



GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

P.O. Box K, Groton, Connecticut 06340 • 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, Connecticut 06355
PHONE (860) 572-2100 • FAX (860) 572-2107

August 19, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We welcome back our students and staff to a new school year that promises to get back to “better than normal.” Groton Public Schools will be providing full in-person learning starting September 7, 2021 for grades 1 - 12, and September 13th for our Preschool, PK and Kindergarten students. Faculty and staff will engage students in high quality instruction and accelerated learning, following Groton Public Schools’ curriculum, instruction, and assessment plans. Some of the best practices and highest levels of engagement come when teachers and students can synchronize teaching and learning face-to-face, and when they connect with one another. There will be no full remote learning unless a student is quarantined with COVID-19 or in case of emergency school closings by using their Learning Management System to access their work.

Health and safety, both physical and emotional, are a top priority for me and all Groton Public Schools’ educators and board members. Our school-based health centers and school nurses serve as an excellent resource for both physical and mental health, along with our school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists. If parents have any concerns, please reach out to the teacher, administrator or any of our health providers. GPS will continue to follow the State Health Department’s (CDC) and Ledge Light Health District’s (LLHD) guidelines on health and safety, as well as Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recommendations.

At this time, safe practices for in-person learning, as strongly recommended by the CDC, LLHD, and CSDE, include (see more info at www.grotonschools.org):

- Consistent and correct wearing of masks for all persons, vaccinated or unvaccinated
- Physical distancing, three feet when feasible
- Practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Frequent cleaning of high touch areas will be performed
- Daily self-monitoring your symptoms and consulting your doctor when you or someone you live with is ill - has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, or new loss of taste or smell. If you are ill, please contact the Principal or school nurse for guidance prior to coming into school.
- Contact tracing will occur if a COVID-19 case exists in a school
- Following quarantine guidance for students and staff who are identified as close contacts

The health and well-being of our students, families, and staff will continue to be our priority as we return to school and provide high quality education for everyone. Therefore, we are limiting visitors in our schools at this time.

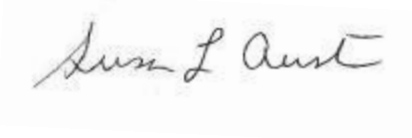
With a dynamic district like Groton, we will lean into the established initiatives this school year, as we work to get back to “better than normal.” An important aspect of the Groton 2020 Plan was to have an International Baccalaureate campus on the top of Fort Hill with Groton Middle School and Fitch High

School. In addition, we open our doors at the two new elementary schools; Mystic River Magnet and Thames River Magnet launching an all intra-district magnet program at the elementary level. This will be actualized even more this year with a two-tier bus system, bringing GMS and FHS students to the campus together with new start and end times (see schedule below), and AB schedules that mirror one another. This bus system will provide ample time for the elementary magnet school runs as well.

SCHOOL	START TIME	END TIME
Fitch High School	7:40 a.m.	2:22 p.m.
Groton Middle School	7:55 a.m.	2:35 p.m.
Elementary Schools	9:00 a.m.	3:35 p.m.

Enjoy these last few weeks of summer, and look for more information coming your way from your school principal.

Best Wishes,



Susan L. Austin
Superintendent
Groton Public Schools