



BOARD MEMBERS

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JAMES D. SMITH
Superintendent

July 8, 2020

Dear GSCS Families,

The Griffin-Spalding County School System (GSCS) Start of School Task Force was launched in May to examine options and develop a plan to safely reopen schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The task force was charged with three tasks that included:

- Reviewing all guidance provided by the CDC, Georgia Public Health, Governor's Office, and the Georgia Department of Education regarding the reopening of schools,
- Identifying and examining possible options for a safe reopening; and
- Accessing all aspects of the school district's operations for appropriate implementation of options identified for consideration.

After careful consideration and review of various models, the task force identified three options to access. District surveys were launched on June 12, 2020, to both parents/guardians and staff members to gather feedback and input on these options. Based on the feedback received, the task force recommended Option 1 for implementation for the upcoming school year, with a delayed start date for students on **Tuesday, September 8, 2020**. All staff members will report according to their normal work calendar unless notified prior to their scheduled start date. The delayed start for students will allow for GSCS to provide additional staff training on CDC-recommended safety protocols, new logistical processes and time to receive supplies, materials and any additional information required for effective implementation.

Today, the Griffin-Spalding Board of Education approved Option 1 for the GSCS Reopening Plan. This option provides for schools to resume normal operations, while implementing a remote at-home learning option for families to sign up for if they are not comfortable sending their child to school for the first nine (9) weeks. Families can choose full-time remote learning for their student(s) during this designated length of time.

Families who select the full-time remote learning option will need to complete the **GSCS Remote At-Home Learning Commitment Form** for each child for the school they will attend. Families must commit to the entire nine (9)-week period. Students participating in the remote at-home learning option must have reliable internet access. For discount internet offers, contact Comcast Essentials at <https://www.internetessentials.com/> or AT&T at <https://www.att.com/internet/access/>. This form must be completed and submitted for each child by **Friday, July 17, 2020**.

To complete the **GSCS Remote At-Home Learning Commitment Form**, please click on the link below:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tyMubur_Q4nDV-1y-faHuq2fglLU_DZ7o4lq_uDPaVg/edit?usp=sharing

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Accredited by AdvancED

For students who will attend school for in-person learning on September 8, GSCS will implement safety protocols based on the *CDC Considerations for Schools and Georgia Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools*. GSCS will work tirelessly to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our staff and our students by:

- Enforcing six feet social distancing whenever possible.
- Providing hand sanitizer in multiple locations throughout schools
- Requiring students and staff to wear face coverings/masks in all common areas of the building. Face coverings will also be worn in classroom settings where six feet social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Following daily and rigorous cleaning protocols.
- Handwashing and restroom breaks will be scheduled throughout the day. Restrooms and common areas will be disinfected daily.

Transportation

GSCS will provide hand sanitizer on all school buses. Bus drivers and students will be encouraged to wear face coverings/masks on buses. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Parents are encouraged to transport their student(s) to school if possible to minimize/reduce the number of students on buses. Parents will be asked to remain in cars during morning drop off.

COVID-19 Screening Procedures

All students and staff will have their temperature screened and documented when arriving at the school building. All staff and students will be screened for COVID-19 signs and symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath at school.

- Any student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated. If a staff member or student is found to have a fever greater than 100.4° F, they will not be able to return to work or school until they are fever free for 72 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications (Ex: Advil, Tylenol).
- Staff and parents of students are encouraged to notify the school nurse of any possible exposure to COVID 19 or of a positive test result.

Meal Distribution

To minimize risk of contamination, meals will be provided in to-go containers for all students getting meals. Students may eat in classroom settings as well as other identified areas to support social distancing and reduce crowd size in one location or area. Markers/tape will be placed on the floor to indicate six feet distancing in the cafeteria to promote social distancing while waiting in line or when using the cafeteria in a reduced capacity method. Food sharing by students will not be allowed.

Based on the Option 1 plan, the following explains what a school day for GSCS students will look like for elementary, middle and high school:

	In-Classroom	Remote At-Home Learning
Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will remain with one teacher for most of their day. ● Students will attend specials (art, music, etc.) with limited access to equipment and supplies to lessen the sharing of items. ● Depending on the number of students that return, GSCS may utilize all certified staff members as homeroom teachers to reduce class sizes and social distance. ● For upper grades who are departmentalized, GSCS may rotate the teachers instead of students changing classes to reduce contact. ● Begin with nine (9) weeks and consider extending the nine (9)-week virtual school option to parents who are uncomfortable for possibly the first semester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standards-based digital learning experiences will be facilitated by an assigned GSCS virtual teacher. ● Virtual learning teachers and students will access standards-based course content and learning tasks through Google Classroom as the virtual learning platform. ● Virtual learning teachers will facilitate and support student learning through a blend of live whole class virtual instruction, small-group virtual check ins, assigned individual virtual learning tasks, and virtual assessments. ● Schools may provide web links to Grades K-5 parents for students to access optional additional on-line learning practice at home ● K-5 students will be provided with a Chromebook if a device is needed. ● Kindergarten and 1st Grade students will experience a blend of digital virtual instruction and virtual learning tasks. ● Pre-K students will be placed on a waiting list for consideration for future in-person Pre-K enrollment if their parents are not yet ready to send their children to school.

<p>Middle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instead of students moving from class to class, have teachers move and students remain in one classroom throughout the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standards-based digital learning experiences will be facilitated by an assigned certified GSCS virtual teacher. ● Virtual teachers and students will access standards-based course content and learning tasks through Google Classroom as the virtual learning platform. ● Virtual teachers will facilitate and support student learning through a blend of live whole class virtual instruction, small-group virtual check ins, assigned individual virtual learning tasks, and virtual assessments. ● Virtual teachers and students will make use of various electronic/online programs (just as students will that attend in person) to support learning such as Edgenuity, USA Test Prep, Delta Math, Active Classroom & Stemscoptes to facilitate student mastery of the learning standards. Students’ engagement with these programs will be crucial to their success. ● Schools will provide students who need a device with a Chromebook.
<p>High</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To meet graduation requirements, all four blocks (including electives) will be offered. ● Logistics will be determined for all Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Griffin Region College and Career Academy (GRCCA) students during the school day. ● GSCS may use virtual or blended learning platforms such as Edgenuity for classroom course segments that exceed social distancing guidelines (computer labs/Chromebooks to support blended learning as needed during the school day). ● GSCS will encourage CTAE teachers on how to provide contactless instruction (Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE)/Arts/ROTC/Physical Education). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standards-based digital learning experiences will be facilitated by an assigned certified GSCS virtual teacher. ● Virtual teachers and students will access standards-based course content and learning tasks through Google Classroom as the virtual learning platform. ● Virtual teachers will facilitate and support student learning through a blend of live whole class virtual instruction, small-group virtual check ins, assigned individual virtual learning tasks, and virtual assessments. ● Virtual teachers and students will make use of various electronic/online programs to support learning (just as students will that attend in person) such as Edgenuity, USA Test Prep, Delta Math, Active Classroom & Stemscoptes to facilitate student mastery of the learning standards. Students’ engagement with these programs will be crucial to their success. ● Schools will provide students who need a device with a Chromebook

Option 1 guidelines for students enrolled in PreK, CTAE, ESOL, Special Education, Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS), Gifted and Talented, and Dual Enrollment (GRCCA) will be published in the ***GSCS Back-to-School Guide***. The guide will provide in-depth information on how GSCS plans to ensure safety for students and staff including daily health screenings, public health practices like handwashing and social distancing, sanitizing buildings, and crisis protocols for schools in the event of an outbreak. Additionally, guidance for the GSCS Elementary Afterschool Program, extra-curricular activities, and athletics will also be included in this document.

As you know, the safety of our students, families and staff are our top priority. GSCS is committed to ensuring all students have access to high-quality instruction and support for the 2020-2021 school year. I truly appreciate all of the hard work and commitment set forth by the GSCS Start of School Task Force to design an instructional program that embodies a wide variety of concerns and considerations in mind based on the feedback from the surveys. Your patience and flexibility are appreciated as we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times. As we approach the new school year, GSCS families are strongly encouraged to 1) update their emergency contact information in the parent portal of Infinite Campus; and 2) visit our district website (www.spalding.k12.ga.us) and follow social media channels for updates:

Twitter: @GriffinSpalding

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GSCSS/>

Instagram: @griffinspaldingschools

We understand and acknowledge that the decision to return to school is a highly personal one for each family, and we look forward to supporting your student in whichever setting you select both with academic and social-emotional resources in mind. Please know that as CDC and public health guidelines change, we will continue to keep you informed every step of the way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James D. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James D. Smith
Superintendent