

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan

The Gideon School District returned to in-person instruction during the 2020-2021 school year. The district was successful implementing preventative protocols with minimal interruption. This plan is an extension of last year re-entry plan with a focus on ensuring continued safe operations for the 2021-2022 school year. Our goal is to maintain the health and safety of students and staff. The district's number one priority will be to protect the health and safety of all stakeholders. We are asking that parents screen students for COVID-19 symptoms at home prior to getting on the bus or coming to school.

IN-PERSON/REGULAR SCHOOL

Employee and Student Safety

1. Visitor Restrictions

The safety of our staff and students remains the district's primary concern. Gideon School District will limit unnecessary visitors and volunteers inside the buildings. If there is a necessary need for a visitor to enter the building, such as a scheduled meeting, the visitor will be subject to a simple screening. Parents and guardians that need to sign students out will be asked to come to the door and wait outside. School staff will sign them out and send them outside. If parents and guardians need to drop items off there will be a drop off table outside the door that items can be left on and the student will retrieve them.

2. Employee and Student Screening and Protocols

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to our employees and students, we will be requiring employees to self-screen for symptoms. We will ask for the teachers to do a quick visual check of students for symptoms each morning.

Symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste and smell
- Diarrhea
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Known close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to COVID-19

All screening information will be kept confidential by the administration and the district nurse.

3. Health Protocol and Testing

- If an employee or student becomes ill at school or if they begin exhibiting symptoms at school they will be sent to our quarantine room and supervised by our nurse. They may be asked to leave school and go home or to the nearest health center.
- The school has the ability to do rapid testing and may seek permission from a parent to test and determine if it is COVID-19.
- Employees and students returning to school from an approved medical leave should contact the administration. You may be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you may return to school when you have been cleared by a medical doctor or followed the protocol set forth by your medical professional or the local health department.

Isolation, Quarantine, and Contact Tracing

If an employee or student becomes ill while at school, he/she will immediately report to the district nurse's holding room.

Once the employee or student arrives at the holding room, they immediately will be provided with a mask and gloves. This is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus.

- The nurse will complete a suspected COVID-19 case form and call the local health authority and seek advice.
- The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person will wear protective mask, face shield, and gloves.
- The nurse will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to seek permission to test, or have the student picked up. Any students will stay in the holding room until parent arrives.
- The nurse and district administrator must identify persons who may have come in contact if the person is positive. They will conduct contact tracing and provide that information to the appropriate people at the health department. The district administrator will also contact parents of those affected by a positive case to advise them.
- Advise employees that they may have been in contact with a suspected employee or student and to carry out self-screening every morning.

- The holding room and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

We might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person, staff, student or visitor, has been in a school building. This decision will be made in conjunction with the New Madrid County Health Department, Center of Disease Control (CDC), and Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).

Communicate with staff, parents, and students.

We will coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.

- This communication to the school community will align with our communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member.

Clean and disinfect thoroughly after Positive Case

- Close off main area used by the individuals with COVID-19. Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area. Areas will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly before opened again.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by ill person, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Guidance If Exposed

While we all hope to avoid exposure to illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. If you have been exposed to the virus, our first concern is for your health and safety and those around you. Please do the following:

1. Quarantine yourself in a specific room away from others in your home
2. Contact the following and let them know you have been exposed to COVID-19. Follow their instructions.
 - a. Your healthcare provider
 - b. Your building Administrator
3. Your building administrator will work with the superintendent to determine appropriate next steps.
4. The school district will consult with the local health department to help families and employees determine when they should return to school.
5. In case of an emergency, call 911 and let them know you have been exposed to COVID-19 and follow their instructions.

Social Distancing

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. Gideon employees, student, parents, and visitors should practice staying approximately 6 feet away from others in common areas and eliminating contact with others.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In order to minimize exposure to COVID-19, PPE may be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE can include:

Staff Masks and Face Shields: Face masks are an important part of employee protection, as well as personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts. Staff may be required to wear face coverings when they are within six feet of students. Staff will be provided face masks and face shields.

Gloves: Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection. Wearing gloves does not diminish the need to wash your hands. Please remember to wash your hands. Gloves are not required at this time.

Hand Washing and Respiratory Etiquette: In addition to using PPE, the Gideon School District will educate the staff and students on the following protocols:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol frequently throughout the day. Anytime you enter a room use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.

Sneeze Guards: Sneeze guards will be utilized in our reception areas and in classrooms.

Personal Workspace/Classroom

Employees are encouraged to disinfect their own personal workspace (desk, phone, student desks, etc) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces.

Facilities Cleaning

The safety of our employees and students are our first priority. Our schools will be completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. We will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (door handles, sinks handles, light switches) multiple times each day. Use of shared objects (gym or physical equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between uses. We have developed a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.

Improved Ventilation

The district has purchased new HVAC systems with improved filtration systems. This will help the ventilation in classrooms. We also encourage our staff to open windows when possible to increase fresh air ventilation.

Signage

Signage will be placed throughout the offices and schools reminding employees and students of social distancing and proper hygiene.

Bus Driver/Bus Protocols

The Gideon School District encourages parent and guardians to bring their child or children to school by private vehicle. However, if this cannot be done we will still run our regular routes. The bus maintenance supervisor will disinfect the buses in between uses. The bus drivers will be encouraged to wear a mask during routes but will not be mandatory at this time. Students will have assigned seating on their bus, families should sit together on buses using social distancing as much as possible. Bus drivers are encouraged to run routes with windows down if weather permits.

Universal and Correct wearing of masks

Our staff and students will be trained on wearing face masks correctly consistent with the CDC recommendations. Face masks will be encouraged and allowed. Face masks may be made mandatory based on the recommendations by the CDC and our local health department. Our district will attempt to follow CDC guidelines at all times. We will continue to monitor our area and make a determination of when face masks may become mandatory for all students and staff.

Classroom Modifications

In this unusual time we will be utilizing some modifications to our classrooms:

- Student seating and desks will be spaced 3-6 feet apart when feasible.
- Desks will face in the same direction or students will sit on only one side of the tables spaced apart. This includes lunch and breakfast.
- Physical education classes will be encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
- Interaction between classes and grade levels will be limited in the elementary.
- Recesses will be staggered to limit the amount of classes participating at one time.
- Elementary students will not be required to wear face coverings at this time but may do so.
- High school students will be encouraged to wear a face covering but do not have to unless there is an increased risk or mandated to wear face coverings by the health department or state, or as advised by CDC.

- Some junior high and high school classes may be limited to certain classrooms because of size and the teachers will rotate.
- Any student that is required to stay out of school will receive instruction through modified delivery.
- Students will be encouraged to bring their own water bottles to class. Each building and gym will have a touch less water fountain that can refill water bottles. This will be the only allowable use of water fountains. Students will take their water bottles with them to PE.

Cafeteria and Meal Periods

Lunch and breakfast may be modified to allow for social distancing. Some classes may be required to eat breakfast in their classroom.

Vaccination of Staff and Students

The Gideon School District has made an effort to educate their staff and students about COVID-19 vaccinations. The district provided a vaccination clinic for our staff in the spring of 2021. Butler Drug Store came to campus and provided vaccines for staff. The majority of our staff chose to be vaccinated. Our district will continue to educate staff about vaccines and can provide information about the availability. Our district also posted flyers about vaccination availability for our students that are eligible. We will continue to educate our student body about the safety and availability of COVID-19 vaccination.

Accommodations

Any child with disabilities will be provided appropriate accommodations with respect to any policies or protocols contained in this plan or by their Individual Education Plan. If your child falls in this category and you have concerns please contact your building administrator.

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

If the district is notified by local and state health officials of a substantial community outbreak we may be advised to interrupt in-person instruction for a short period of time. The district will transition to virtual instruction only. All schools will be closed.

- Virtual instruction and packet instruction will be delivered to all Pre-K-12th grade students.
- Teachers will assign curriculum related lessons and activities via Google Classroom or any other online program used within the district.
- Teachers will track completion of assignments on a weekly basis and provide feedback to students.

- Virtual instruction and assignments will contain the same content as in-person instruction/assignments.
- Virtual assignments will be required and graded as assigned.
- Assessments will be administered virtually.
- The grading scale for virtual instruction will follow the same guidelines as in-person instruction.
- Training will be provided to all students on how to access all assignments and virtual instruction.
- The district will work with all parents that need additional assistance with virtual instruction.
- Students grades 3-12 will be allowed to check out a chrome book. These may also be available to pre-k through second. Pre-k through second will follow the procedures set forth by the teacher for phone calls, facetime, Facebook videos, and different forms of instruction.

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

Our school counselor and district administrators believe that during a time of interruption of in-person activities that it is important to continue to meet social, emotional, and mental health needs of our district. Our counselor and district administrators will provide contact numbers to our district staff and families that may need services met during a time of interruption. They will be available to assist our staff and district families during periods of interruption.

Nutritional and Health Services

During anytime of interruption our district will continue to provide breakfast and lunch. These meals will be available for pick up in front of the cafeteria for those that do not ride a bus. Our staff will run bus routes to deliver breakfast and lunch to those on the routes. The nurse will also be available to provide health services for those in need. Any person needing health services should contact their building administrator and arrangements will be made.

*This plan was developed and adopted with public input during the June 10 public board meeting. This plan will be reviewed and revised every six months with input from students, families, school district administrators, and teachers. The district will also attempt to gain input from civil rights organizations, and stakeholders representing children with disabilities, English learners, homelessness, foster care, migratory students, incarcerated, and underserved students.

** Translations of this plan are available for non-English speakers.