

Groton Public Schools (GPS) Hybrid Learning Plan

Fall Re-entry 2020

“We will start slow and grow”!

Groton Public School will reopen schools September 8, 2020 for grades 1-12 and September 14, 2020 for the entire district PK-12 with a Hybrid Learning Plan. Groton Middle School students will have remote learning and orientations from September 8 – 11, 2020. All families were offered two options at this time; face-to-face in the classroom (in small groups) two days a week, with the rest of the week distance learning with their teacher, OR they could choose total remote learning. Several families decided to homeschool their children. This plan will be continuously monitored with the Groton Board of Education and will be reassessed in four to six weeks. GPS will follow the Governor and State Health department guidelines as well as Connecticut State Department of Education recommendations. Whether students are face-to-face with their teacher or at home learning remotely, teachers will engage students in high quality instruction and accelerated learning, following the fall re-entry curriculum plan. On Wednesdays all students will be provided with remote learning and teacher support during their established office hours and/or Zoom meetings. The “Distance Learning” component of the GPS fall re-entry plan provides the opportunity for planned teaching and learning with assessment and feedback, and allows time for students (parents) and teachers to communicate. Some of the best practices and highest level of engagement comes when teachers and students can synchronize teaching and learning face-to-face or in a live video conferencing setting or when students can speak with teachers in person or remotely; when classes come together for a class meeting, mini-lesson, a read aloud, inquiry lesson, or conversation/debate.

Highlights of the Hybrid Learning Plan and the Full Distance Learning Plan (Remote Learning):

- Provide instruction and assessment using GPS Learning Management Systems (LMS: SeeSaw PK-2, Google Classroom grades 3-8, or Schoology grades 9-12) with daily/weekly planning, assessing, monitoring student participation (attendance), communication, and established office hours. Teachers work their normal 7 hour days per the school schedule on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, however on Wednesdays’ teachers work remotely from 9 AM – 3 PM and will be able to check communications (email, REMIND, LMS systems). On Wednesdays, for two hours, teachers will establish office hours to communicate with students and support them with small or large group livestream and recorded lessons; this will also be a day for planning for the next week, both personally and collaboratively. Students will have the opportunity to work remotely on assigned independent work.
- In the Hybrid Learning Plan, teachers will meet with a small cohort of students face-to-face on two days a week, and teachers and students will work together remotely in a blended synchronistic and asynchronistic way for three days a week. With our “start slow and grow motto,” we will begin with establishing relationships, taking care of social emotional learning, establish routines at school and remotely, and review health protocols, and move to academic lessons, both livestream and recorded.
- Some students and families have opted for full remote learning in the beginning of school year. These students will be part of the class, able to attend Zoom meetings, and fully engage in the class through the learning management system. They will be able to communicate and work with the teacher and classmates, while accessing the teaching and learning.

- Teachers will be able to provide mini lessons that are pre-recorded or livestreamed on Zoom (and other livestreaming technology) and then recorded for students learning remotely and face-to-face. The recommendation is for grade level teams and departments to collaborate; slides with voice over along with other engaging videos are also recommended. Document cameras will be utilized to support livestreaming.
- Live video conferencing available on Zoom (and other livestreaming technology) is expected, and it can be recorded by the teacher. The expectation to do video livestreaming for a class meeting and mini-lesson (10-15 minutes) will increase student engagement with the understanding that there should be a blend of asynchronistic and synchronistic learning, therefore taping those lessons at the time of livestream, and pre-recording lessons will offer a balanced approach and more opportunity for students.
- Attendance will be monitored through student participation, work completion and established check in points (i.e. can take during the homeroom period or be a question of the day). CSDE will be providing an addendum to guide districts on attendance.
- Virtual PD is available to staff (i.e. Virtual Professional Development recorded from 8/28 and future events can be seen on the faculty/staff curriculum site under Professional Development, such as Google Classroom, Zoom and digital platform resources; as well as Social Emotional Learning; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Literacy with TCRWP, etc.).
- Continue Curriculum Compacting around Priority standards for accelerated learning: Elementary Leadership team with teacher representatives and Secondary Department meetings at the high school, middle school led by administration, department chairs, and math and literacy specialists occur remotely; **See Fall re-entry 2020** on grotonschoools.org. GPS Curriculum maps will be made available to the public this fall.

Communication and Interactive Time tips to grow student engagement:

- Set up classroom in SeeSaw, Google Classroom, or Schoology; include admin/evaluator, and special education or support staff as needed.
- Email or text students and parents regularly with a greeting and message that new work is posted, using platform or REMIND.
- Post assignments on the Learning Management System (LMS).
- Communication and Interactive Time through Office Hours:
 - Time for students to ask questions and for teachers to clarify assignments, which at minimum can be done through student school email exchange and/or within the LMS
 - We recognize that teachers may want to use the other features within the LMS program to instruct, communicate, and gather student feedback. In order to engage students in learning, it is recommended to present lessons face-to-face and record livestream lessons; also record slide show with voice over or pre-record a lesson (Zoom and other broadcasting technology)
 - The purchase of additional resources, online texts and libraries, as well as additional software will provide more student engagement during both face-to-face and distance learning. Columbia University TCRWP remote learning units of studies were purchased under the DoDEA literacy grant and made accessible to all teachers and students K-8.
 - The purchase of toolkits, workbooks, journals, books, calculators, and manipulatives will enhance both learning at home and at school.

- Using Zoom and other broadcasting technology, teachers are able to use Live Video Conferencing, which can be recorded during the day so that it will be accessible to all students. It is recommended to collaborate with colleagues to support live video conferencing.

Per CSDE **Adapt, Advance, Achieve Addendum 4** on *Interim Guidance for Decision Making Regarding the Use of In-Person, Hybrid (Blended), or Remote Learning Models in Connecticut Schools during COVID-19*: “Therefore, in collaboration with the school district, parents who decide to opt into voluntary remote learning will also be expected to supervise and engage their children to fully and effectively access the remote learning programming that is offered through the public school district.”

As our motto goes, Start Slow and Grow; this is an opportunity for learning new techniques while implementing the hybrid model, which blends face-to-face instruction in schools with highly engaging distance learning. We will do the best to meet the needs of our students during this challenging time in education. By grade level and department, continue to review the GPS curriculum; identifying the scope of what needs to be taught in each unit, compacting curriculum and focusing on priority standards. Flexibility is very important as each student has varying levels of support at home. By giving extensions, modifying assignments, and connecting with your students to see what supports are needed, you encourage more engagement in learning. Know that the Board of Education, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, Administration, colleagues, students, and families are greatly appreciative of your hard work and dedication in providing the highest quality of learning during these challenging times.