

## **GILMANTON SCHOOL OPENING PLAN 2021-2022**

Presented to and approved by the Gilmanton School Board on August 19, 2021

We are excited to be opening the 2021-2022 school year with an in-person, five day a week schedule. The district will not be offering a fully remote learning option for the upcoming school year. Families wishing to have their children learn remotely will need to enroll their children in an outside program, such as VLACS, or homeschool.

The Four Guiding Goals used in creating the Gilmanton School Opening Plan are:

1. Ensure Healthy Classrooms - Following safe practices in classrooms
2. Ensure a Healthy Building - Creating routines and practices to promote an overall healthy building
3. Ensure Healthy Policies - Building a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility
4. Ensure Healthy Schedules - Moving between rooms and locations safely

This plan also considers the four goals developed by the NH State Chief Epidemiologist, Dr. Benjamin Chan:

1. Maximize the in-person educational experience
2. Minimize the risk of COVID-19 to students and staff
3. Build in flexibility to allow for multiple learning opportunities
4. Continue to provide community and social supports to families

The fully in-person instructional model is comprised of the following:

1. Maintain 3 feet of physical distancing between people in the classroom and throughout the building whenever possible.
2. Eat lunch in the cafeteria. There will be 4 lunch periods in order to maintain the 3 feet of physical distance between students during lunch time.
3. The wearing of masks, either as an option or as a requirement (please see below for complete details).
4. Frequent cleaning of hallways and bathrooms throughout the day. Filters will be replaced in all HVAC systems. Nightly cleaning will include the use of ionized hydrostatic disinfectant spray.

**The most important job we have is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and our staff, so that in-person instruction can take place uninterrupted throughout the year.**

## **OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES:**

Our overall goal is to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in our school. In order to achieve this goal, we need to make sure students and staff who are not well stay home.

*When students present with new or unexplained symptoms that are associated with COVID-19 while at school, the nursing office will perform an assessment of the student and make a determination, based on all information collected, as to whether or not the student will require further evaluation. If the determination is that the student needs to be dismissed from school, then the student will need to have a documented negative COVID-19 test result **or be excluded from school and school activities for 5 days, and wear a mask at school for an additional 5 days.***

*If the nursing staff determines that a student can remain in school as long as they wear a mask, the parent/guardian will be called and given the choice of the student remaining in the classroom with a mask on until symptoms subside or going home (if they do not want to wear a mask).*

***First Edit (in italics) approved by the Gilmanton School Board on September 14, 2021.***

*Updates in Bold approved by the Gilmanton School Board on January 11, 2022.*

We ask that all parents screen their children daily at home, before coming to school, for symptoms of COVID-19. If any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 are present, please keep your child at home: Common Symptoms of COVID-19 (**most common are in bold**)

*As in past years, a student who has a fever, due to non-COVID-19 reasons, must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of any fever-reducing medication, before returning to school.*

- **Fever or chills**
- **Cough**
- Shortness of breath
- **Sore throat**
- **Nasal congestion and runny nose**
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- **Headache**
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

We will continue to strongly encourage you to have your child tested for COVID-19 if your child is exhibiting any of the above symptoms. If a parent decides not to have their child tested for the virus, a student exhibiting these symptoms will not be able to return to school for 5 days after symptom onset or a positive COVID-19 test. \*The day of symptom onset or COVID-19 test is Day 0.

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services, has adapted the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Quarantine and Isolation guidelines on how to safely shorten quarantine and isolation to 5 days. In keeping with these new recommendations, the Gilmanton School will follow the updated COVID-19 protocols beginning January 12, 2022.

**Isolation:** If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, that person must isolate for 5 days after the date of the positive test or the date of symptom onset.

- The person may return to school if they are fever free without medication for at least 24 hours and other symptoms are improving
- The person must wear a mask when in school for the next 5 days while in the school.

**Quarantine:** If you are a student or staff member of a household contact who is unvaccinated or not up to date on receiving all recommended COVID-19 doses, you must quarantine at home for 5 days from the last date of contact with the positive case.

- This could mean your quarantine would last up to 10 days, or more, depending on whether symptoms develop and the close contact tests positive for the virus.
- You must wear a mask, when returning to school after the 5 days of isolation, for the next 5 days while at school.

Please click on the link below for further details on these newly updated Quarantine and Isolation Recommendations for the General Public:

[https://www.covid19.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt481/files/inline-documents/sonh/isolation-and-quarantine-recommendations\\_0.pdf](https://www.covid19.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt481/files/inline-documents/sonh/isolation-and-quarantine-recommendations_0.pdf)

<https://www.covid19.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt481/files/documents/2022-01/household-contact-exposure-flowchart.pdf>

*These updates were approved by the Gilmanton School Board on January 11, 2022.*

**Unlike last year, the school is not required to do any contact tracing.** If we are made aware of a positive COVID-19 case in our school, we will alert those who need to know. For instance, we will alert the parents of those students who are in the same classroom as a student or staff member who tested positive for COVID-19. The name of any individual who tests positive will be kept confidential. We also ask that families report positive COVID-19 test results to the school nurse in order for us to monitor our students and staff for symptoms.

**MASKS ARE OPTIONAL at the Gilmanton School** - except when riding the school bus.

It is important to remember the two purposes of wearing a mask:

1. To protect the person wearing the mask.
2. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 from the person wearing the face mask to others.

Because we are able to maintain 3 feet of distance in our classrooms, the Gilmanton School will follow an optional mask use policy. The following is a list of conditions that will require the wearing of face masks at school.

**Masks will be required under the following conditions\*:**

- When riding on the bus
- When there is a positive COVID-19 case in a classroom. All students and staff in that classroom will wear a mask for 10 days from the day we are made aware of the positive case.
- When a grade 7 student tests positive for COVID-19, all grade 7 students will be required to wear masks, and if a grade 8 student tests positive for COVID-19, all grade 8 students will be required to wear a mask for 10 days. This is due to the fact that grade 7 and 8 students will be in class with multiple grade level peers throughout the day.
- When the school has 6 or more active COVID-19 cases in the school at the same time, all students and staff will be required to wear a mask for 10 days, with day 1 being the day of the 6th person's positive test. An active case is defined as a case where the positive person was in the building during the contagious period (48 hours prior to onset of symptoms or specimen collection of their positive COVID test result for those that are asymptomatic). This will help us to stop any further transmission of COVID-19 in the building, allowing us to continue full in-person instruction.
- When directed by the state and/or federal government.

\*In an emergency, the Gilmanton Administrative staff has the authority to require face masks until Board action can be taken.

**Masks are NOT required while students and staff are outside.**

**Classrooms:** Our classroom layouts will look similar to last year with three feet of space between students. It may not, however, always be practical, feasible, or conducive to maintain this spacing in the classroom.

**Cafeteria:** Students will eat in the cafeteria this year. Students will enter the cafeteria and go directly to their assigned table. Students will be called up by table to get their lunch.

**Hand Washing/Personal Hygiene:** Students and staff are expected to wash their hands frequently and use hand sanitizer when washing hands is not possible. Students will be reminded to cover their sneezes and coughs with their elbow or a tissue to prevent the spread of germs.

Water filling stations will be open; however, water fountains will remain inoperational.

**Remote Learning:** We will use remote learning strategies if the need arises. These needs may include weather related building closures, positive COVID-19 classroom clusters or school outbreaks, or statewide closure mandates. If it becomes necessary to move a classroom, grade level or student group into the full remote instructional model, we are prepared to do so for such time until the situation is resolved.

**Co-Curricular Activities:** The Gilmanton School District will allow co-curricular before and after school activities for the 2021-2022 school year. Students and staff who participate in these activities will follow the same protocol as school day programming.

**Parents and Visitors in the Building:** At this time, The Gilmanton School will only allow visitors on official business into the building during school hours. All visitors are required to wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status.

**Bus Transportation:** All students riding a bus to and/or from school must wear a mask on the bus at all times due to federal public transportation regulations. The bus company will follow a regular schedule to disinfect the school bus.

**Use of Facilities:** We will allow outside organizations to use our facilities during non-school hours. All organizations wanting to use the facility must fill out a Use of Facility form and have all proper signatures in place prior to using the facility.

*It is important to note that this is a dynamic plan that could change quickly based on local, county, state and federal guidelines and data. The Gilmanton School District will continue to use the information provided by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services as its primary source of information regarding the pandemic. We will also continue to monitor and/or take into account the level of community transmission, the transmission of COVID-19 within the school building, and the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the school community when considering a change in our protocols. Any changes in our reopening plan will be communicated to all families as soon as possible via email, Alma, our new student information system, or our Blackboard Connect communication system.*