

Groton Public Schools (GPS) Full In-person Re-opening of Schools

2021 – 2022

Accelerated Learning Plan

“Going back to Better than Normal; taking lessons learned to enhance and engage learning”

Groton Public Schools (GPS) will provide full in-person learning PK-12 at the beginning the school year for FY22, per CDC, CSDE, and LLHD guidance. There will be no full remote learning, unless a student is quarantined with COVID-19, or in case of emergency school closings. GPS will continue to follow the State Health Department’s (CDC) and Ledge Light Health District (LLHD) guidelines on health and safety, as well as Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recommendations. Faculty and staff will engage students in high quality instruction and accelerated learning, following GPS 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.

Highlights of the GPS FY 22 In-Person Learning Plan:

The major shift in the GPS FY22 Learning Plan is to teach all of our students in person, and only move to remote learning in case of quarantine due to COVID-19 or if the school needs to close due to an emergency. Our goal is to have real time engagement and less screen time for all students. With our motto *“Going Back to Better than Normal,”* we believe in growing relationships, taking care of social emotional learning, re-establishing routines and expectations at school, and reviewing health protocols. We also believe in engaging students in rigorous and relevant academic lessons in-person, accelerating learning, and reducing screen time. GPS Management Systems (LMS: SeeSaw PK-2, Google Classroom grades 3-8, or Schoology grades 9-12) should be used for the purpose of communicating and organizing assignments and homework, while monitoring student participation and work completion.

Attendance

- Students will attend school for full in-person lessons unless they are ill or have an excused absence.
- At the secondary level, attendance will be monitored daily and by period in accordance to the district attendance policy for in-person learners. If a student is not present at school, they will be marked as absent, according to the district policy.
- At the elementary level, attendance will be monitored daily, in the morning and afternoon, in accordance to the district attendance policy for in-person learners. If a student is not present at school, they will be marked as absent, according to the district policy.
- Quarantined students will be moved to remote learning for the period of quarantine only.
- Quarantined remote learner attendance will be monitored daily using attendance in Zoom mini lessons, check-ins, and/or completion of required assignments.
- District policy for vacations will also be in effect, and students will be marked absent if they are on vacation.

Communications

- Clear, concise, and timely information will be communicated to students, staff, and families from Central Office and the schools on a regular basis.
- For communication and organization purposes, teachers and school administrators should continue to use learning management systems (LMS) such as SeeSaw, Google Classroom, or Schoology, as well as GPS email, GPS website, Remind, PowerSchool, and SchoolMessenger.
- Students can check the LMS system for work assignments.

Remote learning for students due to COVID-19 quarantine or school closure (emergency):

- An assigned building substitute will provide mini lessons that can be accessed by quarantined remote learners on Zoom (or other livestreaming technology). Students will also receive communications and assignments through the LMS, supported by their building substitute teacher, a tutor, an interventionist, and/or their teacher.
- Remote learning can be a blend of asynchronistic and synchronistic learning. The use of exemplar lessons, like those from Teachers' College Reading Writing Project, Khan Academy, Mystery Science, etc. can also be utilized for both in-person and remote learners.

Health and Safety

Health and safety, both physical and emotional, are a top priority for all Groton Public Schools educators and board members. School-based health and our school nurses serve as an excellent resource for both physical and mental health, along with our school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists. Social emotional learning is a key ingredient to schooling. If parents have any concerns, please reach out to the teacher or administrator or any of our health providers. With the return of full in-person learning at the start of FY 22, the following protocols will be utilized:

Safe Practices for In-Person Learning per updated CDC and state guidelines should include:

- Consistent and correct wearing of masks for all persons, vaccinated or unvaccinated, as strongly recommended by the CDC, LLHD, and CSDE
- Physical distancing when feasible
- Students may work in groups and share materials with safety measures
- Practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Frequent cleaning of high touch areas will be performed
- Monitor your symptoms and consult 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
- Contact tracing will occur if a COVID-19 case exists in a school; per CDC and state guidelines
- Follow quarantine guidance for students and staff who are identified as close contacts per CDC

- Follow self-isolation guidance for students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19

If parents have any concern, please reach out to the teacher or administrator or any of our health providers.

U.S. Department of Health Services: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on PK-12 Education Health and Safety in Schools

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>