

# GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

2020-21  
RE-OPENING &  
ACADEMIC PLANS

VERSION 2, AUGUST 20, 2020



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1	Overview and Letter from the Head of School
Page 2	Safety Considerations
Page 3	Campus Usage
Page 4	Important Dates and Tiered Opening Approach
Page 6	Preschool
Page 7	Lower School
Page 8	Middle School
Page 9	Upper School
Page 10	Boarding
Page 12	Academic and Social-Emotional Support
Page 14	Keeping Our Campus Safe
Page 17	Other Considerations
Page 18	Planning Committees and Resources

## KEEP OUR GRIZZLIES SAFE & HEALTHY



SOCIAL DISTANCE



WASH & SANITIZE  
HANDS REGULARLY



WEAR A MASK



STAY HOME IF  
FEELING SICK



# FALL 2020 AT GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

Dear GFS Community,

Many members of our faculty and staff have spent the past few months developing comprehensive plans to account for many different possible opening scenarios. From the beginning, we have kept the health and safety of our community at the very forefront while exploring innovative ways to ensure our students are learning, connecting and growing as part of their GFS experience. The plans you will see detailed in the following pages were informed by local, state and federal guidelines and recommendations; parent, student and teacher input via surveys and anecdotal feedback; space analysis and recommendations from our architects; ongoing discussions with medical professionals; and following the latest updates around this constantly evolving situation. In addition to the planning committees who took on this important work of providing guidance and recommendations, our faculty and staff spent significant time engaged in professional development this summer to prepare for the year to come. I am so very grateful for the many dedicated members of our community who have been so diligent and thoughtful in working through these scenarios and challenges.

**We are planning to open online in all divisions followed by a gradual re-entry to campus beginning in mid-September.** While this is not what we had hoped for, we knew this was a strong possibility, and we currently feel this is the best decision to ensure the health of our entire community. A deliberate, thoughtful return to campus gives our students and teachers the opportunity to adjust to an educational environment that looks very different; at the same time, opening online allows us to ensure everyone is comfortable so that any future shifts can be seamless.

As we approached this work, we were guided by our desire to maintain the following components, whether in person or online:

**SAFETY AND WELL-BEING:** Ensuring that our students, families, faculty, staff and community are engaging in a safe and healthy environment that is most optimally conducive to to learn, live and work during this time.

**COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION:** Developing regular and intentional opportunities for engagement and overall sense of GFS spirit that will succeed even in the face of reconfigured classrooms, social distancing guidelines or online learning.

**COMPETENCY AND CURRICULAR EXCELLENCE:** Continuing to build a robust and excellent academic program that also accounts for students having different needs and the reality of varying family situations. Working not only to ensure academic progress, but provide support and enrichment for each student in an individualized way.

**COLLABORATION:** Leveraging teacher-parent and student-teacher relationships to understand the needs, challenges and progress of each student as the year progresses.

**COMMUNICATION:** Keeping the GFS parent and student community informed about what's going on. Even in times of uncertainty, our goal is to be transparent and share what we know.

We also know that this work is far from done. This is new territory, and we expect that we will learn and need to pivot or revise some of what you see here as the year unfolds and recommendations are updated. A key focus of our planning is to ensure we are able to seamlessly transition to online learning at any point or provide integrated learning for students who cannot be with us in person.

As you read through the information here and as we provide more details closer to the opening of school, I welcome your thoughts and feedback.

Warmly,

Chris Hughes  
Head of School

# SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Above all, keeping our entire community healthy and safe is our top priority. We are closely following all recommendations from local, state and federal agencies and keeping up-to-date with new information and best practices as they are released. You may see modifications and updates to these protocols and procedures as the year progresses, but for now, here is what you can expect:



Cloth masks must be worn indoors at all time, and outdoors when six-foot distancing is not possible, by all students and employees. [Masks must conform to current guidance from the CDC](#). Masks should be laundered after each use; each student should have a spare mask in case the first becomes soiled or damp. GFS will provide one mask per student. Otherwise, masks should be a solid color with no writing or patterns other than GFS-branded masks.



At-home daily temperature checks will be required for all students, faculty and staff, as well as completion of symptom screening questions. Students and faculty/staff will be asked to stay home if they have a temperature above 100.4, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.



Families should report immediately if a student or household member receives a positive COVID-19 test result to the School's Health Team. (Please see Keeping Our Community Safe section for more details.) Anyone who is traveling to a destination under a CDC Level 3 Health Travel Notice or to a state currently under travel restrictions, or has known exposure to COVID-19 is asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.



Additional nursing staff has been added to ensure proper coverage for our campus, and the Health Center will have separate areas for well-visits and the treatment/isolation of ill patients. Students who present symptoms while on campus must be picked up within one hour of parental notification. Please see Boarding and Campus Life section for specific information for boarding students



Enhanced on-campus hygiene and cleaning protocols include:

- Daily in-depth cleaning of all buildings using EPA approved disinfectants as well as a weekly, 360-degree cleaning of all surfaces using an electrostatic ionizer.
- Additional touchless hand sanitizing machines across campus.
- Disabling hand dryers and adding additional paper towel dispensers.
- Enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces.
- Removal of touchscreens and shared devices in classrooms.
- New signage for foot traffic patterns to support physical distancing as well as health and hygiene reminders.
- Additional staff and shifts added for housekeeping.
- Upgrading air filters to the maximum efficiency filter recommended by manufacturer and replacing those filters at a minimum of every three months. HVAC equipment is also inspected, serviced and cleaned every three months.



# CAMPUS USAGE

The unique layout of our 110-acre campus makes a safe return to school possible, allowing creative use of space to ensure we can welcome back our students safely. As part of our planning, we worked with our architects to perform an occupancy audit of all spaces and are following the Center for Disease Control's recommendation of maintaining six feet of distance in classrooms. Modifications include:

- Reconfigured classrooms that allow for safe distancing.
- New traffic flows into and within buildings to minimize contact, with safe distancing clearly marked.
- Reduced movement and traffic inside buildings.
- Lunch will be eaten outdoors or in classrooms; boarding students and residential faculty will eat in a designated space that allows for proper distancing.
- Whenever possible, extensive use of outdoor spaces.
- Restrictions on parent and non-essential visitor entry into buildings.



## WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER!

While our campus gives us the ability to properly distance and much care has been given to procedures and maintaining a healthy campus, we will be asking and expecting students and families to follow all necessary protocols to ensure everyone stays healthy. Official protocols and expectations will be shared with students prior to the start of the school year.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR REOPENING 2020

Monday, August 31

Item and device pick-up for students  
(no online learning)

Tuesday, September 1

Online programming begins, to include  
online Orientation

Week of September 14

Potential gradual entry on-campus for Preschool

Week of September 21

Potential gradual entry on-campus for  
Lower School

Week of September 29

Gradual entry to on-campus learning begins in  
all divisions

October 5

Full on-campus learning (with hybrid options in  
place for those who cannot return)

### GFS VIRTUAL CLASSROOM: COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED AND FLEXIBLE

Over the past few months, the Online Learning 2.0 task force has been analyzing parent, student and teacher survey responses, reviewing best practices and recommendations and carefully considering many different approaches to online learning. Our faculty have also been actively engaged in professional development throughout the summer to prepare for an online or hybrid learning situation, to be ready to swiftly transition between the two on an individual or full-division scale. The development of comprehensive, integrated online learning plans included evaluating technology needs and considering the needs of individual students across divisions. When needed, the GFS Virtual Classroom will:

- Have clear expectations and structures for students, parents and teachers.

- Be thoughtful and structured.
- Be seamlessly integrated into the overall experience.
- Be informed by feedback and data.
- Employ a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning to best meet the needs of all students.

In addition, as we look toward an in-person opening, students and teachers will be using the same platforms in the classroom that they will use for virtual learning to ensure everyone is comfortable and to make the shift to online less jarring should it occur. In the beginning of the year, parents will be invited to parent education sessions to learn more about each division's learning platforms and plans for online learning.

You will receive more information specific to your child's grade as we get closer to the start of school.

## TERMS TO KNOW

**SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING:** Real-time learning that follows a student's schedule—i.e. virtual classes led by teachers.

**ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING:** Learning that takes place at a student's own pace—i.e., videos, assignments posted to learning platforms.

## TIERED OPENING APPROACH

To create a flexible, comprehensive approach to learning that will allow us swiftly and seamlessly to navigate changing requirements while minimizing impact to the student experience, we will be utilizing the system below. Within this structure is the ability to integrate online learning components for students who need them at any point, whether for one student who can't be on campus because of health concerns or a mandated return to school-wide online learning.

You can find more specifics within each divisional section on the following pages, as well as on our website: [gfs.org/reopening](https://gfs.org/reopening).

For fall 2020, we are planning to open in **LEVEL 4**, with plans to gradually transition to Level 3 in mid-to-late September.

### LEVEL 1

#### NORMAL OPERATIONS

No restrictions in place

### LEVEL 2

#### SCHOOL OPEN WITH MODIFICATIONS AND DISTANCING RESTRICTIONS

Normal movement between classes and classrooms within division, but no cross-divisional classes

Daily at-home, or for boarders, at the assigned area, temperature checks required

Masks to be worn as part of uniform

Lunch outside or in assigned zones

Large group meetings (Morning Meeting, Community Time, Grizzly Gatherings, etc.) to be held virtually

Before and aftercare will be available, potentially with modifications in place

### LEVEL 3

#### SCHOOL OPEN WITH HEIGHTENED RESTRICTIONS AND ONLINE LEARNING COMPONENTS (AS NEEDED/IF NECESSARY)

Daily at-home temperature checks required

Masks to be worn as part of uniform

Movement between buildings will be extremely limited for all students and staff

Rooms and spaces will be reconfigured or repurposed to allow for greater distancing

Lunch to be held in designated areas or outdoors

Large group meetings to be held virtually

In-classroom cameras and other measures taken to facilitate online learning as needed for individuals and groups

Before and aftercare not available for Preschool and Lower School; extended day not available for Middle School

### LEVEL 4

#### FULLY ONLINE

Campus will be closed and all learning will be done online as part of GFS Virtual Classroom

Please see divisional pages for additional information about learning platforms, schedules and expectations





## TENTATIVE ON-CAMPUS RETURN DATE: WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14 (GRADUAL ENTRY)

### FOCUS

For our youngest students, returning to school amid a global health crisis can be confusing and scary. Our goal is to welcome our Preschoolers with all of the joy and warmth that has always been a part of their experience and to continue providing the strong foundations they need to form a successful path forward.

### IN-PERSON: WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

We will be using the cohort model ensuring the same teacher and students will remain together throughout the day. Special area subjects will be taught in the preschool building or nearby outdoor spaces.

Preparing for an in-person return for our Preschool requires flexibility and creativity. We recognize that the person-to-person interaction is key. Specific precautions that will be in place for our Preschool classes include:

- Appropriate student-to-teacher ratios that allow for as much distancing as possible.
- Children will have their temperature checked before parents walk their children to the exterior door of their child's classroom. There will not be a drive-through carpool during arrival times. Parents will not be allowed in the building.
- Per new guidance from Baltimore County, masks will be required for Preschool students, and all staff will be wearing masks and scrubs. As we know that this can be scary for younger children, we will be introducing fun, age-appropriate ways to help your child become more comfortable in our classrooms.
- For the safety and protection of our students and staff, there will be no early-bird drop off or aftercare options for at least the first six weeks of school as we open in Level 3.

- All students should plan to arrive at school between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. Monday through Thursday and between 8:45 and 9:00 a.m. on late start Fridays. Students will report to the front door of the Preschool for temperature checks and then parents will walk them to the exterior doors of their classrooms. Students will then be picked up from their classrooms either at the 12:00 p.m. or the 3:00 p.m. dismissal. We will re-evaluate early-bird and aftercare options a few weeks into the fall semester. In the event we move to a Level 2 or evaluation shows that we can safely offer before and/or aftercare options, we will let you know as soon as possible.
- Knowing that hugs and high fives are normally the way we get to know and love one another, we will be introducing new ways to connect as a community.

### PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING WITH GFS VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

While online learning is not ideal for the youngest student, teachers will continue to provide structured schedules and a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning to create an engaging online experience. In addition, we will continue to nurture, encourage, and support important student-to-student and student-to-teacher connections, keeping the social/emotional wellness of our students a priority. Schedules and expectations will be clearly communicated, with the individual student in mind. Understanding that younger students may need more at-home support, teachers will be in regular contact with parents to ensure all needs are being met and the student is thriving.

Learning platforms used: Seesaw





# LOWER SCHOOL

**TENTATIVE ON-CAMPUS RETURN DATE:  
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21 (GRADUAL ENTRY)**

## FOCUS

Because Lower School encompasses such a wide range of ages, learning levels and social-emotional developmental stages, planning for a return to school has focused on meeting the needs of each individual student—in a modified classroom setting as well as online if needed. In addition to providing a safe and welcoming learning environment, the Lower School will foster peer-to-peer and student-teacher relationships in creative ways that ensure our students are engaged, connected and supported.

## IN-PERSON: WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

Careful consideration has been given to the experience of our Lower Schoolers, and we will be maximizing the space within our building to ensure a safe learning environment for everyone. Expect to see:

- Individual classrooms will be modified to ensure proper spacing.
- We will keep classes in “grade-level cohorts” in order to reduce cohort mixing yet maximize grade-level peer connections and interactions.
- Every effort will be made to reduce the transfer of supplies, etc., between home and school and the touching of others’ personal belongings.
- Movement around our building and on campus will be managed to reduce the mixing of students. The schedule will be designed so that specialist (art, science, P.E., etc.) teachers will travel to the assigned grade-level classrooms.
- Students in the Lower School will eat lunches in their assigned classrooms or outside. Students in grades K-5 may pre-order lunches through Sage, our school dining provider, and have them delivered to the Lower School building. More information and ordering details will be provided later in the summer.
- For the safety and protection of our students and staff, there will be no early-bird drop off or

aftercare options for at least the first six weeks of school as we open in Level 3. All students should plan to arrive at school between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday and between 8:45 and 9:00 a.m. on late start Fridays. Students will report directly to their assigned classrooms. Students should be picked up by 3:30 p.m. each day. We will re-evaluate early-bird and aftercare options a few weeks into the fall semester. In the event we move to a Level 2 or evaluation shows that we can safely offer before and/or aftercare options, we will let you know as soon as possible.

- **Dress code changes will limit your need for back-to-school shopping.** Since we will be taking advantage of the beautiful outdoor spaces on the GFS campus as much as possible for learning and movement, we are allowing athletic wear for school dress (GFS shorts and white shirt or polo shirt with sleeves). We will be in touch shortly with specifics. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact Gail Hutton, Head of the Lower Division.

## PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING WITH GFS VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

If we need to pivot to online learning, or to support individual students who may need to be out for extended periods of time, we will be utilizing in-classroom cameras, structured schedules and a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning to provide a robust online experience. In addition, we will continue to nurture, encourage, and support important student-to-student and student-to-teacher connections, keeping the social/emotional wellness of our students a priority. Schedules and expectations will be clearly communicated, with the individual student in mind. Understanding that younger students may need more at-home support, teachers will be in regular contact with parents to ensure all needs are being met and the student is thriving.

Learning platforms used: Seesaw, Schoology



# MIDDLE SCHOOL

**TENTATIVE ON-CAMPUS RETURN DATE:  
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 29 (GRADUAL ENTRY)**

## FOCUS

Middle School is a time of academic exploration and creating connections. When envisioning a modified approach, we focused on creative use of space to maintain the sense of community and minimize distractions while learning in a safe environment. We have also developed a robust online experience as an integrated part of our approach.

## IN-PERSON: WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

Careful consideration has been given to the experience of our Middle School students, and we will be reimagining the space within our building to provide the safest possible learning environment for all students.

Some of the modifications you should expect to see as we open in Level 3 include:

- Grade-level specific entry/dismissal doors and staircases to better control traffic and flow. Students may still arrive starting at 7:30 a.m.
- Use of designated large classroom spaces that allow for proper social distancing.
- Use of “grade-level cohorts” to ensure safety and maximize grade-level peer connections and interactions.
- Designated grade-specific help sessions to ensure students have the academic support they need while minimizing contact and “drop-ins.”
- Reconfigured use of grade-level wings to keep students in cohorts and minimize cross-contamination of spaces.
- No cross-contamination of spaces between grade levels.
- Virtual Morning Meetings.
- Outdoor recess and Break Time.
- Designated bathrooms and spaced-out lockers.
- Lunch will be eaten outside whenever possible or in a designated space in their grade-level wing. Students may pre-order lunches through Sage, our school dining provider, who will deliver the lunches to a specified pick-up spot.

## PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING WITH GFS VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

The Middle School is committed to providing a hybrid learning experience for students who are unable to return to campus this fall. All Middle School faculty engaged in professional development, taking a course called “Designing, Building and Teaching for a Hybrid Environment,” and are prepared to make a swift transition to online learning whenever it may be needed. Classes will be recorded and made available for students who cannot be on campus, and there will be opportunities for students to attend classes virtually and participate in regular check-ins with teachers and advisors. In the case of a school-wide mandated return to online learning, students will follow an online learning schedule that very closely resembles their regular schedule, with slight modifications to ensure all classes have a synchronous learning component. Students should expect mandatory synchronous class sessions each morning, asynchronous work and optional drop-in sessions each afternoon and regular virtual class meetings and community gatherings.

Learning platform used: Schoology



# UPPER SCHOOL

**TENTATIVE ON-CAMPUS RETURN DATE:  
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 29 (GRADUAL ENTRY)**

## FOCUS

The Upper School has three key areas of focus: providing a challenging, robust academic experience that prepares students to succeed after GFS; supporting all students through their journey, academically and socially; and creating opportunities for peer-to-peer and student-teacher connections. Our comprehensive college counseling program will continue to be an important part of the Upper School experience, whether in person or virtually.

## IN-PERSON: WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

- Classes will be held in both non-traditional and reconfigured spaces to allow for appropriate distancing.
- Grizzly Gatherings and class meetings will be modified or held virtually in order to comply with distancing regulations.
- College counseling programming will be held virtually in small groups during X block.
- Lunch will be outside or in assigned zones. Students may pre-order lunches through Sage, our school dining provider, who will deliver the lunches to a specified pick-up spot.
- Congregating in hallways will not be permitted, with reduced access to lockers, and appropriate distancing and directional signage will be posted.
- Occupancy numbers will be posted in all spaces to indicate maximum number of individuals permitted and guide students during free periods and downtime. Potential spaces for students to use during these times include the library, empty classrooms or outdoors, including the courtyard, which will be tented.

- Morning check-in will take place in first period classes.
- Students will wipe down desks before and after each class.
- Senior Room will not be available until operations return to Level 1.
- Grade-level privileges will be modified during Levels 2 and 3.

## PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING WITH GFS VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

All Upper School faculty engaged in professional development, taking a course called “Designing, Building and Teaching for a Hybrid Environment,” and are prepared to make a swift transition to online learning whenever it may be needed. In the case of a school-wide mandated return to online learning, students will follow an online learning schedule that very closely resembles their regular schedule, with slight modifications to ensure all classes are represented synchronously. Students should expect to attend mandatory synchronous class sessions each morning and complete asynchronous work daily. There will also be opportunities for virtual class meetings, advisory meetings, community gatherings, and college counseling programming. In addition, all courses will use the Schoology platform even when in-person so students are comfortable working there. For students who aren’t able to attend classes in person, teachers will be providing coursework through videos, virtual class opportunities, and course material all through our learning management system, Schoology.

Learning platform used: Schoology





# BOARDING STUDENTS

We recognize that returning to campus may pose additional concerns or challenges for our boarding students, particularly for our international students. GFS is more than your school; it's your home for a large portion of the year, and we will work diligently to ensure that it is not only a safe place to be, but a place where you feel comfortable, welcomed and connected to your peers.

## SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DORMS

In addition to other health and safety precautions taken campus-wide, there are additional precautions and protocols in place around our residential experience, including:

- While all boarding students will be provided a single room to minimize contact, room assignments are subject to change to provide the safest environment for our students, faculty and staff. We encourage boarding students to pack lightly in case they need to quickly change rooms.
- Additional cleaning protocols and procedures will be in place in the dorms.
- We will have designated quarantine rooms for isolation in the case a boarding student is exposed to COVID-19 or begins showing symptoms once she is on campus.
- Dorm kitchens will be closed for at least the first few weeks of school. Food service will be provided seven days a week and service will follow appropriate protocols, including boxed lunches and designated eating areas for breakfast and dinner.
- Masks must be worn inside the dormitory any time a student is outside of her room.
- No visitors (day students, family members or students from other dorms) are allowed in the dorm.
- Breakfast attendance will be mandatory, and mandatory temperature checks will be conducted daily.
- We will create bathroom schedules and protocols to provide the safest environment for our students, faculty and staff.

## ARRIVING TO GFS

Prior to arrival to campus, ALL boarding students must either:

- Provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 TEST result from within 72 hours prior to arrival on campus to the Health Center. **Students choosing this option should plan to arrive the weekend of September 26-27 and will begin gradual re-entry to on-campus classes later that week.**
- Anyone with a positive test must not come to campus and must notify the Health Center immediately. They will not be permitted on campus and must be home for a minimum of 14 days and may return to campus only once they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication and experience improvement of other symptoms.

OR

- Must certify that they have completed a 14-day quarantine, in the state of Maryland, before their arrival to campus, in compliance with current Maryland recommendations. If a student cannot quarantine off-campus, they will complete their quarantine on the GFS campus following on-campus quarantine protocol (more information to be provided)

and continue with online learning through October 2. They will join their classmates in person beginning on October 5. **Students who need to quarantine on campus should plan to arrive the weekend of September 19-20.**

- Once the school year begins fully on campus, any travel that takes you out of state will require an on-campus quarantine immediately upon your return. This includes for holidays.
- In the case that a boarding student tests positive for COVID-19, the expectation is that their guardian or emergency contact will pick them up from campus as soon as possible and within 24 hours. The student will conduct a 14-day quarantine with their guardian or emergency contact, returning to campus only after all symptoms have improved.
- If another member of the community is exposed to COVID-19 causing a cohort or the entire school to move into quarantine, boarding students will follow on-campus quarantine protocols in their dorm rooms.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

We know our international students face particular challenges in preparing for your arrival to GFS. We are here to help.

**Late arrival options:** Due to travel restrictions and other challenges, some students may have trouble getting to campus. We will work with families to figure out the ideal time for students to arrive based on their travel needs and the school schedule. Students who need an invitation letter to obtain an international visa should let us know as soon as possible. We will also soon provide details about the fall semester for students who are unable to join us for the start of school.

## VISA INFORMATION:

- Because Garrison Forest is planning to offer in-person classes for the coming year, international students with F-1 visas must enter

the U.S. and attend school to keep their visa in active status. If GFS is forced to shift to entirely online, returning students already holding an F-1 visa may remain in the United States and pursue the online program or return home and pursue our online program.

- International students who are outside of the U.S. and cannot get to campus will need to be in touch with us to ensure that all necessary travel documentation is up to date.
- New international students who have yet to receive their F-1 should continue to try to get a visa appointment, make travel arrangements and keep us informed of their arrival dates. Arrival dates will dictate program start dates on I-20s, so please be in contact with us as you know more information.

**Online learning:** We are fully prepared to provide a robust and comprehensive online learning experience. You can expect flexible options that include recordings of classes or lessons, scheduled times to meet with teachers, college counseling and academic advising, clearly outlined schedules and expectations and opportunities to connect virtually with your peers.

## CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Our campus is not only home to boarding students, but also to approximately 25 faculty members and their families. To strengthen the community, all on-campus faculty members have a dorm affiliation, which brings together students and teachers together. As we re-open for the 2020-2021 school year, we will continue to build our community connections following all recommended safety precautions.

**Contact Jodi Blackburn,  
Director of Residential Life,  
with any questions or concerns:**

**EMAIL:** [jodiblackburn@gfs.org](mailto:jodiblackburn@gfs.org)

**RESIDENTIAL LIFE CELL PHONE:**  
410-812-7062

**WECHAT:** jodiannblackburn



# CARING FOR THE WHOLE STUDENT

In addition to preparing for the logistics of swift transitions between in-person and online learning, we are cognizant of the stress and challenges some students and families may face during this time. Whether we are in person or online, our academic support and counseling teams are here and ready to help each student have the best experience possible. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's Division Head, Academic Resource Coordinator or counselor at any time.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Garrison Forest School remains committed to offering individual academic support for students in all divisions during each phase of the reopening.

### LOWER SCHOOL:

- Lower School teachers will continue to offer extra support during a scheduled help session or as needed.
- Academic support will be provided through individual or small group work to help students navigate online learning requirements, effectively plan and manage their time and assignment due dates, and productively use available resources.
- The Lower School will continue to meet weekly with each grade level teacher to monitor student progress and/or needs.
- The Academic Resource Center (ARC) will consistently monitor student needs (academic, time-management, etc.) and communicate with teachers and families when necessary.

- The ARC will help parents and students break down assignments, scaffold content delivery, and provide additional resources to help students meet learning goals/objectives, including a shift from in-person to online or back again.
- Lower School students with academic testing will continue to receive accommodations and support as per their academic plan.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL:

- The Middle School will continue to offer regular check ins with advisors during Advisory, GIT and/or virtual check ins.
- The Middle School Academic Resource Coordinator will be available for small group and 1:1 support during Help Sessions, GIT and in a virtual format.
- Middle School teachers will continue to communicate about student progress through Academic Notes to students, parents, advisors and the Academic Resource Coordinator.
- Middle School teachers will continue to offer extra support during regularly scheduled Help Sessions, virtual Drop In Sessions and as needed.
- Middle School students with academic testing will continue to receive accommodations and extra support as a part of their regular schedule.



**UPPER SCHOOL:**

- The Upper School will continue to offer Monday afternoon check-ins with advisors during X Blocks.
- The Upper School Academic Resource Coordinators will remain available for small group and 1:1 support.
- Upper School teachers will continue to communicate with students, parents, advisors, and the Academic Resource Coordinator through Academic Notes.
- Upper School teachers will remain available for extra help during breaks, mutually free blocks, and after school hours.
- Upper School students with specific testing guidelines will continue to receive support and be accommodated in all areas of their academic plan.

**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

Beyond providing support with academic work, we know that some students may need additional resources to help them through this stressful time. Counselors are available in each division to continue communications with students and families, provide additional resources as needed, address any social or emotional concerns among students or families, continue providing lessons and check-ins—whether in small groups or virtually—and developing other community-building activities to foster a sense of togetherness. In addition, our counseling staff has participated in professional development specifically around supporting students through hybrid or online learning, and are also prepared to assist students who cannot be here on campus with us, either because of health concerns or travel challenges.

If you are worried about a specific issue with your child, please don't hesitate to reach out to your divisional counselor for assistance.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION WORK**

In June, we created the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board. Made up of GFS faculty and staff members from across divisions and offices, as well as members of the GFS Board of Trustees, the role of the Advisory Board is to provide guidance and recommendations to the school in its ongoing efforts to be proactively anti-racist and inclusive. This work is vital to our school and community and will continue as we reopen campus. We will be sharing more details about the specific focus areas of this group and opportunities for students, parents and faculty and staff to engage and participate as we identify action steps. Please visit [gfs.org/DEIAdvisoryBoard](https://gfs.org/DEIAdvisoryBoard) for more information.





# KEEPING OUR CAMPUS SAFE

The safety of our campus depends on our ability to promptly isolate and evacuate symptomatic individuals. Per state guidelines, anyone with COVID-like symptoms must evacuate campus for further evaluation in order to keep our community healthy.

## **PRE-ARRIVAL: QUARANTINE AND TESTING**

- All students (boarding and day) arriving from outside of Maryland (including Maryland residents who have recently traveled outside of Maryland) will be asked to either:
  - Certify that they have completed a 14-day quarantine before their arrival to campus, in compliance with current state recommendations, OR
  - Provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 test result from within 72 hours prior to arrival on campus to the Health Center. (Note: Antibody testing will not be accepted.)
- Boarding students, please see page 10 for additional requirements and details.
- All students and families should minimize their exposure in the two weeks prior to their arrival on campus.
- Anyone with a positive test must not return to campus and must notify the Health Center immediately. They will not be permitted to return to campus for a minimum of 14 days (see Return to Campus protocol).

## **CAMPUS DEPARTURE PLAN FOR BOARDERS**

A campus departure plan must be established for ALL boarding students in the event of an emergency situation where a boarding student must leave campus quickly. Parents will need to provide GFS with contact information of who to notify in the event a student needs to vacate campus quickly and they are unable to return home.

## **OPENING OF CAMPUS AND DAILY SCREENING: DAILY SYMPTOM SCREENING TOOL**

- All students and faculty must complete a daily Magnus screening in the Magnus app before coming to school each day (Specific directions to follow.)
- Boarding students will have this screening completed by a member of GFS nursing or Residential Life staff.
- Individuals who are showing symptoms of COVID-19\* or know they have been exposed should not come to campus, and should talk to their health care provider about testing for COVID-19 or whether there is another specific diagnosis. The individual should not come to school or will they be sent home immediately.

## **MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 SYMPTOMS\* DURING SCHOOL HOURS:**

- Day Students:
  - Those who develop symptoms during the day will report to the designated isolation area of Health Center.
  - Individual will be safely isolated and provided with a surgical mask.

- Using appropriate personal protective equipment, nurse will assess the student and determine condition.
- Begin plans for individual to vacate campus.
- Day students will need to be picked up within one hour.
- See below for management of boarding students.

- The Health Center will work with the health department to monitor outbreak and prepare for possible school closure. Potential impacts may include moving any students and teachers in the affected individual's classes or cohorts to online learning via GFS Virtual Classroom and a required 14-day quarantine or broader closures depending on the situation. We will be following guidelines released by the State of Maryland Department of Health to determine best practices.

[See more details here](#)

### RETURN TO CAMPUS PROTOCOL:

- The student who experienced COVID-19 symptoms will be permitted reentry onto campus following the report of 1 of the 2 following documents to the Health Center:
  - If the individual reports a negative COVID-19 test (Note: Antibody tests will not be accepted) OR
  - If no COVID-19 test was performed, a note from a board-certified physician stating that the symptoms are associated with a diagnosed non-COVID-19 illness and follow the required medical procedure given for that illness.
- If the student experiencing COVID-19 symptoms reports a positive COVID-19 test, the below outlined procedure is to be followed:
  - The individual must be home for a minimum of 14 days and may return to campus after the following criteria are met:
  - Fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication AND improvement of all symptoms.
  - Per guidance from the State of Maryland, the Health Center will collaborate with the health department and GFS administrators on contact tracing and provide appropriate communication, direction, and support to those exposed on campus.

### BOARDING STUDENTS:

- Boarding students presenting symptoms during the school day should report to the appropriate area of the Health Center for further assessment.
- If symptoms warrant, student will promptly be sent to their room or a designated quarantine room to self quarantine.
- Dr. Stein, the GFS pediatrician, will be contacted for evaluation with directions for COVID-19 testing and/or telemedicine appointment.
- Health Center will arrange for COVID-19 testing if warranted and will be in communication with Residential Life.
- Students will:
  - Observe strict self quarantine in their dorm room while awaiting test results.
  - Begin online learning.
- Health Center and Residential Life will monitor students with emphasis on non-contact communication (phone calls, texts, telemedicine appointments) when possible.
- Students testing negative for COVID-19 may resume normal activities.



- Boarding students presenting with symptoms after Health Center hours should promptly quarantine, notify Residential Life, and await further direction from the on call nurse.
- If a student has a Positive COVID-19 test, student is expected to vacate campus within 24 hours, in accordance with their Campus Departure Plan.

*Families of students with chronic conditions or special health care needs should be in communication with the Health Care Center and/or Division Head to discuss any needed accommodations or concerns.*

*\*Per Baltimore County's most recent guidance, which was adapted from the clinical criteria in the CDC case definition of a probable case of COVID-19, symptoms of a COVID-19-like illness include those that meet: 1. New onset cough or shortness of breath; OR 2. At least 2 of the following: fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, chills, shivering, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, or gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea).*

### TESTING LOCATORS:

- <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing#TestSitesList>

- <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/News/COVID19/testing.html>

*Note that these procedures could change if additional guidance is provided specifically for schools.*



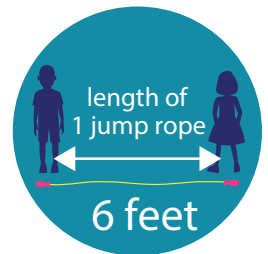
Wash your hands often



Wear a cloth face cover



Cover our coughs and sneezes



Keep **6feet** of space between you and your friends



# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Many components of our daily lives at school will look different this year. As we get closer to the start of the year, we will be able to provide updates and specifics on things like athletics and extracurricular activities.

## ATHLETICS

Our athletic conference, the the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM), has announced that there will not be a competitive fall season. Our Athletics Department will be offering an enriching, fun and challenging program with options for serious athletes as well as students who are just looking to stay active. Options will include both virtual and, as much as possible, on-campus activities.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Options for extracurricular activities will be evaluated as the school year begins. We will add them as we are able; top priority will be given to maintaining a safe environment within our campus and avoiding cross-contamination of spaces. In the event we are not able to offer in-person extracurricular activities, every effort will be made to develop virtual meeting times and activities to keep these groups connected.

## TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation will still be provided to those who have registered. (Please visit [gfs.org/transportation](https://gfs.org/transportation) for options and information.) Parents should follow expected protocols, checking their

child's temperature and completing the required health questions each day before their child boards the bus to GFS. Bus riders will follow social distancing guidelines and buses will be cleaned between runs. During Levels 2-4, there will be no field trips or school-related travel for students.

## SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIP

While we have worked to develop a plan that is comprehensive and thoughtful while delivering the GFS experience you deserve, the success of each student requires a meaningful relationship between school and home. We know that the coming year will call for flexibility, patience and mutual support as we all navigate through this space.

We are dedicated to maintaining a safe environment for your child and providing the space to grow, learn, connect and thrive--whatever the circumstance. We ask that you help support these efforts by following all recommendations and guidelines around protecting yourself and your family from Covid-19. This includes keeping your child home if they are showing any symptoms or have been exposed to the virus and taking reasonable efforts to avoid exposure as a family.

Together, we can make sure our community is safe, healthy and thriving.



# PLANNING COMMITTEES

## PLANNING COMMITTEES

**Re-Opening of School Task Force:** Lauren Misera Anderson '02, Middle School Dean of Students; Robert Ammons, Director of Information Technology; Jamie Bailey, Director of Early Childhood Education; Sarah Baldwin, Preschool Faculty; Randy Beckford, Upper School Dean of Students; Jodi Blackburn, Director of Residential Life; Liza Blue '10, Assistant Director of Auxiliary Facility Usage; Butch Ely, Director of Facilities; Kristin Franzen, School Nurse; Deanna Gamber '85, Associate Head of School; Chrissy Grant, Lower School Academic Resource Coordinator; Vanessa Griffin, Executive Assistant to the Head of School; Chanda Grimes, Director of Health Center; Leigh McDonald Hall '81, Physical Education Faculty; Chris Hughes, Head of School; Gail Hutton, Head of Lower Division; Reema Khanchandani, Head of Upper School; Carolyn Lewis, Director of Community Life and Inclusion; Stacy Mohn, Director of Finance and Operations; Jessy Morgan, Director of Athletics; Shelly Placek, Director of Communications and Marketing; Tara Rosenbaum, Director of Auxiliary Facility Usage; Shannon Schmidt, Head of Middle School; Betsy Segelken, Upper School Science; Bryna Stout, Preschool Faculty

**Hybrid Learning Task Force:** Jodi Blackburn, Director of Residential Life; Rachael Browne, Upper School Faculty and Assistant Director of Residential Life; Catie Gibbons, Director of Enrollment Management; Chris Hughes, Head of School; Reema Khanchandani, Head of Upper School; Shelly Placek, Director of Communications and Marketing; Shannon Schmidt, Head of Middle School; Amy Welling, Lower School Faculty

**Online 2.0 Task Force:** Robert Ammons, Director of Information Technology; Jamie Bailey, Director of Early Childhood Education; Jim Beam, Upper School Faculty; Trudy Cox, Middle/Upper School

Faculty; Leslie Goldstein, Lower School Faculty; Chris Hughes, Head of School; Gail Hutton, Head of the Lower Division, Lindsay Kelland, Director of Educational Tech and Libraries; Reema Khanchandani, Head of Upper School; Stephanie Leary, Middle School Faculty; Dana Livne, Lower School Faculty; Deborah Fusting Lynn '75, Lower School Faculty; Valerie Marsh, Preschool Faculty; Johanna Maranto, Upper School Faculty; Tara O'Neal, Middle/Upper School Faculty; Emma Parsons, Middle School Academic Resource Coordinator; Andrea Perry, Dean of Special Programs and Director of James Center; Shelly Placek, Director of Communications and Marketing; Shannon Schmidt, Head of Middle School; Chris Shriver, Lower School Digital Learning Specialist; Sam Spiegel, Upper School Faculty; Ashby Litz Thoeni '02, Lower School Curriculum Specialist; Erin Hirsch Viana, Lower School Faculty; Amy Welling, Lower School Faculty; Diane Yu, Upper School Faculty

## RESOURCES

### American Academy of Pediatrics:

[COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)

### Baltimore County Department of Health:

[COVID-19 Coronavirus Updates and Guidance](#)

### Center for Disease Control (CDC):

[Considerations for Schools](#)

Global Online Academy, [“Designing for Online Learning: Elementary/Lower School”](#)

### Maryland State Department of Education:

[COVID-19 Resources for Maryland Schools](#)

One Schoolhouse, “Academic Leadership for Hybrid Learning Design” & Designing, Teaching for Hybrid Learning”:

<https://www.oneschoolhouse.org/COVID-19.html>



**VERSION 2 RELEASED AUGUST 20, 2020**

**VERSION 1 RELEASED JULY 29, 2020**



GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL  
2020-21 RE-OPENING & ACADEMIC PLANS