

Great Falls Public Schools- District 1A

Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

Date of Adoption: May 10, 2021

Updates: Nov. of 22, May of 2023

Revision Dates:

Board Policies: 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1903F, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1906P, 1907, 1908, 1908F, 1909, 1910, 1911

SAFETY MEASURES

The District is taking the following measures to safely provide in-person instruction, including consideration of guidance by the CDC and state and local health officials as follows:

Universal and correct wearing of masks

GFPS implemented a strong universal mask policy for the 2020-2021 school year. The masking protocols and procedures will continue as staff continues to offer summer school and extended school year programs to students. As of June 7th, 2021 GFPS has allowed for staff who are socially distanced to not wear face masks. As GFPS prepares for the 2021-2022 school year, we will look to further guidance from the CDC and Montana Department of Health and Human Services. Per our 2020-2021 reopening plan, if we continue in a “green zone” with regards to low community rates of COVID, GFPS will possibly move from masks required to masks encouraged. We will continue to utilize masking when working closely with immunocompromised or other at risk student groups with chronic health conditions. The CDC does allow for vaccinated individuals to participate in activities of daily living without mask use and we will explore how we may adopt this within Great Falls Public Schools in a safe and reasonable manner.

In November of 2022 universal mask wearing ended for GFPS.

Physical Distancing

In the 2020-2021 school year, Great Falls Public Schools utilized recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (and later reinforced by the CDC) to facilitate 3-6 feet of social distancing for students in classrooms, lunch rooms, and other common areas. Elementary and middle school students were in grade level cohorts and high schools implemented block schedules. As we prepare for the 2021-2022 school year, the district will continue to encourage 3-6 feet of social distancing in classrooms and will mandate seating charts for assistance with potential contact tracing. Visual reminders that were

implemented in 2020-2021, such as 6-foot markers on floors and posters on walls, will also continue. In November of 2022 Universal masking ended.

Plexiglass barriers have been implemented in many common areas, such as in offices and areas where physical distancing is limited, such as speech therapy intervention areas.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Hand hygiene with use of hand sanitizer is encouraged through the “gel in, gel out” motto. As students enter or exit that school or classroom setting they are prompted by staff to use hand sanitizer. Hand hygiene with hand washing is reinforced through instructional posters and school nurses offer hand washing classes at the elementary level. Various hand hygiene messaging is also encouraged through use of schoolwide announcements and posters. Posters and school nurses also reinforce proper etiquette for covering coughs and sneezes.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities (including ventilation improvement)

First Engineers/Day Custodians:

- Maintain daily duties and assigned cleaning areas (run)
- Clean and disinfect common restrooms (gang) 2 times a day, once in the morning before lunches start and one time in the afternoon before dismissal
- Clean and Disinfect high touch areas throughout the day (common areas, tables, classroom door knobs, entryway door handles (inside and outside) etc.
- Ensure that air handlers are working and scheduled to run during occupied times. Because we need adequate air flow throughout the day, a morning air purge is scheduled in the control system.
- Clean/disinfect classroom surfaces during a recess or lunch period if a teacher/student develops symptoms and is sent home.
- Clean/disinfect isolation rooms after an affected student/teacher is sent home.
- Assist with laundering of masks and microfiber cleaning cloths

Evening custodians:

- Maintain daily duties and assigned cleaning areas (run)
- Clean and disinfect all bathrooms after building is unoccupied
- When run is done, all desk tops/chairs will be sprayed using the 3M #25 disinfectant, using enough to stay wet for 10 minutes without air drying.

During non-student days all desk tops will be:

- First cleaned using green pads and microfiber cloths, a general cleaner (3m peroxide).
- Then sprayed with 3m #25 Disinfectant-enough to stay wet for 10 minutes without air drying.

Nov. 2022: All cleaning requirements in place.

June of 2023: All cleaning requirements remain in effect when necessary.

COVID Cleaning Protocols for positive case in classroom

CLEANING REQUIREMENTS

Step 1: Run Hepa filtered air machines big enough to exchange the air 12 times in one hour. (2000cft/m)
-Exhaust air to the outside where applicable.

Step 2: Use UV disinfecting lamps in conjunction with air machines for a minimum of 30 minutes. Lamps are rated for UVC spectrum with wavelength in the 240-280nm range, large enough to produce light that will cover 1200 sq. ft.

Step 3: Clean all desk top and high touch surfaces in the classroom using a mild detergent. First scraping desks with a razor blade to remove glue and other sticky contaminates, scrub the desk top using a Scotchbrite or other similar approved green pad and detergent, then wipe dry with a microfiber cloth. Microfiber cloths will be changed frequently to prevent cross contamination.

Step 4: Disinfect all desk tops, chairs and high touch surfaces using an EPA list N certified disinfectant. Follow all product labeling and adhere to labeling dwell times for proper disinfection.

Contact Tracing

In the 2020-2021 school year, the Cascade City County Health Department and the Great Falls Public Schools Nurses worked closely and tirelessly on contact tracing for anyone with a confirmed case within GFPS. In an effort to support contact tracing efforts, GFPS administrators were also deputized by CCHD and trained in contact tracing by the GFPS Lead Nurse. The GFPS Nursing Department will continue to follow the guidance of the local health department's protocols and procedures for contact tracing any confirmed communicable diseases within GFPS during the 2021-2022 school year. Seating charts and/or cohort/team rosters will continue to be mandatory to aid in contact tracing.

Contract tracing ended at the end of the 21-22 school year.

Diagnostic and Screening Testing

In regards to symptom screening and surveillance, staff and students will be continually encouraged to monitor themselves for signs of illness and stay home if they are sick. GFPS developed and

implemented a very thorough inclusion/exclusion protocol for COVID in 2020-2021 and the GFPS Nursing Department will once again work with local providers and community health officials to revise the protocol as needed for 2021-2022.

Great Falls Public Schools has utilized Alluvion Health for diagnostic testing of its staff with pre-purchased Rapid PCR testing. We will continue to refer symptomatic staff and close contacts for this testing as long as we are able to maintain a test supply.

Symptomatic students are referred to community agencies such as Alluvion Health, Benefis Health Systems, Great Falls Clinic, or Indian Family Health Services for testing or further evaluation. Close contacts are able to get tested at Alluvion Health's drive through testing site and receive test results in a timely manner.

In the 2020-2021 school year GFPS did not do any onsite testing or diagnostic screening. If this were found to be a desirable service, GFPS School Nurses would be utilized to implement testing, most likely with Binax NOW tests available through MTDPHHS.

Testing for Covid at the district level ended in June of 2022.

Vaccinations

The District will act in accordance with state and federal law with respect to vaccinations for its staff and eligible students. Great Falls Public Schools has hosted several clinics for staff and community members by allowing Alluvion Health to utilize space during afterschool hours in our buildings. Teachers were allowed to participate in these clinics at the end of their duty day. GFPS has advertised for vaccine clinics for community members 12 years old and above through flyers sent home and social media messages. The District will continue to explore opportunities with Alluvion Health and other community partners such as Benefis Health System, Great Falls Clinic, and Cascade City-County Health Department to promote vaccination.

The District will not refuse, withhold from, or deny a person any services, goods, facilities, advantages, privileges, licensing, educational opportunities, health care access, or employment opportunities based on a person's vaccination status.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

The District will provide accommodations to its policies for students with disabilities as determined appropriate based upon the individual student needs and in accordance with an individual accommodation plan or individualized education plan. Students requiring accommodations should contact Lance Boyd, Director of Student Services in Great Falls Public Schools to request information on plans for students with disabilities.

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

The District will provide for continuity of services as follows:

[Strategic Plan for Reintegration, Reengagement, and Remediation: 2021-2022 School Year](#)

Strategic Plan for 2022-2023: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.gfps.k12.mt.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1408&dataid=32430&FileName=2022-2023%20Strategic%20Plan%20for%20web.pdf

Strategic Plan for 2023-2024: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.gfps.k12.mt.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1408&dataid=34044&FileName=2023-2024%20Strategic%20Plan%20for%20web.pdf

Student Academic Needs

Great Falls Public Schools believes that we should have comprehensive systems of support in place to ensure that Students achieve the highest levels of academic growth.

- **GOAL:** The district will develop clear goals for student learning and will focus instruction and assessment on the knowledge and essential skills necessary for citizenship, career and/or college readiness, as measured by academic achievement data at each grade level as well as graduation rates.
 - 1. Identify and focus on loss of learning for specific individuals and subgroups significantly impacted by COVID-19.
 - Assess students and analyze data
 - Identify the necessary skills and standards
 - Identify best practices
 - Develop plans
 - Monitor progress and adjust accordingly
 - Provide professional development to staff (PIR and PLC)
 - Add intervention teachers for targeted schools and/or subjects.
 - 2. Design and implement building-based, extended learning opportunities.
 - Extended Time: Extended School Year (SPED), Summer School, Saturday School, Blitzes, IEP goal remediation before/after school
 - Before/After School Programming
 - Credit Recovery Opportunities

- 3. Design a customized homebound and remote learning model to meet individual student and family needs.
 - Addition of one middle school and four high school teachers.
 - Elementary will design a customized plan to meet the needs of individual students.
- 4. Evaluate current English Language Arts standards and curriculum. Develop alignment with an evidence-based, rigorous program/resource for adoption.
 - Provide researched based programs for Special Education Resource 1,2,3 Classrooms
 - Identify varied programs that differentiate instruction at each level.
- 5. Implement a district-wide professional development plan that addresses the achievement gap through the lens of fairness and respect for all students.
 - Evaluate the structures and practices within our buildings
 - Engage all staff that have contact with students
 - Roll plan out to District Directed PIR 2022-2023

Student Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

The District believes that a comprehensive educational environment addresses the health, safety, and social/emotional needs of all students and staff.

- **GOAL: The District will implement strategies/practices to address the social and emotional needs of students and staff, and the identified environmental (health and safety) factors in school buildings, while monitoring the health of all throughout the 2021/2022 school year.**
 - 1. Identify students/families who are disengaged or at risk of disengagement.
 - 2. Design and implement processes and staff training to support Summer-Kid Connections (K-6) / Home visits (7-12), to include other District departments (Indian Education, Homeless Liaisons, Student Services, etc.) and applicable, diverse community partners.
 - 3. Design and implement summer and fall engagement activities for all at the individual school level.
 - 4. Provide professional development designed to train personnel to facilitate re-engagement activities.
 - 5. Design and develop a sustainable school-based mental health program, to address the needs of students/families in all schools.
 - Provide staff member(s) to help coordinate collaboration with the mental health and medical community and other partners to provide these connections.
 - 6. Each school will develop, implement and monitor a social-emotional learning plan that addresses the adverse effects of COVID-19 on staff and students.
 - This may require consulting and professional development on social-emotional/mental health to include summer meetings for goal setting.
 - 7. Create learning environments in schools and classrooms that are respectful and nurturing, supported by all GFPS staff.
 - Evaluate the structures and practices within our buildings.
 - Incorporate all staff that have contact with students.
 - Administrators and Admin Assistants: PD Fall 2021

- District Directed PIR focus 2022-2023
- 8. The district will retain school-based nurses.
 - Revise COVID-19 health and safety protocols for school year 2021/2022
Screen for symptomatic students and staff
 - Monitor health care plans and support 504 plans
 - Support plans for immune-compromised students, staff and families
 - Implement a secure medical record system

Other Student Needs –Food Service and Transportation

- **Transportation:**

- Parents are encouraged to transport students whenever it is feasible to do so. Students will be assigned seats according to the recommended standards.
- Open seats between family groups and students when possible.
- Masks will be worn at all times.
- Use hand sanitizer when students are getting on and off bus.
- Sanitize and clean buses after all routes completed in am and pm.

- **Food Service:**

- Students will be kept in cohort groups for cafeteria meal service and dining. Routines and procedural expectations will be taught with intention within content classes to accommodate physical distancing and safe practices.
- Students and staff will be required to wear face coverings while in line.
- Touchless ID entry for students will be implemented.
- Staff will maintain cleanliness of tables and seats between meal periods.
- Students and staff will maintain food allergy awareness and protocols.

Staff Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

- **Employee Assistance Program for all GFPS Staff:**

- Focus on wellness and self-care events to help support schools and colleagues.
- Employees and family members can have 8 free visits with mental health providers and with an option for telehealth.
- Free additional mental/emotional health support for employees enrolled on district insurance plan.
- Articles, blogs, websites sent out to staff and promoted through wellness committee.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public comment was received and offered to our board and our community on:

- April 27, 2020; May 1, 2020; May 18, 2020- Board Meetings where public comment was received.
- April 14, 2021- Board Work Session
- April 16 – May 7 of 2021- Website, School Board Meetings, Superintendent Email
- Superintendent Moore reviewed plan with Community Advisory Panel on April 21, 2021
Superintendent Moore reviewed plan with PTA Advisory Panel on April 30, 2021.
- IPAC Committee had plan gone through with them on April 21, 2021, and May 13, 2021 by Indian Education Director Dugan Coburn.
- The Great Falls Public School Board adopted the Strategic Plan on May 10, 2021.
- The Plan for Safe Return/ Continuity will be reviewed at school board meeting on June 14, 2021
- Community Advisory Counsel met on: June 1, 2022; August 8, 2022, November 12, 2022
- 2/2- Student Wellness and Mental Health Forum
- 3/9- Townhall Community Budget Meeting
- 3/15- Board Budget meeting
- 4/13- Community Forum on School Safety and Community wellness
- 4/26- Board work session on Strategic Plan for 23-24
- 5/22- School board meeting on final adoption of the strategic plan for 23-24

The District will review this Plan at least once every six months and will provide an opportunity for public input in association with any review of the Plan.