



**Galena Park ISD Return  
to In-Person  
Instruction and  
Continuity of Services  
Plan**

# 2021- 2022

## ***WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER!***

***September 21, 2021***

Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) is committed to:

- providing a healthy and safe learning environment for all students, staff and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic
- working together to provide quality care and guidance to students, staff and parents on all health issues
- helping to reduce the transmission and spread of COVID-19 while balancing the need to maintain a strong education system that effectively supports staff, students and communities
- collaborating with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Texas Education Agency (TEA), Harris County Public Health (HCPH) and GPISD staff to support students, staff and the community.

### ***Maintaining the Health and Safety of Students and Staff***

The purpose of this plan is to provide information and guidance regarding the health and safety of students, educators, other school and district staff and the community in GPISD. The items included outline the policies, practices and strategies that GPISD has implemented and recommendations that should be considered to optimize education and promote health and safety, while mitigating risk throughout the school year.

GPISD will adapt guidelines for Athletics, Fine Arts, and other activities governed by the University Interscholastic League (UIL). All safety protocols currently in place will be strictly adhered to.

GPISD keeps students and staff safe by implementing the following safety practices and protocols:

- District COVID-19 Tracking/Self-Reporting telephone line.
- Distribution of PPE to employees and students at all campuses and facilities.
- COVID-19 Rapid Testing for all students and staff.
- COVID-19 screenings for all visitors.

All policies and procedures are designed to conform to the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) safety requirements, as described below:

### ***Wearing of Masks***

In accordance with Harris County Public Health directives, all employees, visitors, and students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> will be required to wear a mask in district facilities: Masks are available and will be provided upon request. If mask mandates are disallowed by subsequent legislation or executive action, GPISD will continue to strongly encourage mask-wearing and will continue to make them available upon request. Students and staff are instructed that their mask must be well-fitted, and cover their nose and mouth completely in order to be effective. Students and staff are instructed not to touch the mask or pull it on and off while wearing it, and will be taught the proper way of removing the mask without touching its fabric. Face shields will NOT be used in the place of a mask. Staff wearing face shields are expected to wear a mask in addition to the face shield.

### ***Facilities***

The following facility upgrades have been implemented at our campuses:

- Campuses have all been supplied with sanitizing stations in all hallways and classrooms.
- Plexiglass shields in reception areas separate front office personnel from visitors.
- Physical distancing signs have been posted in all district and campus restrooms to help maintain safe distances in close quarters.
- Signs with the District Student Reporting Line number of 832.386.1091 are posted at multiple locations in the building.
- Visual reminders have been posted in all common areas to remind students and staff to maintain social distancing.
- New water fountains all have bottle filling stations.
- Campuses and district facilities will limit access to areas prone to congregation and sharing of equipment.
- Assemblies and other activities for large groups of staff and/or students will be canceled or postponed.

Guidelines have been adapted for athletics, fine arts, and other UIL activities. The following classroom configurations have been made:

- Classrooms with tables have plastic dividers that can be placed between students.
- Student desks (or seats at a table if tables are used) will be spread out a minimum of three feet apart, when possible.
- If possible, students' desks will face the same direction rather than facing each other.
- Classroom manipulatives that will be shared amongst students will be cleaned frequently.
- As feasible, each student will be assigned his/her own supplies.

- Supplies that must be shared will be made of easily cleanable surfaces and disinfected between uses (example: calculators).

### ***Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette***

- All parents are responsible for ensuring that a daily self-screening of each student occurs prior to entering a GPISD facility or boarding school transportation.
- All students and staff will be instructed on methods to protect themselves and others from COVID-19 at school.
- All students and staff will practice appropriate social distancing and good hygiene.
- All students and staff will be trained to practice appropriate social distancing, daily self-screening, and good hygiene, with emphasis on proper handwashing techniques.
- Students will participate in scheduled handwashing times throughout the day, and will be encouraged to routinely wash their hands and use hand sanitizer.
- Hand sanitizer will be readily available for all students and staff in all classrooms.
- Students will continue bringing their own water bottles for personal use throughout the day.
- Students are encouraged to only use the new water fountains that have bottle-filling stations.

### ***Cleaning and Maintaining Facilities***

GPISD will maintain a very strict cleaning/disinfecting protocol of facilities and equipment, as recommended by local, state and federal authorities. The following procedures will be followed in order to reduce the risk of exposure:

- Custodial staff enter district facilities with masks on, and put on protective gloves before handling supplies to stock their custodial carts.
- In each classroom, they put on clean gloves before entering the room, and clean all high-traffic areas with individual color-coded (green for classrooms) microfiber cloths.
- When finished, they dispose of the cloths in a designated bag used only for dirty cloths.
- The classroom is swept, and then sprayed down with an EMist Machine containing hospital-grade cleaning chemicals.
- Classroom cleaning is finalized by mopping the floors.
- The custodian then disposes of their gloves, and cleans their hands at the nearest sanitizing station in the hallway before proceeding to the next classroom.
- Restroom cleanings are documented on a log sheet that is maintained in each restroom.
- Each surface is cleaned with a microfiber towel, color-coded pink to avoid cross-contamination with classrooms (which are only cleaned with green color-coded towels).
- An EMist Machine is used to spray the entire restroom.
- Lastly, the floors are mopped.
- After leaving the restroom, the staff member disposes of their gloves and sanitizes their hands at the nearest sanitizing station in the hallway.
- At the end of the shift, trash bags are sealed tightly for disposal.

- Microfiber towels are washed in the washing machine.
- The custodial staff member washes their hands before leaving the facility.
- Student Nutrition staff will ensure that all areas of food establishment are disinfected and sanitized throughout the day.
- Transportation staff will ensure all high contact surfaces on buses are cleaned and disinfected multiple times each day to mitigate COVID-19 concerns and to prevent the spread of the illness.

### ***Improving Ventilation***

We are currently upgrading all of our schools' ventilation systems to a MERV rating of 11 or higher.

### ***Contact Tracing, Isolation, and Quarantine***

- GPISD will work with Harris County Public Health (HCPH) for contact tracing of any individual with a positive COVID-19 test.
- Reducing and restricting student movement in the building will be critical to the contact tracing process and reducing the spread of COVID-19.
- Elementary parents will be notified if a positive COVID-19 case is reported in their child's classroom.
- Secondary parents and campus staff will be notified if a positive COVID-19 case is reported at their corresponding campus.
- GPISD maintains a COVID-19 dashboard on the district website with active cases by campus.
- Students and staff will be excluded in accordance with guidance provided by the Texas Department of State and Health Services.
- Students and staff may self-report confirmed positive COVID-19 cases using the GPISD Self-Reporting Form.
- Students or staff who self-report a positive COVID-19 test result will automatically be excluded for 10 calendar days. No negative test is required to return.
- Students or staff sent home with suspected COVID-19 symptoms may be excluded for 10 calendar days, or present documentation of a negative COVID-19 test to return to school or work.
- Relocation of classes may occur in the event of a third-party COVID-19 situation. Relocation will consist of the class being moved to an alternate area and/or the room remaining unused for possibly 2 - 3 days following notification. Relocation of classes will be done as a preventive measure to allow for deep cleaning and sanitizing of a particular area.
- School closures may be implemented for possibly 2 -3 days, if necessary, as a part of mitigation efforts to reduce internal transmission of COVID-19. The closure will allow for deep cleaning and sanitizing of the entire facility. All non-exposed students and staff

may return at the end of the closure if symptom-free upon determination by the school district and health authorities.

- A district closure may be implemented in the event there are COVID-19 cases at multiple GPISD facilities. If implemented, a district closure could possibly last from 10-14 days.

### ***Diagnostic and Screening Testing***

GPISD partners with Arch Staffing and Consulting to maintain a testing site for students, staff and community members, conveniently located at the district administration building. Testing is provided free of charge, on an appointment and limited walk-in basis, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Each person who comes through is given a rapid test and also a PCR test.

### ***Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to School***

Vaccinations for community, staff and students are available at our GPISD Legacy Clinics, and also at community vaccination events that will be hosted and publicized by GPISD throughout the year.

### ***Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities***

Our special education staff will continue to work with parents, students, and teachers to determine the need for special education services. Students who receive special education services will continue to be provided these services as defined by their Individualized Education Plans. The following accommodations will be provided as appropriate in special education settings:

- Students will be provided with instruction and reinforcement on wearing a facemask and/or shield upon request of parents.
- Due to the varied needs of students with special needs, it may be impractical to enforce the wearing of a face covering.
- Social distancing will be adhered to as much as possible.
- Manipulatives that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Manipulatives that children have placed in their mouths should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves.
  - Clean with water and soap, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again and air-dry.
  - May be cleaned in a dishwasher.
  - Enough manipulatives should be available so they can be rotated between cleanings.
- Face shields and gloves should be worn anytime staff are unable to socially distance, such as when feeding students, diaper changes, hand-over-hand instruction, etc.

- Staff will wash hands prior to diapering, wear gloves, and wash hands immediately following changings.
- Surfaces used to change students should be cleaned by a district-approved disinfectant.
- If staff are working closely with a student and there is a possibility of fluid contamination, an isolation gown should be worn.
- Staff are encouraged to protect themselves by wearing an over-large, button-down, long-sleeved shirt.
- Staff with long hair will wear it up, off the collar.
- Staff should wash their hands, neck and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Students will be monitored when utilizing hand sanitizer.
- Classroom manipulatives that will be shared amongst students will be cleaned frequently. As feasible, each student will be assigned his/her own supplies.
- Equipment will be disinfected frequently.
- Any activities bringing students into close physical contact will be avoided.

### ***Coordination with State and Local Health Officials***

GPISD provides reports and receives updates from the following local health entities:

- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Harris County Public Health
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)

GPISD also coordinates with the following entities to provide assistance for GPISD families:

- East Harris County Empowerment Council
- Veritex Community Bank
- Harris County Precinct 3 Community Outreach Division
- Joseph House Outreach Center

### ***Continuity of Services***

#### **Academic Progress**

For the 2021-2022 school year, GPISD will be face-to-face, five days a week, for all students grades K-12.

GPISD is a 1 to 1 district, meaning all of our students have access to a district Chromebook to use as an instructional support tool for in-person and remote learning.

Students who are COVID-19 positive or who are isolating because of exposure will have access to academic assistance through remote conferencing.

GPISD will address learning loss among students and implement evidence-based activities through a balanced assessment system that personalizes individual learning pathways for students.

The following data will be used to identify students most in need of academic support and intervention through small group or individual tutoring:

Elementary Math:

- STAAR
- iReady (EOY, MOY screener)
- Guided math observational notes
- District Assessments

Elementary Reading:

- STAAR
- iStation (EOY screener)
- mClass (BOY screener)
- BAS/Sistema (BOY screener)
- Guided reading running records
- Guided reading anecdotal notes
- District Assessments

Elementary Science:

- STAAR
- District Assessments

Secondary -Core Courses:

- STAAR / EOC
- BOY/MOY/EOY District Assessments
- Benchmarks

### **Transportation**

GPISD will modify or adjust transportation services as required by local, state, or federal health authorities. Bus transportation is provided for Special Education students when required by the students ARD and IEP. All general education students will be provided transportation if eligible from the designated transportation areas to each campus.

- Parents are required to screen their student for fever and COVID-19 symptoms prior to students entering the bus. Based on the exclusion



criteria listed in this document, parents are to notify the campus if a student tests positive for COVID-19.

- During transport, drivers will maintain as much social distancing as possible between students. Members of the same family may sit together.

Required Bus Sanitation Guidelines:

- Bus drivers will use an EPA-approved disinfectant on frequently touched surfaces after each morning run, each afternoon run, and as needed.
- Buses will be disinfected using the EPA-approved antimicrobial misting system on a rotating basis, based on manufacturer specifications.

### **Student Nutrition**

GPISD will modify menus, service and daily operations provided by the Student Nutrition Department as a mitigation measure. Each campus will establish meal service that meets the following criteria:

- Meal service may include classroom service.
- Disposable food service items will be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Curbside Meals will continue to be distributed as needed.
- Hands-free transactions with ID badges will be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Social distancing will be maintained in school cafeterias.

### **Social/Emotional Student Support**

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing a tremendous amount of stress, fear and anxiety for many people. It's important that students, parents and staff have access to the mental health care resources they need to stay well during this challenging time. Our schools will play an important role in helping students and staff cope, access needed resources and build resilience.

GPISD has multiple resources available to assist in this effort including but not limited to the following staff members:

- Campus counselors and nurses
- Dr. Seretha Augustine, Senior Director for Student Support Services
- Dr. Karen Haynes, Director of Mental Health and Social Services
- Curby Rogers, Licensed Mental Health and Student Support Specialist
- Vanessa Squirrel, Director of School Culture
- Teresa Rainer, District Lead Nurse
- Legacy Clinics (GVE and NSSH)

District personnel should encourage staff, students and families to talk with people they trust about their feelings and concerns regarding COVID-19.

GPISD counselors work together to ensure all students and staff receive ongoing emotional and mental health support as we navigate through COVID-19.

GPISD has joined 1,600 school districts across the country to become part of the *No Place for Hate* movement. Our school district recognizes that we all have a role to play in combating bias and bullying as a means to stop the escalation of hate. We all work on improving and maintaining school climate so all students can thrive.

*New Beginnings Support Group:* Galena Park ISD's Mental Health Intervention Team is offering a six-week New Beginnings Support Group for students, parents, or staff in need of a safe, supportive environment to share and cope with their feelings associated with the COVID-19 pandemic or any other life stressors. Participation in the group is free of charge and open to GPISD students, parents, and staff.

Another initiative GPISD has embraced is having Boys' and Girls' Clubs at every campus. These Boys' and Girls' clubs provide students with leadership development, etiquette instruction, and opportunities for students to learn about personal growth and positive character traits including honesty, perseverance, integrity and self-discipline.

Social Emotional Learning lessons are offered to GPISD students to develop important skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Resources for supporting mental health and wellness:

- Mental Health Support <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/mental-health.aspx>  
TexProtects – Champions for Safe Children  
<https://www.texprotects.org/familyguidetothrive/>
- Helping Children Cope <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/for-parents.html>
- Family resources can also be found at [GPISD Counseling Resources Link](#).

### **Recess**

- Use of playground equipment is permitted. Use of hand sanitizer before and after use is required. Students will be placed in cohorts.
- Campuses will limit the number of students per recess group by creating a staggered schedule.
- Teachers will monitor students to ensure safety guidelines are followed.
- Movement and brain breaks will be implemented as needed, at the discretion of the campus/teacher.

### **UIL**

The district will comply with all University Interscholastic League (UIL) Risk Mitigation Guidelines for events covered by UIL.