



**Safe Return to In-Person Instruction  
and Continuity of Services Plan  
2021-2022**

May 2021

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

The George County School District will return to school on the traditional schedule. No waiver on instructional minutes will be given this year. Therefore, all schools will meet a full day (no less than 330 instructional minutes).

Distance/Virtual Learning will also be available for students with documented high risk medical conditions. Students will receive instruction through virtual learning via the Google Classroom LMS. Their schedule will follow the school's traditional schedule. All students will be required to participate in all mandated state assessments and districtwide end of quarter assessments on the campus of the school they attend.

In the event that the district or a school have to close due to an outbreak (as determined by the CDC and/or MS Department of Health), the GCS D has a plan in place to engage all students via Virtual and/or Hybrid instructional delivery plans that include the distribution of Chromebooks to every student and a hotspot if available. The progress of all students will be monitored by regular education classroom teacher and special education teacher (if applicable) during the closure based on student engagement and assignment completion. Daily attendance will be maintained in the SIS based on LMS engagement as prescribed by the teacher's communicated lesson plans.

Regardless of educational learning environment, all regular education teachers and special education teachers will maintain communication with students and parents via tools that include live virtual lessons, email, School Status communication, and AIM communication.

Quarterly grade level and content area meetings will be held with district administration which will include Curriculum Directors, SPED Chairperson, and Director of Student Assessment to discuss progress monitoring and academic needs. Quarterly data meetings will be held with local school administrators, district administrators, and Superintendent (or designee) to discuss progress monitoring and current student data.

Summer Enrichment and Credit Recovery programs have been developed and implemented to target students who have exhibited a deficit.

The GCS D will follow all approved grading scales, enrollment procedures, attendance procedures, graduation requirements, and promotion/retention policies in place that are consistent with MDE requirements for all students regardless of traditional or distance learning status.

### **Distance/Virtual Learning requirements for students with documented underlying medical condition:**

There will be a two-week trial period. If the parent or the school determines that Distance/Virtual Learning will not work for your student, the student may return to the traditional setting. All decisions regarding returning to traditional setting will be at the

discretion of the local school principal. Decisions regarding approval and denial of all applications are also at the discretion of the local school principal.

1. Students participating in Distance/Virtual Learning are required to have a learning device (iPad, Chromebook, computer, tablet, etc.) and reliable internet connection or access to a hotspot.
2. Student will be given educational diagnostic screeners at the beginning, during, and at the end of Distance/Virtual Learning. These screeners will take place on the school campus.
3. Students will still be required to take state tests on the campus of the school enrolled. George County School District students are required to participate in the statewide assessment program as prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education and state law. All Distance/Virtual Learning students are required to return to their school campus in order to take benchmark and state assessments.
4. Distance/Virtual Learning students must complete at least 330 minutes of instructional activity everyday as prescribed by the lesson plan. Grades will be taken for assignments. Incomplete assignments or assignments not attempted will be assigned a zero. Assignments will be the same as students who are in traditional setting.
5. Students may be required to come to their local school to take weekly assessments.
6. Students who do not engage in the prescribed daily assignments will be counted absent for that day and are subject to referral to the truancy officer.
7. Students must wear uniforms any time that are scheduled to be on campus.
8. Students who participate in Distance/Virtual Learning cannot participate in any extracurricular activities (athletics, ROTC, School Clubs, etc.) at their local school.
9. Distance/Virtual Learning students who have failing averages at the end of the academic school year will be subject to retention as per our district policy and procedure.

## OPERATIONS

Students will arrive and dismiss as determined by local school bell schedules. There will be separate drop off locations for students being transported by car and students being transported by bus. Parents and students will be encouraged to administer health checks such as temperature checks prior to arriving on campus.

GCSD plans to run its regular and special education bus routes as scheduled. The buses will promote social distancing as much as possible. Seating charts will be developed and maintained. The students and bus drivers may be required to wear proper face coverings as per current CDC and/or MSDH guidelines. The bus driver will sanitize the bus after each unloading location before transporting another group of students. Buses will arrive on campuses and unload in an orderly fashion as to promote social distancing as students enter campus. Buses will have hand sanitizer dispensers available. Bus drivers will be

properly trained in COVID safety measures. Parents are encouraged to provide transportation to school if possible.

Students will participate in a grab and go breakfast. Students at GCSD will be provided lunch in different locations depending on the local school. Some students will have a grab and go lunch style and dine in their classroom with their teacher. Some students will dine in the dining hall of their school depending on seating capacity and the availability of social distancing. Some schools will have their lunches delivered to the classroom and students will not have to leave the class to receive their lunches.

The start date for students for the 2021-2022 school year is August 5, 2021. The end date for the 2021-2022 school year is May 25, 2022. (2021-2022 board approved academic calendar attached)

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The George County School Districts maintains communication with parents in a variety of methods. Parents are in constant contact with teachers via our School Status messaging system. This messaging system provides teachers with the ability to send and receive communications in a language the parent can understand (native language). We also have resources available to parents in our Parent Resource Center. Our website can be accessed in multiple languages. We have a technology hotline available for all parents and staff. We also offer annual federal programs comprehensive needs assessment survey and planning meetings that allow parents to provide valuable input. Multiple additional surveys have been conducted over the course of the year regarding technology and learning including the recent MDE Bright Bytes Technology and Learning survey. Data gathered from surveys and parent communications will be considered when planning instructional programming and supports for the GCSD students and staff.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The George County School District will communicate with families via our AIM (Automated Information Messaging) Alert System, George County School District Website [www.gcsd.us](http://www.gcsd.us), George County School District Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/georgecountyschooldistrict/>, and all local news media outlets including our local radio station, local newspaper, all surrounding area TV stations, and our city government agencies.

All current health and safety guidelines as prescribed by CDC and MSDH will be

communicated with parents via our regular communication tools.

Our policies, protocol, and procedures regarding student health and wellness are posted on our website. All policies, procedures, and protocol will be strictly adhered to.

School nurses, school administrators, school counselors, and/or other appropriate school staff will communicate with parents as needed in regards to health concerns of students.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Overview

GCS D has taken steps to prepare for the health, wellness, and safety for students and staff for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. These guidelines are part of a living document and will be updated with new information as it becomes available. Please see the information below for a set of general guidelines and expectations. Decisions will be made in coordination with local and state guidelines as they are released. The GCS D has put in place a team of district and local school personnel who serve as the coordinators for health and safety measures.

### Transportation

- Students will be separated on the bus where feasible. Siblings or children living in the same household may be seated together.
- Drivers and any students who choose to utilize GCS D bus transportation may be required to wear proper face covering for the duration of the route to and from school as per current CDC and/or MSDH guidelines.
- Buses will be appropriately disinfected after each use.
- Buses will have hand sanitizer available.
- Bus drivers will be properly trained in COVID safety measures.
- Social distancing on buses will be a challenge. Parents are encouraged to provide transportation to school if possible.

### Arrival

- Staff, parents, and students will be encouraged to perform health checks including temperature checks before arriving on campus.
- Students will use hand sanitizer or hand washing upon arrival into classrooms.
- Common areas will be restricted where feasible.

### Dismissal

- Use of the car line will be used for student pick-up only. No in-person parent pick-up to avoid parent gatherings in school lobby or in front of school.
- Individual schools will set protocols for dismissal on their campus. These protocols will emphasize social distancing.

### Cafeteria-Breakfast and Lunch

- Cafeteria protocols may differ from school to school based upon school population and cafeteria size.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizer will be available before and after lunch.
- Cafeterias will be appropriately disinfected after each use.

#### Classrooms

- Multiple social distancing strategies will be implemented based on feasibility of the unique space and needs of each school.
- Students will be encouraged to maintain distance from each other in the school and taught appropriate hygiene/COVID practices as guided by CDC and MSDH.
- Personal water bottles will be encouraged. Touchless drinking fountains are available at all campuses.
- Frequent handwashing and hand sanitizing will be encouraged.
- Appropriate measures will be taken for cleaning Chromebooks/other technology devices.
- Staff will observe students for illness prior to starting class and refer students to nurse as needed.
- GCSD teachers and staff will clean/disinfect at appropriate times.
- Seating charts will be developed and maintained and will be utilized for contact tracing.
- Plexiglass table top dividers have been made available and may be utilized in classrooms.

#### Passing Periods

- Hallway traffic may be limited by schedule and students will be monitored while walking in hallways.
- Movement throughout buildings will be limited or reduced / one -way traffic where feasible.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizer will be available.

#### Visitors/Volunteers

- Non-essential visitors will be limited.
- Lunch guests or volunteers will be limited if and when allowed.
- Visitors are encouraged to call the school before entering the building.
- Proper face coverings may be required as per current CDC and/or MSDH guidelines.
- The number of visitors per campus will be determined by the size and population of the local school office.

#### Playgrounds

- Students will be monitored for social distancing while on playgrounds.
- Handwashing/sanitizer will be available upon re-entry to building.
- Frequently used playground hard surfaces will be cleaned routinely following CDC

protocols.

#### Cleaning/ Hygiene

- Cleaning will target cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched hard, non-porous surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, stair rails, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, drinking fountains, and any other surfaces that are visibly necessary.

#### Health Services

- School personnel will provide COVID safety training/materials to faculty and staff.
- School personnel will provide education to staff and students regarding health and safety protocols as they relate to prevention of communicable disease which will include but not be limited to vaccination education, proper handwashing, and proper wearing of face coverings.
- Students or staff demonstrating symptoms will be referred to health care professional. Prior to returning to school, the school nurse will be consulted or documentation from health care provider will be provided.
- Exclusion procedures will follow best practices. Students and/or staff exhibiting COVID symptoms will be required to wear a provided mask.
- Students/adults who are symptomatic will be issued a mask to wear until they are picked up by a parent or leave the building.
- Contact tracing will be performed in the event of a positive case and parents will be notified as per current CDC and/or MSDH quarantine guidelines.

#### PPE

- Use of personal masks will be allowed for students.
- Use of personal masks will be allowed for staff.

#### Athletics/Activities

- MHSAA, MDE, MSDH, CDC, & State of Mississippi Guidelines will be strictly adhered to.
- Locker rooms, weight rooms, band halls, & equipment will be sanitized and cleaned daily.
- All athletic clothing will be washed and sanitized daily
- Teams will be broken up into smaller groups when feasible
- Social distancing will be practiced when feasible
- Digital tickets may be made available to help alleviate the transfer of money.

#### Other General Items

- Additional guidance will be forthcoming as public health data, safety precautions, and guidance evolves.
- Field Trips will be considered on a case by case basis and will be limited.
- Confirmed COVID case (student/staff) --CDC Guidance or MSDH/MDE guidance will be followed. As the school year advances, procedures within the GCSD are

subject to change in accordance with state regulations and CDC guidelines as it relates to positive COVID cases.

- Licensed trained counselors and/or interventionists have been employed at all school campuses to provide social and emotional health services for students and staff. A Social and Emotional Learning Coordinator has been identified to provide support and training to elementary and secondary counselors, interventionists, and other appropriate staff.
- Vaccinations have been made available to all GCSD staff by the local health system.

## TECHNOLOGY

All students will have access to a Chromebook or other device regardless of traditional or distance learning environment.

Multiple surveys have been conducted over the course of the year regarding technology and learning including the recent MDE Bright Bytes Technology and Learning survey. Data gathered from surveys and parent communications will be considered when planning instructional programming and supports for the GCSD students and staff. In addition, we provide a technology services hotline for parents, students, and staff.

Parents of students and students approved for Distance/Virtual Learning are also offered an orientation time and training on how to utilize the online learning platform, Google Classroom, as well as other third party vendor learning applications utilized across the district. Specialized technology training was offered to parents of students with disabilities in order to demonstrate accommodation options such as read aloud, highlighting, screen view reduction, etc. available within the LMS.