	ashing and respiratory etiquette	7
Cleanir	ng and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	8
local, te	t tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with territorial, or Tribal health departments	8
•	stic screening and testing	9
	to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	9
Approp safety p	riate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health policies	n and 10
Continuity	of Services	13
Acader	nic Needs	13
Social a	and Emotional Learning	13
Food S	ervices	14
Transp	ortation	15
Public Cor	mment	15
Survey	s	15
Town H	Iall Session	16
Understan	dable and Uniform Format	16
Appendix	and Other Resources	17
Return	to School Planning Document for 2020-2021	17
GPS C	OVID-19 Tracker	18

Schedule for Periodic Updates

LEAs are required to periodically review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to InPerson Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023. Each review must include seeking public comment on the plan and developing the plan after taking into account the public comment.

- June 23, 2021
- December 23, 2021
- June 23, 2022
- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023

District Statement

2021-2022

Greenwich Public Schools is in full return status. Some restrictions have been modified to update current mitigation measures. Additional staff have been hired through use of American Rescue Funds (ARP- ESSER 3) to provide intensive support for reading, mathematics, and social work support across all 11 elementary schools.

2020-2021

Since the start of the 2020-2021 school year, Greenwich Public Schools has been pursuing full-time in-person learning for our entire K-8 student population, and for most of this school year, we were hybrid for grades 9-12; and we just recently returned our high school students for full-time, in-person learning. Additionally, we had a highly-regarded, dedicated remote learning school for K-5 students who wanted to pursue full-time remote learning, and we offered a high-quality streaming remote learning environment for our fully remote 6-12 students. Given our extensive planning and logistical work during the pandemic, we are well positioned for a safe return for the 2021-2022 school year, especially if Local, State and Federal guidance continue their trends of easing restrictions and ending mitigation requirements. Currently, we are planning for a full return in the Fall with an environment much more similar to non-pandemic years. Should there be any continued requirements for social distancing, mask wearing, etc., we will be ready to safely return our students while adhering to local, state and federal requirements, as we did during this school year.

Update shared with GPS families on Friday, July 23, 2021

As of today it appears that masks will be required in schools, per the CT Commissioner of Health who declared that masks should still be worn and the Governor's Executive Order 13 signed on Monday which extends the mandate through September 30. Our Greenwich Health Department updated us yesterday as well, and it is unlikely this will change given this mandate was just issued and updated in the Executive Order. We remain cautiously optimistic that our return to school will be more aligned to a non-pandemic school year, but will continue to follow all health and safety mandates required of schools. Please note: we must follow all mask mandates, and as such, any exemptions will need a note from your family physician. Notes can be sent directly to Mary Keller, GPS Head of Nursing at Mary_keller@greenwich.k12.ct.us

Health and Safety Strategies

Describe how the LEA plan includes (or will be modified to include) the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

Should there still be a mandate for wearing masks while in school, GPS will share all requirements through ongoing communication to parents, school signage as well as any necessary BOE Policy.

As of December 22, 2021, Connecticut requires all individuals to wear a face covering while inside the school building. The current Governor's Executive Order goes through February 15, 2022.

Example of BOE Policy (5141.8/4118.237/4218.237; Adopted August 20, 2020):



Example of School Signage:



Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

Should social distancing and/or cohorting remain necessary for the 2021-2022 school year, the GPS District may address the following:

☐ Classrooms are set up to maximize social distancing up to 3-feet
☐ If desks are available, achieve 3-feet apart
☐ If desks are available, face the same direction when feasible
☐ If tables are utilized, sit on only one side of the table or if ample space clear dividers may be utilized
☐ Floor mapping at the front of the room for a 3 foot "teacher zone"
☐ Clear dividers for tabletop surfaces as needed for small group instruction and/or services
Low Transmission Risk: Elementary (Grades PreK - 5)
 □ Full re-entry for K-5 maximizing social distancing and cohorting. □ Staggered arrivals
□ Support from families to mitigate bus travel social distancing challenges □ Keep K-1 class size at approximately 20 student to maximize social distancing spaces. K-1 classroom square footage is larger in most of the buildings.
Low Transmission Risk: Middle and High School (Grades 6-12)
☐ Full re-entry for 6-12
 Modified Schedule to create cohort movement with a group of like teachers. Considerations will be made for elective class rotations.
Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
Included below is an overview of mitigation strategies to adhere to health and safety guidelines for handwashing and respiratory etiquette.
☐ Signage in all restrooms reminding students and staff to wash their hands (see below)



☐ Inside the restrooms are no-touch paper towel dispensers
☐ Hand sanitizer is available for all classrooms
☐ Hand Wash/sanitize before and after outside exposure.
☐ Provide online video tutorials for families and staff which include:
□ Social distancing;
☐ Frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer
☐ Use of face coverings that completely cover the face and nose
☐ Respiratory and cough etiquette
☐ Enhance cleaning/disinfection of surfaces
☐ Work with Human Resources to make sure all substitutes view the online tutorial before entering the classroom
Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Included below are a list of mitigation strategies for keeping our facilities clean:

☐ Sanitizing wipes are available for all classrooms
☐ Each building has sanitizing throughout the day on door handles and other high touch surfaces
☐ The building is disinfected each evening with a product considered safe and non-toxic, while also being proactive in eradicating evidence of the virus.
☐ Hand sanitizing available at entry/exit points.

Outlined health and safety mitigation tactics will only be utilized for the 2021-2022 if required by Local, State and/or Federal guidelines.	
☐ Utilize safe touch methods for vending machines and lunch numbers. ☐ Detailed information for our Viking Pure Solutions for cleaning and disinfecting is shared publicly on our GPS website.	
Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments	
GPS takes pride in its extensive contract tracing and transparent reporting on COVID-19 cases, exposures and quarantine for the District. Our District has one of the most robust tracking documents available (see Appendix), and we will continue to maintain it, as necessary.	
Contact Tracing, Isolation and/or Quarantine Requirements GPS will continue to take direction from the CDC, CT State Department of Health, and Town of Greenwich Department of Health on requirements for contact tracing, reporting quarantine and isolation for those impacted by COVID-19.	
Currently, GPS is utilizing a new method for quarantines which includes an option to screen and stay. This option may be suspended at any time if the health guidance prefers GPS to refer back to the traditional 10-day quarantine.	
Governor Lamont announced the rollout of the <u>Screen and Stay</u> initiative for Connectic schools that choose to participate. Under the initiative, students and staff identified as close contacts to a known COVID-19 case but who are not yet fully vaccinated, will be able to remain school if they meet certain criteria. If a child has been exposed to a positive case in school the school's nurse will review the <u>Screen and Stay protocol</u> to see if they are eligible (<u>Spaniversion</u>).	
Containment Planning	
☐ If necessary, the District will continue its protocol for containment to ensure immediate responses if an individual has signs or symptoms.	
☐ The Plan includes:	
☐ Notification and coordination with local Health Department.	
☐ Identification of and mobilization of a response team within each school.	
Consideration and application of school dismissal, quarantine and return to school timing and procedures.	

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exposure are equal to the deep disinfecting performed each evening.

isolation room will be given full PPE.

☐ Identification of an isolation room in each school. Individual who monitors the

☐ Cleaning protocols and procedures after confirmed positive cases or confirmed

Diagnostic screening and testing

Included below is a list of expectations for our GPS Community should we need to adhere to strict health and safety protocols. As shared earlier, we are anticipating a more normal return to school.

Expectations for Teachers & Staff

- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Daily monitoring of one's own health. Is your temperature below 100 degrees?
- Must wear a mask at all times, unless on a prescribed "mask break"
- Maintain social distancing.
- Wash hands often, and utilize hand sanitizer when a hand washing station is not available.
- Do not congregate with colleagues in groups.
- If possible, stay within a small cohort of people while at school.
- Be responsible before and after school.
- Enter the building with social distancing.
- Move down the hallways following all directions.
- Stay home and quarantine for the required period of time if a member of the family has COVID.

Expectations for Students

- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Daily health check by parents required.
- Must wear a mask at all times, unless on a prescribed "mask break"
- Maintain social distancing.
- Wash hands often, and utilize hand sanitizer when a hand washing station is not available.
- If possible, stay within a small cohort of people while at school.
- Be responsible before and after school.
- Enter the building with social distancing.
- Move down the hallways following all directions.
- Stay home and quarantine for the required period of time if a member of the family has COVID.

Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible

While GPS, as a school district, does not provide vaccinations directly to educators, other staff and/or students, we do share information and resources about how and where to obtain a vaccine should our community members be interested in doing so. These types of messages include: links to resources and information about the types of vaccines (provided by the CDC, CT State Department of Health, and other health-related organizations); which local facilities are offering the vaccine; unique links for clinics that are offering space for our GPS community members; and any updates shared from the CT State Department of Education.

We remind our GPS community frequently that the COVID-19 vaccine is currently an optional, personal or family choice.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies

The plan for addressing the needs of students with IEPs was developed with the understanding that there has been no waiver of requirements under the IDEA for provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Should we need to adhere to strict health and safety mitigation protocols for the 2021-2022 school year, the district will continue to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students, as well as those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services.

Students eligible for special education and other special populations are general education students first. Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the district's reopening plan as designed for strict health and safety protocols (if necessary), school teams will facilitate individualized and alternative plans based on student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input.

Parents are partners in the planning for students with disabilities and will be included in decisions made about program modifications in both general and special education.

Preschool, Elementary, Middle School and High School – Common Low Transmission Risk Guidelines

- Students are provided with transportation consistent with their current IEPs.
- Students will follow the school routines with accommodations and modifications required per the IEP or impact of the student's disability.
- Related services will be provided primarily through individual sessions in a separate setting with staff wearing appropriate PPE. The room and materials will be cleaned between each session.
- Parents will be notified if staff supporting students in Activities of Daily Living (primarily eating and toileting) will be closer than 3 feet. The notification will include the specific activity/time and a description of the support. All staff will be required to wear masks, gloves and protective clothing covers.
- Members of the student's IEP team will identify alternative strategies for providing instructional supports that had been previously provided by an adult in proximity closer than 3 feet, utilizing technology or environmental modifications if appropriate.
- Special Education services will be provided as described in the student's current IEP to the maximum extent possible in order to maintain safety of the student and staff. Any changes that need to be made to accommodate the implementation of the safety

guidelines will be communicated to parents in a written plan. The plan will include a description of any goals/objectives that will need to be modified or postponed due to the implementation of the safety guidelines.

Preschool - Low Transmission Risk

- All preschool children will be required to wear masks consistent with the guidelines for elementary school students.
- Hours of instruction remain the same although start and end times may be adjusted to lessen number of students arriving and departing at any given time
- Related services (pull out) will be provided individually. Related services (push in) will remain consistent with current Preschool Practice.
- Recess/Morning Movers will follow all safety guidelines
- Toileting and toilet training will follow Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Parent permission for toilet training and toileting will require a written document.
- Lunch and Snack will remain in classrooms as consistent with current preschool practice
 with the exception of a 3-foot requirement for social distancing. OEC and CDC
 guidelines will be followed. Parent permission for assistance with feeding will require a
 written document.
- Cleaning of classroom toys and manipulatives will follow the OEC/CDC guidelines supported by instructional assistant staff outside of the instructional preschool school day. Bins will be placed in classrooms to identify soiled toys needing cleaning/laundering.
- Sensory "table" will remain closed. Individual sensory bins can be utilized during this time and disinfected between students.
- Playdough or sensory materials will be utilized by individual students and disposed of daily.
- Students and staff will require multiple sets of change of clothing on site. Both clean and soiled clothing will be stored in sealed containers.
- Art materials will be stored in separate bags or bins for each child.

Elementary and Middle School - Low Transmission Risk Guidelines

- Special education teachers will be assigned to cohorts and support students in those cohorts through push in and pull out services. Pull out groups, including social skills groups and lunch bunches, will be made up of students within cohorts to the maximum extent possible. Cross cohort groupings may be implemented in individual situations with parental permission from all participating students.
- Related service staff (speech, psychology, social work, occupational and physical therapies, hearing and vision services) will serve students across all school cohorts. Limited related service providers (primarily occupational and physical therapies, vision and hearing services) may serve students in multiple buildings. The number of buildings will be limited and full PPE protocols will be followed.
- Students whose related service delivery requires group work, such as pragmatic language, social skills and behavior support, can be implemented through push-in

services within the cohort. Cross cohort groups may be provided on a limited bases with appropriate PPE procedures and parental permission.

High School - Low Transmission Risk

- Students will receive special education support in the house-specific Academic Labs, the Wellness Center and support classrooms in designated GHS Houses.
- Related service staff (speech, psychology, social work, occupational and physical therapies, hearing and vision services) will serve students in houses whenever possible to decrease movement and contacts.
- All community-based instruction will be canceled until safety requirements are lifted.

Community Connections/Windrose – Low Transmission Risk

- Students receiving related services from staff not assigned to the building will receive those services on one day each week.
- All current job sites will be reviewed against the safety requirements and only those sites
 that can be accessed within the guidelines will be used. Classroom instruction and
 virtual experiences will be substituted for vocational preparation.
- Public transportation will not be used to access available work sites. Individual arrangements may be made for students who meet the criteria for independent travel and have parent permission.
- Students will follow a five-day schedule.

English Language Learners (ELS)

□ ELs will continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Any adjustments or modifications will be discussed on an individual basis with families.
☐ The District will communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in
English in a language they understand as required by Title III of the Elementary and Secondary
Education Act.
☐ As during traditional schooling, communications during school closures due to COVID-19
may be provided through translation and/or interpretation, as requested.
☐ GPS will continue to provide ELs who are also identified as students with disabilities with
supports for their EL needs, as well as supports for their disabilities. Any necessary modifications to services will be discussed on an individual basis.

Continuity of Services

Describe how the LEA plan will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

Academic Needs
Prior to the start of school: Building administrators will provide time for vertical teams to collaborate. Teachers and building administrators will continue to receive resources and training opportunities on Linkit to review student accomplishments of standards.
☐ Teacher teams will be allotted time to plan the first unit of instruction
Start of the school year: Teachers will establish classroom communities and establish norms with their students. Teachers will implement the first unit of instruction to be highly engaging and to allow for maximum student success. By the end of the first month of school, teachers will have administered LinkIt assessments for K-8 Grades 9-12 will assess for baseline information so that teachers can monitor and adjust as needed for each student
Ongoing throughout the year: Teachers will periodically utilize formative assessment practices to gauge the impact of thei teaching by eliciting evidence of student learning, providing feedback, and adjusting their teaching.
End of the school year: ☐ At the end of the year, students should be administered an on-grade summative assessmen (which may be the state assessment if available for students in Grades 3 through 8, 11, or Link End of Year Accomplishment of Standards K-8) to evaluate overall achievement on the state standards.

Social and Emotional Learning

The GPS Pupil Personnel Services and Social Emotional Learning Teams will partner with school administration and staff to develop enhanced Social Emotional Learning offerings for students to ensure increased access to SEL content and experiences.

Food Services

Food Service Set-up

Outlined below are strict protocols for health and safety mitigation strategies for Food Services and will be utilized should that be deemed necessary.

Low Transmission Risk
 Students may eat in the cafeteria with their cohort if social distancing of 3 feet can be maintained. School site analysis will continue to be conducted with the principal and members of the GPS administration prior to the start of school. Brown bag or box lunches are served to the students. No lines will be utilized for lunch service.
Moderate Transmission Risk
□ Students eat in their individual classrooms. Brown bag or box lunches delivered to the classrooms to mitigate contact. □ Lunches are delivered via a box or cart, and the delivery is placed outside the classroom door for the teacher to retrieve. There is no entry into the classroom by the person who is delivering. Gloves should be worn for all deliveries. Low and Moderate Risk require allergy free zones in classrooms and/or socially distanced cafeterias.
Critical Risk requires full district lunch deliveries at designated locations.
Food Service Protocols
☐ Train all food service staff on the food safety processes and Standard Operating Procedures relevant to their role in providing meals.
☐ Identify any additional equipment or supplies such as thermometers, alcohol wipes, etc., that may be needed to keep food safe when transported and served in other areas of the school.
☐ Obtain and develop posters and other aids to assist non-food service school staff to implement safe food practices when they participate in the service of meals.
☐ Review written policies and procedures to ensure they are up-to-date and clearly communicated to all applicable staff.
☐ Ensure written procedures for food safety, meal preparation and meal counting and claiming are available and easily accessible to the staff when needed.
☐ Ensure schools are properly staffed for food service production and service methods that are and will be used, and that regularly assigned staff and substitute staff are properly trained.

- ☐ Identify other school staff who may be trained to carry out select food service processes or tasks when staff shortages are expected.
- ☐ Ensure all required state and local health and safety guidelines will be followed.

Transportation

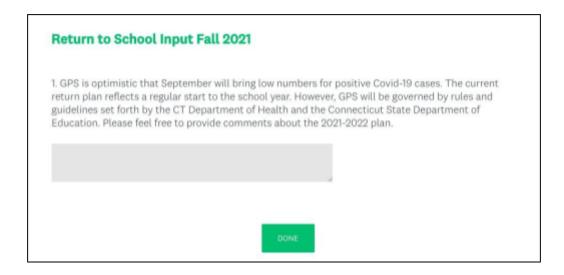
Currently, the GPS District has planned and budgeted for a full return to normal bus service operations. However, should we need to revert to any planning from the 2020-2021 school year, we will refer to that plan (please see the Appendix for the planning document link, which includes robust details about transportation, including: social distancing and ridership on the bus, health and safety mitigation, scheduling and more).

Public Comment

Describe how the LEA plans to provide the public the opportunity to provide input and for public comment in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the LEA took such input into account.

Surveys

We surveyed the GPS Community via SurveyMonkey regarding school reopening plans. All responses were anonymous. Input, feedback, suggestions and insights will help influence the planning for the 2021-2022 school year.



Town Hall Session

GPS held a Virtual School Community Town Hall Meeting on June 8, 2021 at 6:00PM to discuss the current plans for our 2021-2022 school year, as well as ESSER Funding. This Town Hall Session shared information and administration held a Question and Answer Session from the community.

Monthly updates are provided to the BOE and community through the monthly business meeting structure.

The District maintains an active input survey link to provide feedback to the district on an on-going basis.

GPS held a Virtual Town Hall for COVID Questions and Answers on Monday, August 16, 2021 via Zoom. During the Town Hall, a District panel answered community submitted questions. Please watch the <u>video posted</u> from the Town Hall. You can also review the <u>PowerPoint presented</u> during the meeting.

Understandable and Uniform Format

Describe the unique needs of the LEA's audience and confirm the LEA's approach to ensuring the document is accessible.

GPS has confirmed that this document is fully accessible by current ADA standards.

Appendix and Other Resources

Return to School Planning Document for 2020-2021

Return to School Planning for 2020-2021 (COVID-19/Pandemic Planning)

This document was created in July 2020, and submitted to the CT State Department of Education, per their requirements during 2020-2021 school year planning. It outlines, in great detail, our safe return to school, including adhering to all necessary health and safety mitigations.

GPS COVID-19 Tracker

GPS maintains one of the most robust, transparent COVID-19 trackers for a public school system. Our commitment to regular updates and transparent information

