

Safe return to school plan update: January 3, 2022

GRAND ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT

Mask wearing now recommended and not mandatory

In response to community feedback and vaccine availability for ages 5+, on January 3, 2022, mask wearing as a layered preventative measure for COVID-19 will transition from required to recommended and supported at Grand Island Public Schools (GIPS). Other best-effort preventative measures such as staying home and getting tested when sick, contact tracing, HVAC ventilation, physical distancing where possible, and hand washing will remain in place.

In accordance with Federal law, masks will be required when riding district-provided transportation of students.

School Closures

Proactive Parent Communication:

- Parents will be notified as the medical/illness absentee rate gets closer to 5% encouraging masks and other monitoring precautions.

Building Closures:

- 8% or higher medical attributed absentee rate schoolwide may result in closure for that building.
- Prior to or following a school building closure, masks may be required until the absentee rate subsides.
- As we work closely with Central District Health Department (CDHD) to identify potential building closure procedures, we will communicate with families as early as possible to share duration forecast.



COVID-Related Classroom Closures

Cases will continue to be reviewed on the GIPS dashboard.

Elementary Schools:

- Three or more students and/or staff confirmed COVID cases per elementary classroom may result in closure for that classroom. Duration will be determined on a case-by-case basis with guidance from the CDHD.

Middle and High Schools:

- If a group of confirmed COVID cases (3 or more staff or students) is identified in a group of classes, cohorts, sports teams and the like, GIPS will work with CDHD to determine potential necessary closures by grade level or section or group for a short duration on a case-by-case basis. Duration will be determined on a case-by-case basis with guidance from the CDHD.

Classroom Exposure

Proactive Parent Communication

- Elementary School positive cases in classrooms will be communicated with those grade levels.
- Middle School and High School positive cases will be communicated to parents by updating the GIPS COVID-19 dashboard.
- Further communication regarding confirmed cases will be shared on a case-by-case basis.
- If multiple cases occur in a secondary classroom or group of students, GIPS will work with CDHD to determine an appropriate response plan.



Other Key Details:

Students and staff that are sick and/or exhibiting symptoms are encouraged to stay home.

Isolation Guidelines

All students or staff that test positive for COVID-19 will be required to follow isolation guidelines as highlighted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, individuals may return to school but must wear a mask for up to an additional 5 days.
- If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.



Quarantine Recommendation

- Staff and students that are exposed to confirmed positive cases are strongly recommended to follow quarantine guidelines as highlighted by the CDC (same as above).



Testing & Vaccine Information

- Local COVID-19 testing sites may be found at cdhd.ne.gov courtesy of the CDHD.
- Vaccine information for [kids ages 5 - 11](#) as well as [general vaccine info](#) are also available courtesy of the CDHD.



Nurse Office Visits

- Symptomatic students are required to wear a mask while in the nurse's office, isolation room, or while waiting to go home.



Staff Gatherings

- Masks are recommended for staff when attending indoor, congregate gatherings.
- Contact HR if accommodations are needed.



Events

- Mask wearing will be recommended at all GIPS events.



Disclaimer

- Please note, a scenario may arise of which we may revert back to universal masking if deemed necessary or mandated by the state or local officials.
- We will continue to move along with the pace of our community and work with our health officials as we have throughout this process to monitor, review, and adjust.