

Greenland School District's Plan for Safe Continuation of In-Person Learning and Continuity of Services reviewed/updated October 9, 2023

Ready for Learning

The Greenland School District's goal is to provide the best instruction and learning possible for all students, at all times. While we prioritize having our campuses open and students on-site, plans are in place if the need to pivot to virtual learning arises.

The Greenland School District will provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum that supports the immediate needs of students whether instruction is on campus or virtual.

Gaps created from unfinished learning during the conclusion of the 19-20 school year as well as during the 20-21 school year will be addressed utilizing the playbook from the State of Arkansas and district resources.

All staff will utilize a Learning Management System. For K-4 this will be SeeSaw and Google Classroom, and for grades 5-12, it will be Google Classroom. Teachers will be trained as needed to effectively utilize a LMS.

Parents and students will be supported in every way possible as we explore education of the future. We will continue our commitment to learning and growing in an environment where ALL means ALL.

We will continue with a communication plan for all parents, students, and the community through a variety of avenues: website, social media, emails, text messaging, newspaper, radio, videos, REMIND messaging, zoom meetings, mail, and personal phone calls.

Continued Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks associated with COVID-19, Greenland Schools have been very successful in providing in-person learning since August 2020. This success can be attributed to the multiple layers of mitigation strategies that we have implemented in our schools, such as social distancing, mask wearing, disinfecting and cleaning, handwashing, hand sanitizer, and physical distancing to the extent practical.

Although the health directives that governed school operations were converted to guidance, the Arkansas Department of Health and Arkansas Department of Education have strongly advised districts to continue to follow all measures that have allowed for successful in-person learning to occur. Therefore, Greenland Schools will continue the COVID-19 protocols that students and staff were practicing throughout the last two years.

Masks/Face Coverings

Face masks are not currently required for students or staff members.

Vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccines are the most effective strategy to protect people from getting sick and to reduce the risk of people spreading COVID-19. Students who are ages 5 and older are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccination. Schools are encouraged to help students ages 5 and older, their families, and all school staff with getting vaccinated.

Physical Distancing

In order to facilitate in-person learning 5 days a week for Arkansas students, it is recommended to continue to implement practices that promote physical distancing between individuals and groups of individuals. Although 6 feet is the standard, the inability or impracticality to have physical distance does not prevent a school from having in-person learning. Based on studies from the 2020-2021 school year, the CDC recommends schools maintain:

- at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, and
- at least 6 feet between students and adults, and between adults who are not fully vaccinated.

Hand Washing/Cleaning

Hand sanitizer is available at all entrances and in every classroom. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will continue to be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.

Ventilation/Air Circulation

Evidence suggests that improved air circulation is beneficial in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Whenever possible, our schools will open windows or otherwise work to improve air flow by allowing outside air to circulate in the building, and thereby lower the concentration of viral particles. The CDC has provided guidance on increasing ventilation to prevent COVID-19 spread. Use of air filtration units will assist with this.

Visits to Schools

Parents and other adults will be allowed to visit schools at this time as monitored by the building Principal and staff.

Screening

The value of screening is that it keeps students and staff with symptoms out of school and limits exposure. Screening usually consists of making sure a person doesn't have a fever, as well as having him or her answer questions about symptoms and exposures.

We will continue to offer to screen individuals who show signs or symptoms by taking their temperature and utilizing appropriate questions. If an individual does not pass the screening, isolation will be recommended.

Busing

Normal bus transportation will be provided to students. Masks are not required.

Food Service and School Meals

Given the very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals. Schools will maximize physical distance as much as possible when students are moving through the food service line and while eating (especially indoors).

Responding to Positive COVID-19 Cases in a School

Point of Contact and Reporting of Positive Cases

To promote the continuation of last year's successful communication strategy, we will continue to identify a Point of Contact (POC) who will continue to remain up to date on the latest trends and guidance involving COVID-19 in the State of Arkansas. Hope Dorman is the POC for the Greenland School District.

Schools are no longer required to report to ADH positive results that they hear about from 3rd parties (such as from parents, guardians, etc.), but are recommended to continue tracking at the local level so as to know if an in-school outbreak is occurring.

There are some conditions that could exempt an exposed individual / close contact to the quarantine/isolation requirements that are discussed below. School nurses can help verify the status of a potential close contact to help POCs and school officials determine responses.

Close Contact Determination and Responses

ADH has updated its guidance to allow flexibility at the district level for quarantining those who have come into contact with a positive case. Though the decision on whether to quarantine exposed students/staff now lies with each district, it is still the recommendation of ADH/ADE to do so according to the following guidelines:

The CDC defines a close contact as an individual confirmed to have been within six feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period during the infectious period

of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. To manage the negative impacts of excluding students from onsite education with the risk of spreading COVID-19, the close contact definition within a K-12 setting has been modified in effort to try to achieve the appropriate balance. Close contact within a K-12 school setting in which quarantine is recommended is defined as students or staff who have been within three (3) feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period during the infectious period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

1. Individuals who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered and who are subsequently exposed to someone with COVID-19 within 90 days of their original diagnosis do not have to stay at home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms. Individuals who develop symptoms again within three months of their first instance of COVID-19 should see their physician as they may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.
2. Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 are not recommended to quarantine if they have no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask during the entire exposure.
3. Individuals who have received all recommended vaccines may not have to quarantine. Students, teachers, and staff who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they:
 - Are ages 18 and older and up to date with COVID vaccination (have received all recommended vaccine doses, including booster and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people). This means:
 - Have been boosted
 - Are within 5 months of the 2nd dose of either Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.
 - Are within 2 mos of the 1st dose of J&J vaccine.
 - Are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Though not required, it is still recommended that all children eligible for a booster receive one.

Even though not required to quarantine, it is recommended that exposed individuals:

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days
- Test on day 5, if possible If you develop symptoms, get a test and stay home.

School officials will review with the POC the local process for identifying close contacts and the process for communicating with parents, staff, and students whether an individual will need to stay home and/or be tested.

Isolation of those with COVID-19

It is still important for a person who tests positive for COVID-19 to isolate at home regardless of vaccination status per the following guidance:

- Stay home for 5 days
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.
- Continue to wear a mask around others through day 10 after symptom onset (or test date if asymptomatic).

After the initial 5 days, a person should also be fever-free for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medicines) before leaving isolation.

Educational Options

Based on increasing numbers of positive cases, there may be interruptions to the school year and we are planning for contingencies. DESE and ADH will work closely with districts to monitor local situations and to assist if prolonged school closures or prolonged remote learning becomes necessary.

Students and staff should stay home when sick. The Greenland School District will review attendance policies to be sure that COVID-19 isolation and quarantine requirements are taken into consideration when dealing with student and staff absences, as well as state and federal requirements for staff and students with disabilities. Flexible attendance policies will be utilized for individual students and staff in order to continue teaching and learning options while unable to be at school due to COVID-19 impacts. These policies should be communicated with parents and staff. We want our students and families to feel confident that students can remain connected to their school even when they are not able to attend in person due to COVID-19 isolation or quarantine requirements.

AMI Pivots for school-wide or district-wide COVID closures

Responses to positive COVID-19 isolation and quarantines will be as strategic and targeted as possible. In cases where a classroom or grade level pivots to remote learning, the district will ensure the necessary tools for blended learning are in place to facilitate the continuation of teaching and learning for small groups of students and staff.

In the event that an entire school or the district must modify on-site instruction and pivot to **remote learning**, the school or district will follow the district's approved Alternate Method of Instruction (AMI) plan. If positive cases have evolved to the point that an AMI day is necessary, the superintendent shall take the following steps:

- Notify the designated DESE POC - the list and contact information will be sent to each superintendent; and,
- Report the AMI day in the LEA Insights portal, which is the same process that was in place last school year; The AMI day for the school or district will also be reported in eSchool; and,
- Participate in consultations with the DESE and ADH.

Public Health Considerations

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor, has authority over all instances of quarantine and isolation throughout Arkansas, as necessary and appropriate to control disease in the state of Arkansas, as authorized by Ark. Code Ann. §§ 20-7-109 and 20-7-110. See also ADH Rules Pertaining to the Control of Reportable Diseases, which provide for the prevention and control of communicable diseases to protect the public health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of Arkansas. The COVID-19 Delta variant is now the predominant COVID-19 strain in Arkansas. The Delta variant is two-to-three times more transmissible, which means that an infected person can spread COVID-19 to twice as many people as observed earlier in the pandemic. The COVID-19 Delta variant appears to cause more severe disease and a greater likelihood of hospitalization in unvaccinated young people than we observed earlier in the pandemic. While adolescents over 12 years of age and adults can be protected from the Delta variant by the COVID-19 vaccines, children under 12 remain at high risk. Children represent an increasing proportion of new COVID-19 cases, including hospitalizations and severe disease. In light of the spread of this more transmissible variant (and potential future strains), ADH and ADE urge schools to maintain as many mitigation measures as possible, or risk increased spread within the school setting.

Please share your comments and concerns at the following link:

<https://forms.gle/4VB3mzquQ5Nrz4gNA>