



COVID-19 Parent Handbook

Gill St. Bernard's School created this action plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance has been drawn from a range of sources, most notably the [New Jersey Department of Health](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the NJDOE. The guidelines are designed to help our community promote a vibrant educational environment that is safe for our students, employees, and families.

Responding to the ever-changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic requires our school to be flexible in making real-time adjustments. The GSB Health & Safety Team continues monitoring scientific research and obtaining guidance from state and local health officials. With this, the handbook will be updated as needed, and we ask that you review it periodically for changes.

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Section 1: Guiding Principles

- I. We all share the responsibility in keeping our community safe.
- II. Our focus will be on the public health, well-being, and safety of the whole community and not on individual preferences.
- III. To achieve our goal to provide an educational experience as safely as possible, we will all be required to adjust how we conduct ourselves.
 - a. Giving each other immediate, urgent feedback.
 - b. Ensuring that we never become lax with the protocol.
 - c. Understand that we view the CDC and State guidelines as our baseline, but we are called to do more.

Section 2: Community Guidelines

GSB Mask Policy Update (March 7, 2022)

On February 7, 2022, Governor Murphy announced that masks and facial coverings will no longer be mandated for students, staff, or visitors in schools beginning March 7, 2022. Citing the “continued drop in new [COVID-19] cases and hospitalizations, projections indicating a continued decline over the coming weeks, and the continued growth of vaccinations for our school-aged population,” Governor Murphy and the NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) agreed that a responsible end to the universal mask mandate was finally possible.

Throughout the pandemic, Gill St. Bernard’s has adhered to the policies established by the NJDOH and will continue to do so. As such, GSB will become mask optional as of March 7, 2022.

While wearing masks indoors will no longer be required, community members are still welcome to wear one, if they choose. The CDC advises that properly wearing an appropriate mask slows the spread of COVID-19, especially when indoors and social distancing is not possible. Consistent with GSB’s Core Values, we support an individual’s decision to wear (or not to wear) a mask and expect that all members of our community will demonstrate respect regarding this choice. We recognize that this change may be initially awkward for some, or even uncomfortable. Nonetheless, the circumstances warrant this adjustment to our protocols.

While we are encouraged by this “huge step towards normalcy,” GSB may need to return to a universal masking requirement if mandated by the governor or if local positivity rates increase substantially. Additionally, the NJDOH expects to issue updated guidelines prior to the mask-optional protocol being implemented. As a result, our health and safety policies will continue to be revised in the future to align with any new guidance.

To promote health and safety, Gill St. Bernard's School community members must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The COVID-19 questionnaire from Magnus Health must be completed by students prior to entering campus each day. The questionnaire will be reviewed by our Health and Safety Team, with follow-up as needed.
- Face masks may be worn for protection from Covid-19. KN95 masks are recommended as the most protective mask followed by a surgical mask. GSB can provide additional disposable mask/face coverings. Bandanas and gaiters are not effective coverings. Coverings must be solid color or a simple print with no messaging on them, and images must be school-appropriate and in accordance with our dress code.
- Students or staff who are immunocompromised or live with persons at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness should be encouraged to mask. Students or staff who, for whatever reason, are concerned about disease transmission should be encouraged to mask.
- While GSB is mask-optional as of March 7, 2022, please note that masks may be recommended by the NJ Department of Health if community positive cases surge in the future.
- Recommended social distancing will be maintained in all classrooms.
- Campus access for visitors is limited. Indoor volunteer opportunities are not currently permitted. All essential guests are welcome by appointment or invitation only, and must follow our protocols through security check-ins. All at-risk visitors over the age of two should wear a mask indoors.
- Gill St. Bernard's School will conduct daily cleaning and sanitizing in accordance with CDC protocols.
- GSB will display signage regarding wellness tips throughout the buildings in key areas.

NOTE: Those GSB faculty members who teach remotely are doing so for documented medical reasons, which are accepted by the school in accordance with its policies. Due to privacy laws, the school is unable to comment further about specific details.

Isolation:

Onset of COVID-19 symptoms:

- Should you become ill or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 infection, we ask that you please not come to campus.
- If a community member has COVID-19 symptoms, the parent should email attendance@gsbschool.org to report the absence and call the school nurse. School personnel should reach out to the Director of Human Resources. The individual will need to provide the school nurse with a negative COVID-19 PCR test to be able to come back to campus or to participate in activities. The community member with COVID-19 symptoms will not participate in the GSB testing program until cleared by the nurse.

All individuals should adhere to the following precautions:

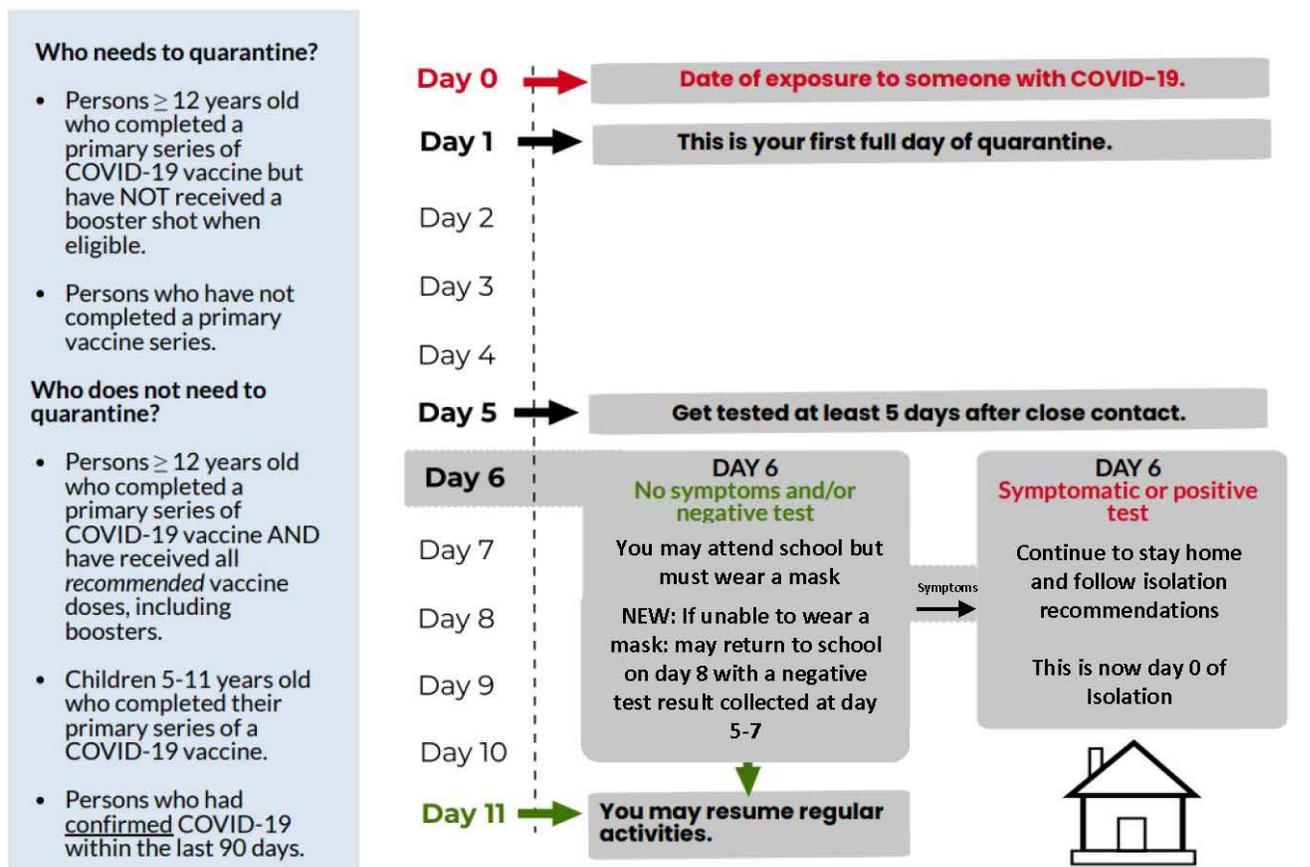
- Community members who test positive for COVID-19 will isolate at home for at least 5 days until all symptoms resolve. An individual must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. The individual may return to school on day 6 and will wear a mask at all times through day 10, with mask optional on day 11.
- MASK: Continue to wear a well-fitted mask when around others at home and in public through Day 10. For those ending isolation on Day 5, this would be during Days 6 through 10. Individuals who are unable to wear a mask when around others should stay home and isolate from other people for a full 10 days.
- TRAVEL: Avoid travel until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms or, if asymptomatic, after the date of your positive test. If travel is necessary on Days 6-10, wear a well-fitting mask when around others for the entire duration of travel. Persons unable to wear a mask should not travel during the 10 days.
- AVOID HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES: Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, including nursing homes and other high-risk settings; do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days.

Quarantine:

Primary Exposure:

Primary exposure constitutes being within 6 feet of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for fifteen minutes or more. These fifteen minutes are cumulative over a 24 hour period. In other words, they have had close exposure for a total of fifteen minutes over a longer period of time (e.g. brief, intermittent contact over a longer period of time, such as active participation in a sports match). Gill St. Bernard's will adopt the NJDOH quarantine guidelines effective Monday, January 17, 2022. These guidelines will be applied retroactively and are as follows:

- If a student is exposed to COVID-19 and is not up to date with the COVID-19 vaccination, the student is required to quarantine for 5 days and wear a mask on day 6-10 at school (indoor and outdoor), or choose to quarantine at home for 10 days.
- If a student is exposed to COVID-19 and is up to date on the COVID-19 vaccination, the student is required to wear a mask indoor and outdoor at school for 10 days or choose to quarantine at home for 10 days.



Section 3: Identifying a Sick Individual

- GSB school nurses, in conjunction with administration, will determine if any member of the community is at risk of being sick with a potential infectious disease. School nurses do not make medical diagnoses, but they will determine a nursing diagnosis and will determine the person's disposition. CDC recommends that employees or students who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work/school or become sick during the day be separated from other members of the community and be wearing a mask.
- GSB school nurses must send home any employee or student who appears to have symptoms of illness. The school nurses will notify the Director of Human Resources of any actions taken for employees. The Director of Human Resources will contact the appropriate administrators. Parents/Guardians of ill students will be contacted directly by the school nurses.
- Parents are required to provide two emergency contacts other than themselves who are available to pick up the ill child within one hour.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- Gill St. Bernard's School administration and school nurses will strive to prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace. Determinations of risk based on race, religion, gender, country of origin, or any other identifier are prohibited.

Section 4: COVID-19 Case Policy

COVID-19 is a contagious virus, which is most commonly transmitted from person to person. The virus may also be transmitted by touching an infected object or surface. At this time, it is possible that there may be other methods of transmission which are unknown by experts and health authorities. While infection control measures and personal discipline will help mitigate the risk of exposure and/or infection to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, all risks cannot be eradicated by the school.

- Gill St. Bernard's School will work with our school physician, school nurses, and the local Board of Health/CDC guidelines to maintain confidentiality when addressing and communicating about any suspected cases of COVID-19 within our school community.

- When the school becomes aware of a student or employee that has a positive test, GSB will inform the school community of their possible exposure to COVID-19 after consulting with the school physician and local Board of Health while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- GSB school nurses and the Director of Human Resources will monitor and respond to absenteeism for both students and employees, respectively.

Section 5: School Actions for Positive Cases

- After a positive case, Gill St. Bernard's School will adhere to the NJ Department of Health and the Board of Health's guidance.
- If your student tests positive, please inform the appropriate division nurse as soon as possible:
 - Laura Barback: Middle/Lower School
 - Janice Backer: Upper School
- Any student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to participate in school wide testing for 90 days. Documentation and testing status will be addressed on a case-by-case basis with the school nurse.
- The school will contact trace and determine primary contacts according to the local health department guidelines.
- The local health department may call an individual who has tested positive to determine who was a "close contact," both in the individual's household and any individuals within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes in a 24 hour period.
- Community-wide response when a case or cases occur will be dependent on a range of factors. According to the CDC's "Safe Return" guidelines, "A single case of COVID-19 in a school would not likely warrant closing the entire school, especially if levels of community transmission are not high. The levels of community transmission described above and the extent of close contacts of the individual who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 should all be considered before closing."
- GSB would base its decision on the "level of community transmission," other state and local public health metrics as indicated on this document, the guidance of the Board of Health, and other governmental and health officials.

The school's response could include the need for community members to quarantine themselves, enhanced monitoring, testing, or a shift in mode of learning. Gill St. Bernard's School will prioritize the health and safety of all its community members when making decisions about school operations.

COVID-19 Physician Clearance Information

Any GSB student who is diagnosed with COVID-19 is required to provide a note from the treating physician clearing the student to participate in physical activity. Physical activity includes, but is not limited to: team sports, intramural clubs, use of the fitness center, recess, physical education class, spirit day events, and walking to and from Home Winds Farm. It is up to the treating physician to determine if additional testing is required prior to clearance. Physician notes should clearly state the following:

"As per COVID-19 cleared for full, unrestricted physical activity."

Please do not have the physician fill in a specific sport or activity, as this will restrict the student to that one activity.

Section 6: Daily Screening Process and Student Arrival

All students entering campus will be required to complete a symptom screening questionnaire on the Magnus Mobile V2 phone app related to health status. Symptoms referred to on the screening questionnaire will include temperature, muscle aches, new loss of sense of taste or smell, sore throat, new onset of cough, new onset of headache, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain.

MAGNUS MOBILE V2 APP

Gill St. Bernard's will use the Magnus Mobile V2 app COVID-19 Questionnaire as a screening tool for all students attending school in person. Completion of the Questionnaire will also be required for school-related extracurricular activities occurring when school is not in session, such as weekends and holidays.

- We will begin using the symptom Questionnaire on Monday August 30th, 2021.
- Students **MUST** have the app completed prior to arrival. See divisional guidelines below.
- Students who are not attending school or participating in an extracurricular event that day do not have to complete the questionnaire.

- We strongly recommend that the Magnus app be downloaded to a parent/guardian phone and the Questionnaire be completed by a parent/guardian. A picture of the green "GO" screen can be sent to your student's cell phone.

Completing the Daily Magnus Health COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire

- If a green "GO" sign appears after submitting your responses, your student may attend school.
- If a red "STOP" sign appears after submitting your responses, your student may not attend school. Contact the school nurse for further instruction.
- If you MADE A MISTAKE when completing the questionnaire and you receive a red "STOP" sign, you can edit your response.

STUDENT ARRIVAL

Lower School Arrival (PreSchool - 4th grade)

- Families will display the app upon arrival during morning drop off in the upper lot entrance of Cox.
- Students arriving late will sign in at the security office in Cox and show their app upon arrival.
- Families with students in multiple divisions should drop off their students at the division of the younger student.

Middle School Arrival (5th-8th grade)

- The app will be checked by the first block faculty during attendance.
- Students arriving late will sign in with Mrs. Argobright in the Conover Middle School office and show their app upon arrival.
- For MS students who do not have phones, their parents will need to complete the app, which will be confirmed with daily Magnus reports.

Upper School Arrival

- The app will be checked by the first block faculty during attendance.
- Students arriving late will check in with Mrs. O'Leary by the Dean's offices in Hockenbury and show their app upon arrival.
- For US students who do not have phones, their parents will need to complete the app, which will be confirmed with daily Magnus reports.

Sports & Extracurricular Activities when school is not in session

- The app will be checked by the coach or club advisor upon arrival.
- For students who do not have phones, their parents will need to complete the app, which will be confirmed with daily Magnus reports.

Section 7: School Wide Health Procedures

The following guidelines reduce the transmission of illness:

Mask/Face Covering Use

- All staff and students are encouraged to wear a mask inside all buildings and on the bus, except when eating or drinking, regardless of vaccination status. Ideally, a mask with at least two layers of thickness should always be worn and cover the nose and mouth. The mask should fit properly and not fall off the face to expose the nose. Masks should not have a valve.
- Before putting on a mask, you should wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer to clean your hands.
- Masks should only be handled by the ear loops and not by the mouth/ nose piece. Place the mask around your ears while at the same time adjusting the mask with the ear loops to fit. Try not to touch any part of the mask but the ear loops.
- If you contaminate your mask, please use your backup mask and properly discard or store your mask in a Ziploc bag to take home. The nurse's office has extra masks if needed.
- While eating lunch, the mask should be placed in a paper bag.
- Plastic face shields may also be used but only in conjunction with a mask, not as a direct replacement.

Social Distancing

- All staff and students should remain 6 feet away from other individuals on campus.
- Social distancing, also called "physical distancing," means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household.
- To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Social distancing is required during school arrival and dismissal as well. Students from different households may not ride in the same car without appropriate social distancing and school notification.

Bathroom Use

- If the bathroom is in use, please wait outside the bathroom door. Please social distance in the hallway outside the bathroom.

A Clean Versus a Dirty Workspace

- All staff members and students must develop a clean space for their work environment. This clean space requires a clean working area with sanitized personal items that are only touched by the individual. A student or staff member should not enter this clean space without having washed or sanitized their hands. No individual should enter the clean workspace of another.
- Staff and students may use gloves to clean dirty spaces or spaces in between student use. Please watch the video regarding mask and glove donning. Hands should be washed or sanitized before putting on and after taking off gloves.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVJbenwzR1s#action=share>

- Staff and students will wash their desks and high touch areas between classes. Please watch the cleaning videos.

<https://vimeo.com/450251383/75c2db6c32>

<https://vimeo.com/450251342/abba30ad4d>

- Students may drink water during class while in their clean workspace. When taking a drink of water the mask should be removed via the ear loop on one side. When the individual is finished with their drink of water, he or she can replace the ear loop.

Handwashing/Hand Sanitizer of Greater than 60 Percent Alcohol

- Hands should be washed as often as possible. If handwashing is not available, hand sanitizer should be used. The hands should never touch the face.
- Students should clean their hands when entering, exiting, transitioning between classrooms, after using the restroom, and other times they encounter high-touch surfaces.
- Hand hygiene should take place:
 - Upon arrival at school.
 - Before and after meals and snacks.
 - After going to the bathroom.
 - Before leaving for the day.
 - After blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing into tissue.
 - When hands are visibly soiled.

- Hand washing should last for at least 20 seconds, using soap, water, and as much friction as possible. Assist/observe young children to ensure proper handwashing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZw4Ga3jg3E&feature=youtu.be>

- When using hand sanitizer, you should cover the complete surface of your hands, use the rub method, and allow the hand sanitizer to dry on your hands. Hand sanitizer should be used after touching doorknobs and anything outside your clean space.

Sharing Objects

- The use of shared supplies and equipment will be limited.
- Teachers will ensure there are adequate supplies (i.e. art supplies, equipment) to minimize sharing of high-touch materials or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of students at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Students should avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, games, or other learning aids. If items must be shared, clean and disinfect between uses.

Recognizing Symptoms of Illness in Students

- Students should not be coming to school if they are showing any signs of sickness. Quarantine and isolation guidelines are to be followed by everyone on campus.
- Completion of the Magnus Health phone app COVID-19 Symptom Questionnaire will be required for all students attending school and school functions.
- Our school nurse will be called if a teacher observes any of these scenarios:
 - A student complains of any symptoms of COVID-19, including difficulty breathing, chills, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, or body aches. If congestion or coughing is excessive or out of the norm.
 - A student shows signs of not feeling well, such as listlessness or labored breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, inability to stay awake or bluish lips or face.
 - A student showing signs of chills or being cold in a temperate environment.

Physical Education

- Physical Education classes will be held outdoors whenever possible. Students should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- At-risk students who are not participating in Physical Education classes held inside should wear a face mask.

Elevators

- Only one individual may use the elevator at a time, and the nurse will be contacted if assistance is needed.

Isolation Areas Beyond the Nurse's Office

- Lower School - Room 214 in Cox
- Upper School - Room HK101 in Hockenbury
- The Quiet Room in Hillard, if needed.

Attendance

- Attendance will be cross referenced with the Magnus Health app COVID-19 Symptom Questionnaire.
- Upper School
 - If a student is unable to attend school on a particular day, a parent or guardian must e-mail attendance@gsbschool.org, or call/email Ms. O'Leary in the Office of Student Life at ext. 456 before 7:30 a.m. With the full cooperation of all families, the school will be able to establish an accurate attendance. This is an important safety measure which families must support.
- Middle School & Lower School
 - If a student is unable to attend school on a particular day, a parent or guardian should email attendance@gsbschool.org between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m.

Overnight Travel

- As we begin the process of resuming those upper school programs which include or may include overnight travel and in particular, Spring Athletic Trips and the Spring Unit, please know that proof of COVID-19 vaccination will be required for all participants. Vaccination proof must be uploaded into the Magnus Health app prior to the trip.
- This decision was made for several reasons. For trips that include airline travel, those who test positive for COVID-19 would be unable to fly. In such a situation, a GSB staff member may not be able to supervise a student required to isolate. Additionally, overnight trips frequently put students in shared living spaces, and they may be unmasked at times. As vaccinated individuals are less likely to become infected with COVID-19 if they are exposed to the virus, and have different requirements for quarantine, this policy is necessary to ensure the health and safety of the participants as well as mitigate risk.

COVID-19 Vaccination

As the CDC continues to expand the population for those eligible for vaccination, we will provide regular updates on the GSB vaccination policy. Gill St. Bernard's recommends that all those eligible receive a COVID-19 vaccination; however, parents should first consult with their child's pediatrician.

COVID-19 vaccinations have not been added to our list of required immunizations and at this time we do not plan to do so, unless the State of New Jersey determines otherwise. In the event this occurs, state law currently allows for certain exemptions including medical and religious ones.

Section 8: Transportation

Daily Routes - Both Mendham Township and Belair Transport are following the federal, state and local guidelines to include but are not limited to, driver's wearing mask/face covering, buses disinfected with EPA approved products after each run, and temperature checks of the drivers when they arrive at the terminals.

- Students will be asked to have their temperature taken at home and do not ride the bus if they have any of the following symptoms.
 - Fever or Chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- Students will be asked to load the bus from the back to the front. Siblings will sit in the same seat and when possible, one student to a seat.
- When students arrive on campus, they will report to their first period block in normal fashion for attendance and to show their green "GO" screen.

Late Bus Routes

- Students must sign up for the late bus through the online form each week.
- Parents should register their child by Sunday night for the following week. When signing up, please choose a route, a stop, and the days the student will be riding.
- No student will be allowed on a late bus without prior sign up.
- Students will check in with a Gill St. Bernard's staff member prior to getting on a bus.
- Students will load each bus from back to front.

Section 9: Virtual Learning

2020-2021 was an extraordinary year, and it was appropriate for us to make exceptions to our academic virtual learning policies. This year, we seek to restore as much of the regular program as possible. Knowing that teaching and learning are most effective in person, there are two circumstances in which GSB students may attend classes virtually:

COVID-19

Any student who is quarantined by the school for illness due to COVID-19 or is quarantined due to close exposure determined through contact tracing, may participate in GSB classes virtually after consultation with our school nurse and the Division Director.

Global Classroom Program

Students who have applied for, been approved, and enrolled in the Global Classroom Program will be allowed to participate in GSB classes virtually with the permission of the Division Director. These competitive, high level extracurricular activities that require a planned, extended absence from the GSB campus may include horseback riding, golf, and/or skiing.