

GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

300 GARRISON FOREST ROAD • OWINGS MILLS, MARYLAND 21117

Dear parents,

We wanted to take a moment to extend our sincere thanks to all of you for your patience, flexibility and dedication to ensuring a safe return to school. We have been so impressed by the way our students not only adjusted to the new guidelines but truly jumped into the school year with spirit and enthusiasm. It's been wonderful to hear laughter and see our campus come back to life. Whether you are completing the Magnus Daily Health Screening app each day or ensuring your child is prepared and engaged in virtual learning, we are thankful. We couldn't have managed this without your support and partnership, and we look forward to continuing that as the year progresses. We cannot stress enough how important timely communication and accurate reporting, including the daily health screening, is to keeping our community safe and our campus open.

GFS Travel Policy Update

We continue to evaluate our policies and guidelines to ensure they're in the best interest of our entire community; in that spirit, and in consultation with health professionals, we are making the following change to the GFS travel policy: starting today, if you travel to a state with a positivity rate above 10%—meaning, 11% or higher, as recorded by the CDC—you must take a PCR COVID-19 test within 72 hours of your return to Maryland, or quarantine for 14 days. Rapid tests will not be accepted. This loosens the previous requirement of testing or quarantining for any out of state travel. You can see up-to-date information about which states fall into this category on the [CDC's website](#). (Note that Virginia and D.C. are exempted from this requirement, per the State of Maryland.)

We hope this update is helpful as you begin to plan your holiday travel. We also encourage you to read through this [advice from the CDC regarding the upcoming holidays](#) and Thanksgiving in particular: "Thanksgiving is a time when many families travel long distances to celebrate together. [Travel](#) increases the chance of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. If you must travel, be informed of the [risks involved](#)."

Though we are choosing to broaden these restrictions at this time, please note that we may need to modify them again if we are seeing concerning activity within our community. We still ask you to make safe decisions, use your best judgement, and err on the side of caution when traveling; if you are concerned about a potential exposure at any point, you should remain off campus until you can be tested, and notify us immediately at COVID@gfs.org. And, of course, we ask that everyone continue adhering to common sense safety measures such as mask wearing, practicing social distancing, washing hands regularly, avoiding large crowds (including friends and family gatherings) and staying home when you are sick. Together, we can ensure that our community stays healthy and our campus stays open.

GFS COVID Dashboard

In addition, we have created a COVID dashboard to allow our parents, faculty and staff to see any active COVID cases within our community, as well as the number of community members quarantining due to known exposures in each division. View it at [gfs.org/coviddashboard](https://www.gfs.org/coviddashboard); password: . This resource will be updated regularly.

Thank you again for your support and diligence in keeping our community healthy. We know the beginning of this year has had its challenges, but we are proud of how our families and students are supporting the school and one another. We are truly #TogetherGFS.

Warmly,

Chris Hughes
Head of School

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Director, GFS Health Center



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