

Greensburg Community Schools 2023-2024 COVID 19 Handbook

**COVID 19 Back to School Handbook
Guidelines**

**Revised by Greensburg School Board
June 13, 2023**

*Developed with Guidance from the Decatur County Health
Department, Indiana Department of Health, the IDOE, and the CDC.*

Health Protocol for Schools

It is essential for the school community to work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program.

This handbook is made available to provide direction to the school community if protocol is still necessary in the fall of 2023 due to COVID-19.

State statute gives public school districts the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9).

In addition, the Decatur County Health Department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6). Greensburg Schools will work closely with the Decatur County Health Department when exclusion of students from school is necessary. We will follow much of the same protocol as we did at the end of the 22-23 school year. This document will serve as our back to school plan for 2023-2024.

Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School

Students and employees will monitor symptoms to recognize the following COVID-19-related symptoms. These symptoms will require the employee or student to stay home from school.

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Students or employees will stay home from school/work if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC Guidance that is not otherwise explained. The School Nurse will determine the days the student should stay home from school.

Possible School Closures Due to COVID 19 Surge in the Community

The Decatur County Health Department will work with the Superintendent and School Nurses to determine appropriate next steps, including whether in-person can continue or school cancellation is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

The Superintendent and the Corporation Nurses will work with the Decatur County Health Department to determine the scope (e.g., a single school, multiple schools, the full district) and the duration of the closure. These decisions will be made using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community. The recommendations may change over the course of the 2023-2024 school year and this plan will be updated accordingly.

During school closures, extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, field trips, and sporting events) may be canceled or other precautions may be necessary. During school closures, staff, students, and their families are discouraged from gathering or socializing anywhere.

During school closures, the school(s) will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

- Areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 will be closed off. A wait time may be deployed in consultation with the Decatur County Health Department before cleaning and disinfection begins to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets.
- Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. ● For disinfection, CDC recommended and EPA approved disinfectants will be used.

Hopefully, school closures will not be necessary for the 23-24 school year but we will be prepared. We ask all of our school community to work with us through this process. Hope is not a plan.

Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Non-students

Mask-wearing requirements will be consistent with state and local guidelines. The following guidelines will be in place:

- **Effective for the start of the 23-24 school year masks are not required. This applies to all faculty, all staff, all vendors, all contractors, all volunteers, and all visitors.**

If we are required to wear masks by state or federal mandates:

- Masks will be provided at no charge by the school district.

- There may be situations when social distancing can be observed; therefore, masks may not be required.
- All faculty, all staff, all vendors, all contractors, all volunteers, and all visitors are required to wear a face covering or a face shield while on a school bus or other sponsored mode of transportation unless otherwise exempted by law.
- Exceptions for face coverings or face shields include the following:
 - During recess periods provided social distancing can be maintained;
 - If engaging in strenuous physical activity or if social distancing can be achieved and maintained when not engaging in strenuous activity;
 - While eating or drinking;
 - Faculty and staff may remove his or her face covering or face shield, other than to prepare food or meals, if she/he can maintain three feet of social distance;
 - Any person with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability may not wear a face covering or face shield;
 - Any person who is deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
 - Any person who is in a swimming pool and who can maintain three feet of social distancing.

Wearing Masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Students

Mask-wearing requirements will be consistent with state and local guidelines. If masks are mandated by federal or state agencies governing the schools then masks must be worn to attend any school function including classes. **This will reduce the need to quarantine close contacts wearing masks.** The following guidelines will be in place:

- **Effective 23-24 school year and continuing until rescinded or modified by federal or state mandates all students in grades Pre K-12, regardless of age, are not required to wear a face covering or a face shield while physically present in any building, facility or grounds at all times unless otherwise exempted by law**
- Exceptions for face coverings or face shields if required include the following:
 - During recess periods provided social distancing can be maintained;
 - If engaging in strenuous physical activity or if social distancing can be achieved and maintained when not engaging in strenuous activity;

- While eating or drinking;
- Any person with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability may not wear a face covering or face shield;
- Any person who is deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- Any person who is in a swimming pool and who can maintain six feet of social distancing.
- All students regardless of age or grade are not required to wear a face covering or a face shield while on a school bus or other-sponsored mode of transportation unless otherwise mandated by law.
- Any student may wear any mask they choose as long as the design meets school standards.
- Additional accommodations will be made for students based on their individual health plan. Classroom environments where students work closely in cooperative learning groups (like a lab setting) will be expected to wear a mask.
- Greensburg Schools will provide all students with a mask and the student should keep the mask clean. Students are encouraged to bring a mask from home.
- If a student has medical issues that result in the student not being able to wear a mask we will handle those issues individually.

Clinical Space COVID-19 Symptomatic

Each school building has a health clinic for daily medication and routine health issues. Any student or non-student experiencing COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated outside of the traditional health clinic and will be provided with a mask and monitored until a parent can pick up the student.

Only essential staff assigned to the room may enter. A record will be kept of all persons who enter the room and the room will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Strict social distancing is required and staff must wear appropriate PPE.

Preventative Screening Measures

The current CDC guidelines recommend that employees and students with COVID-19 related symptoms stay home. Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. All students and employees are required to self-screen before coming to school. Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without being otherwise explained, are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately.

Before reporting to work or school each morning, all students and staff are required to conduct self-screening which includes the following:

- 1. The individual will confirm she/he does not have the following combined NEW symptoms :**
 - **A fever of 100.4° F or greater**
 - **Cough**
 - **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
 - **Chills**
 - **Repeated shaking with chills**
 - **Muscle pain and fatigue**
 - **Sore throat**
 - **New loss of taste or smell**
 - **Nausea or vomiting**
2. Confirm that the individual has not been in close contact (within 3 feet for more than 15 minutes) with anyone confirmed with COVID-19.
3. If the answer is YES to any of the questions, the individual should NOT report to work or school, and instead should begin quarantine, contact their medical health provider and the school. The return to work protocols will be followed.

Some people can be infected with COVID-19, but show no signs of illness even though they are contagious and can spread the disease to others. It is also unknown how contagious people are the day or two before they begin to exhibit illness symptoms. Thus, these employees or students may be present at school, will show no signs of illness, but be capable of transmitting the disease to others. In these situations, the most important mitigation strategies are social distancing, frequent handwashing, avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth and appropriate PPE.

These key times for handwashing will include a modified class pattern to maintain the best opportunities possible while maintaining distancing between students and include:

- During passing periods
- During Breakfast and Lunch
- After recess
- After using the restroom

- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment

Contact Tracing / Reporting Positive COVID-19 Cases

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, the district will follow direction from the local Public Health Department. This may include closing a classroom, school or schools for a period of time and/or shifting quickly to eLearning at home for students who are impacted.

It will also be important to school nurses that records are kept concerning the location of students, the rooms they occupy, who they are in close contact with (sitting next to, locker location, who they ride to school with, who they eat with) for purpose of contact tracing. This will assist the nurses with quickly identifying and contacting individuals who may have been exposed. Many of our new procedures are designed to support contact tracing should a confirmed case occur. A student or teacher who tests positive for COVID-19 could infect others around them before they are aware of their condition. Tracing their path and potential contacts with other people is important in the prevention of further viral transmissions. Students will have assigned seating on the bus, in the classroom and in the cafeteria. Staff are required to maintain social distancing at all times if practical.

School faculty should maintain social distancing at all times (including breaks and lunch time).

If the student or staff member is onsite when the diagnosis is revealed, he/she immediately should be isolated in an enclosed space. The employee or student will be advised to seek medical attention and to leave the building immediately. The employee or student will be asked to identify anyone that s/he has been in close contact with. **This means being within approximately 3 feet of a person for more than 15 minutes within the last 48 hours of the onset of symptoms.** Those identified will be informed of the potential exposure and may be requested to quarantine subject to local health department guidance. The district will not disclose the identity of the individual with the confirmed case. The school will notify parents and staff that a case has been identified in that school.

Social Distancing in the School Environment

Social Distancing strategies will be deployed across Greensburg Schools to the extent possible. **If the spread of COVID is community wide we may enforce social distancing in our schools.** These protocols may evolve as more information is obtained.

Social distancing will not be possible at all times while attending school in person. It is important to understand that three-foot social distancing barriers are not possible at all times in the school setting. Students and staff will be encouraged to socially distance whenever possible and maximize distance between themselves in situations less than three feet.

School Transportation

The school bus is often the student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. We are paying particular attention to protocols used in student transportation to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect both students and employees. Bus drivers are in short supply so to protect them the seat behind the driver will remain empty.

Cleaning and Inspection of all buses and transport vehicles has taken place. The following are additional considerations:

- Parents may transport children to and from school as they feel most comfortable
- Assigned seats on buses, siblings sit together
- All staff self-screen each day before starting routes
- Parents are to conduct health screening prior to placing students on the bus.
- All bus seats and student areas will be sprayed using a CDC and local health agency approved cleaning solution before each route, both morning and afternoon.
- Bus is cleaned and disinfected between each route
- Field trips may be cancelled. This will be reviewed for 23-24 school year.
- Students will wash hands or utilize hand sanitizer upon arrival at school
- Student drop off and pickup should avoid the gathering of large groups
- **Students must wear school appropriate masks during all bus rides as required by state agencies. If we are not mandated to wear masks then we will not require masks. NO MASKS REQUIRED.**
- Affected buses can be used immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- Custodial-arranged, reimbursable transportation for McKinney-Vento, foster, and medically fragile students is possible for those able to transport McKinney-Vento out of district homeless, foster, or medically placed students.
- Students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 must be picked up from school. They will not be allowed to ride the bus home.

Food Service

- The cafeteria will be the primary space used for food service delivery. Meals may be served in classrooms or in alternative areas in an effort to reduce cafeteria capacity.

- All students wash hands prior to breakfast and lunch
- Hand sanitizer is provided for students and staff
- **Food service staff may be required to wear masks as they prepare and serve food.**
- Assigned seating in the lunchroom or students assigned as groups to tables to support cohorting and tracing when possible.
- Disposable plates and utensils are utilized where possible
- Cafeteria is cleaned between each meal service
- If a student brings their lunch to school, they should include all necessary utensils, condiments, napkins, etc.
- Sneeze guards/plastic shield will be installed in cafeteria serving lines to reduce contamination
- Students should pay charges online when possible

Recess

- Recess times are staggered to limit large congregations of students
- Hand washing or sanitizing prior to and after recess
- Equipment is cleaned daily

Classrooms

- Desks will be spread apart in the classroom a minimum of 3 feet where possible.
- Assigned seating is required
- Seating charts are maintained
- All desks may have to face the same direction
- Minimize the use of shared supplies and materials.
- Water fountains are closed. Students can use water filling stations.
- Hand sanitizer or soap and water will be made available throughout the buildings.

Field Trips and School Bus Rentals

All field trips are subject to cancellation for 2023-2024. This policy will be reviewed in as needed. **Field trips are currently scheduled.**

Extra-curricular activities that take place during the school year may use school transportation.

Greensburg school buses (including activity buses) are available for rental to outside agencies during the school year 2023-2024.

Educational Instruction Plan

Traditional in-person classroom instruction will be provided with traditional bus service at all schools in Greensburg Schools for students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Greensburg Schools will not offer online instruction in the 23-24 school year. There will be no POA (Pirate Online Academy).

In the event of a quarantine period or school closure, students in Greensburg Schools will be expected to continue the educational process through the combined support of teachers, instructional assistants, and technology. **Greensburg Schools will utilize remote learning during any quarantine period or school closure.**

All work completed during the traditional school day is expected to be completed if a student is enrolled in the remote learning format. Grading expectations will be clearly communicated by the teacher for in person and remote learning. Changes to the grading expectations will be governed by the building principals.

Student and Staff Attendance

A student in Greensburg Schools who is absent from school due to COVID-19 related symptoms will be recorded as a student illness/medical absence. If a student is not ill but circumstances require the student to quarantine, the student's attendance will be recorded as "quarantine absence".

An absence due to quarantining will be considered an "excused" absence from school. If the student is able to participate in virtual learning while quarantining, the student's attendance will be recorded as "virtual attendance."

Attendance bonuses and reward programs will be suspended to avoid encouraging employees and students to come to school when they are sick. Students who are out of school for an extended period of time due to COVID-19 (individuals who have tested positive, individuals who have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positive, or individuals who are symptomatic) will be required to utilize remote learning to meet attendance requirements. Remote learning guidelines can be adjusted based on the needs of each student. **Students need to be aware of the building requirements relating to online learning.**

Additional Infection Control Strategies

- P.E., choir, band, and other large classes will deploy strategies to maximize the delivery of content while simultaneously reducing exposure. This means that traditional PE,

choir, band, and other large class programs will use different structures for course delivery than have previously been used.

- Assemblies, registrations, orientations, round-ups, and other large gatherings will be reorganized, reformatted, or canceled.
- An increased number of recess sessions will be provided to minimize the number of students on the playground.
- Every effort will be made to increase space between students during in-person instruction (3 feet where possible).
- Classroom instruction may be moved outdoors whenever possible.
- Visitors will not be allowed during the school day unless they are providing an educational service.
- Volunteers will be limited to only individuals providing substantial educational benefits to the students and school.
- There will be no use of attendance awards or perfect attendance incentives for students. We want to work collaboratively with parents and students in an effort to reduce spread of colds and virus-related symptoms that may be symptoms of COVID-19.

If your child is sick, please keep them home and notify the school of the absence.

Exchange of Resources to and From School

Every effort should be made to reduce the amount of materials, supplies, and personal belongings going to and from school. The school will take the same efforts in consideration to reduce student exposure to high-touch, shared resources at school. **Students in grades K-12 will be expected to take their devices home daily.**

School Calendar

The Greensburg Schools 2023-2024 school-year calendar will follow the previously approved schedule. In the event a change to the school calendar is required, this proposal will be made to the Greensburg Schools Board of School Trustees for their approval. All parents/guardians will be notified of any changes to the school calendar.

Communications

We will make every effort to ensure communication is enhanced through this period of rapidly changing information. It is critical that all Parents/Guardians maintain a Skyward account. Skyward is the student management system used by Greensburg Schools. We will notify parents/guardians of verified Covid 19 cases in each building. This will be done by email or by the School Messenger phone call.

Facility Use/Rental

Greensburg Schools will monitor the application and approval process for Facility Usage/Rental of indoor spaces by outside organizations/groups. Facility Usage/Rental of outdoor spaces will still be considered and approval will be granted if our liability insurance carrier grants approval. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Special Education

Greensburg Schools will continue to communicate individual student plans with families to discuss the delivery method of instruction for students with disabilities. An appropriate platform for delivery of special education-related services will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Greensburg Schools will ensure adequate staffing is available to meet the needs of all students with individualized education plans (IEPs) within the district. Case Conferences will be scheduled as per IEP.

Medically Fragile Students

Medically fragile students are at high-risk of severe medical complications if exposed to COVID19, and therefore may be unable to attend school. Medically fragile students unable to attend school will need to be provided with educational services remotely. The determination of the services to be provided must be made by the CCC based upon the individual student's medical and educational needs. Special education and related services determined by the CCC could be provided online or in a virtual instructional format, through instructional telephone calls, or through other curriculum-based instructional activities (511 IAC 7-42-10). If the services are to be delivered through online or virtual instruction, technological competency and the need for additional assistive technology must be considered. The CCC must convene at least every 60 instructional days to review the IEP for every student unable to attend school in person (511 IAC 7-42-11).

Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities

- All State and local guidelines for group limitations will be followed
- Prior to participation, all first-time student athletes are required to have an IHSAA preparticipation physical for the upcoming school year.
- The athletic directors will create scheduling adjustments if necessary to reduce the number of events, duration, and/or participants present.

- Cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all facilities and equipment to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Contact will be limited to only contact necessary to compete as defined by IHSAA.
- Modified sportsmanship practices will be observed.
- If equipment must be shared, including sports balls, weight room facilities, non-wind instruments, etc., this equipment must be cleaned prior to use and immediately following usage.
- Water fountains will be closed. Individuals should bring their own drink from home. Water bottles will be available to those who need one.
- Spectators, media, and vendors can be present but must implement social distancing and follow established mass gathering guidelines.
- Concessions will be open, and all food handlers and cashiers will utilize appropriate PPE and only prepared, prepackaged food is available.

*On April 22, 2021 the US Department of Education released the following requirements for the **LEA Return to In-Person Instruction Plans** required to be developed by the LEA:*

1. *Seek public comment (June 13, 2023 GCS Board of Trustees meeting)*
2. *Post on a public website. (Posted on GCS website at: www.greensburg.k12.in.us)*