

Gouverneur Central School District

Delivering the Promise of a Brighter Future



Reopening Plan

2023-2024

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Summary

The Gouverneur Central School District’s reopening plan takes the health and safety of all students, staff, and community members as its prime directive. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (DOH), and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) form the basis of the Gouverneur Central School District’s Reopening Plan. With an emphasis on the washing of hands, use of hand sanitizer and frequent cleanings, it is the District’s intent to minimize the risk of exposure to illness. Please keep in mind, the Reopening Plan will continue to be reviewed and modified at least every six months or as needed.

Reopening Plan

The Gouverneur Central School District’s Reopening Plan is posted on our website: <http://www.gcsk12.org/covid/reopening/>

The Gouverneur Central School District includes all assurances completed by the Superintendent, Jacquelyn Kelly, and all of the elements outlined in the New York State Department of Education guidance document.

District Information

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Health and Safety

Schools are an important part of the infrastructure of communities. They provide safe and supportive learning environments for students that support social and emotional development, provide access to critical services, and improve life outcomes. They also employ people, and enable parents, guardians, and caregivers to work. Though illness is spread in environments such as school settings, multiple studies have shown that transmission rates within school settings, when multiple prevention strategies are in place, are typically lower than – or similar to – community transmission levels.

The following prevention strategies will be utilized by the Gouverneur Central School District in order to prevent outbreaks of illness.

Hand Hygiene Plan

Hand hygiene includes:

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater)
- Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout common areas (cafeteria), building entries, halls outside of gymnasiums and use touch free dispensers when able
- Signage will be located near hand sanitizer indicating visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water
- Any staff member or student unable to use hand sanitizer will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water

The Gouverneur Central School District provides the following:

- Facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water
- Paper towels and touch free paper towel dispensers where feasible; air dryers have been removed and disabled from all buildings
- No-touch trash cans
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol or disinfectant hand wipes
- Promotion of proper hand washing before meals, after recess or physical education, before and other times, as appropriate

All students and staff should wash hands, as follows:

- After using shared objects or surfaces (e.g., electronic devices, musical instruments, writing utensils, tools, toys, desks, or tabletops)
- Before and after snacks and lunch
- After using the bathroom
- After helping a student with toileting
- After sneezing, wiping, or blowing nose, or coughing into hands
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled

Respiratory Hygiene Plan

The Gouverneur Central School District encourages:

- All students and staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately
- If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands
- Students and staff should always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing, and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material

The Gouverneur Central School District will ensure:

- No touch/floor pedal trash receptacles are available in each room and common area.

Daily Health Monitoring

The Gouverneur Central School District requires that ill students and staff stay home and seek the advice of a healthcare provider, if necessary.

The Gouverneur Central School District requires all students or staff with a temperature or signs of illness be sent to the health office for an evaluation and sent home.

Transportation

- All buses which are used every day by the district will be cleaned/disinfected once a day.
- High contact spots will be wiped down after each morning and afternoon run.

Facilities

Cleaning and Disinfection

To help with cleaning and disinfection Gouverneur Central School District will perform the following:

- Perform normal routine cleaning with soap and water to decrease how much virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure
- Provide disinfection using US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectants
- Provide frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people
- Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children
- Clean and disinfect daily all areas of the District
- High touch areas in the buildings will be cleaned throughout the day

The Gouverneur Central School District will clean high touch surfaces frequently throughout the day. Examples of high touch surfaces include:

- Tables
- Doorknobs
- Light switches
- Countertops
- Handles
- Entry Vestibules
- Desks
- Phones
- Keyboards and tablets
- Toilets and restrooms
- Faucets and sinks

During the school day when students and staff are present, a green product will be used to clean high touch areas. When cleaning up after food is consumed and for incidental spills, soap and water will be used.

Cleaning will be done in the off hours of students except for high touch areas. Ventilation filters are changed every six (6) months or more frequently as needed. Windows that can be opened, weather permitting, will be open during the day and closed when staff leave the building.

The Gouverneur Central School District cleans playgrounds per CDC guidance:

- High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings will be cleaned routinely
- Shared athletic/gym equipment (e.g., balls, protective gear) will be cleaned between use per manufacturer’s directions.

School Health Office Cleaning

School health office cleaning must occur after each use of:

- Cots
- Bathroom
- Health office equipment (e.g., blood pressure cuffs, otoscopes, stethoscopes, etc.) following manufacturer’s directions.

Disposable items should be used as much as possible including:

- Disposable pillow protectors
- Disposable thermometers or disposable thermometer sheaths or probes, and disposable otoscope specula

Nutrition

The Gouverneur Central School District plan for child nutrition includes assurances that the district addresses all applicable health and safety guidelines for students in attendance at school. Tables are identified for students with nut allergies eating in the cafeteria, as needed. Students with other allergies are accommodated on an individual basis. The nurse notifies building administrators and teachers of the students with allergies and individual health plans are created to ensure the safety of those students.

Students will wash their hands before eating. Additionally, appropriate hand hygiene is encouraged through teacher support, protocols to cleanse hands upon entering the building and classrooms and before eating. The proper technique for hand washing is taught in person and offered with visuals and words posted throughout the buildings. This information is distributed in the home language of student families needing that translation. The cafeteria manager ensures compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements.

To keep food, students, and staff safe, the district provides, but is not limited to, the following items:

- Food thermometers
- Shield by the registers
- Alcohol wipes
- Potholders/Aprons
- Hairnets
- Vinyl gloves/Poly gloves
- Staff Uniforms (provide their own shoes, no open toe)
- Sink for handwashing
- Cooking and Serving Utensils
- Approved food safe cleaning supplies

The district will routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces including tables, chairs, carts used in transportation, and point-of-service touch pads. Single-use gloves will be used for food preparation and delivery. Staff will wear a disposable apron when handling or delivering food. Only program staff, custodial staff, and approved volunteers may enter the food program areas.

Nutrition

The Gouverneur Central School District has established protocols and procedures for how students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating. Teachers will schedule appropriate hand washing opportunities throughout the school day. Age-appropriate posters describing correct handwashing technique will be hung in bathrooms and above sinks. Teachers and support staff will explain to students why we cannot share food and will ensure that the sharing does not take place.

School meals, complying with Child Nutrition Program requirements, will continue to be available to all students. Protocols have been established to safely serve meals in accordance with state regulations.

Our school uses My School Bucks as a way for you to put money on your child's account for meals. With My School Bucks, you will be able to view cafeteria purchases, check your student's balance, receive low balance alerts, and pay for school meals from anywhere. For more information, please visit our website at www.gcsk12.org and click on the “Parents” link. Then, click on the “Lunches” link.



The Simple Way to Pay

FOR SCHOOL MEALS

myschoolbucks.com



View account balances
and meal purchases



Schedule automatic
payments



Make payments
anytime, anywhere
from our mobile app

Teaching and Learning

The Gouverneur Central School District will determine the mode of instruction based on the emergency being faced by the district. However, the district will make every effort to provide full-time in-person instruction.

Research shows that students learn best in-person. Students require social interaction to develop properly and learn societal norms. They need environments that help sustain and cultivate curiosity, focus, and tolerance of uncertainty.

Teachers intentionally and thoughtfully design instruction to cultivate student engagement, collaboration, and discussion in an in-person learning environment. The Elementary School uses a standards-based reporting system to evaluate students’ progress. Middle School and High school use an average based grading system. Regardless of the method of instructional delivery, those systems of student evaluation will remain in place. Students must engage in the learning tasks and assessments in order for teachers to offer feedback to improve student understanding of content and process.

Should the Gouverneur Central School District have to reevaluate the instructional model due to an emergency, all families will be notified immediately and students will be required to attend remotely.

School Schedules

Regardless of the instructional model, equity and access must be the priority for all students. The Gouverneur Central School District’s plan for reopening is focused on prioritizing in-person learning, ensuring substantive daily interaction between teachers and students.

All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. To ensure a high-quality learning experience for students, a series of protocols have been established including: addressing learning gaps, prioritized curriculum, standards-based instruction and high-value lessons, and professional development to maximize the expertise of instructional professionals.

Should a remote learning model be required, the following remote learning protocols will be implemented. The families of the Gouverneur Central School District will be notified of these protocols in advance and provided with the opportunity to view virtual training videos addressing at-home learning and ask questions, if necessary.

Remote Learning Protocols

~ To be utilized during emergency days only
This is for extended periods of closure and may differ from remote learning protocols for snow days.

Model of Instruction

Combined Synchronous and Asynchronous Instruction

Our District’s model to be enacted for remote instruction would be best characterized as a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

During synchronous instruction, teachers will be providing video-based instruction to students. Whether from the teachers’ homes or from a school-based setting, the teacher will be utilizing their webcam and screen sharing to illustrate materials and provide lectures to students. In this manner, students will be asked to respond in real time whether through the chat function in our video conferencing software, through vocal responses, or through independent work time that is still on the class call.

During asynchronous instruction, teachers will be providing instruction to students through prepared curricular materials. These materials could be teacher generated videos or may utilize courseware such as AccelerateU, Castle Learning, Edgenuity, Seesaw, etc. The time allotted for synchronous and asynchronous instruction will take into consideration both the needs and developmental capabilities of our students.

Remote Learning Protocols

Pre-K - Grade 4 Students **Communication**

ParentSquare, Seesaw, Zoom, and/or Google Meet will be the learning management systems used by teachers in Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 3.

Google Classroom and Google Meet will be the learning management systems used by teachers in Grade 4.

Ongoing communication with families will take place through these learning management systems.

Instruction

Elementary students will be required to participate in a minimum of two (2) hours daily of synchronous instruction (with the teacher) with additional independent asynchronous practice time required.

- ***Daily instruction, which may include a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction, will include a minimum of:***
 - ***A synchronous morning meeting***
 - ***One (1) hour of English Language Arts instruction***
 - ***One (1) hour of Mathematics instruction***
 - ***One (1) hour of Science and/or Social Studies instruction***
 - ***A daily special activity (Art, Library, Music, or Physical Education)***
- The teacher will determine the level of instruction based on the needs and age of the students being instructed.
- The synchronous instruction time may be broken down into multiple smaller sessions of instruction based on the age and needs of the students in addition to the curriculum.

The day of an elementary student in Pre-K - Grades 4 will begin at 10:50 a.m. and end at 3:50 p.m. Individual classroom teachers will provide more specific details regarding the schedule.

- Daily attendance will be taken for all students in elementary school. Each classroom teacher will take attendance in a synchronous instruction session.

Remote Learning Protocols

Grades 5 - 12 Students Communication

Google Classroom and Google Meet will be the learning management systems used by teachers in Grades 5 - 12.

Ongoing communication with families will take place through these learning management systems.

Instruction

Middle and high school students will be required to participate in approximately four (4) hours daily of synchronous instruction with additional independent asynchronous practice time required.

- ***Daily instruction, which may include a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction, will include a minimum of:***
 - *A daily check-in and instruction with each teacher on the student's current schedule at the regularly scheduled time.*
 - *A daily special activity (Art, Library, Music, or Physical Education), if applicable.*
- The teacher will determine the type of instruction based on the needs and age of the students being instructed.
- The synchronous instruction time may be broken down into multiple smaller sessions of instruction based on the age and needs of the students in addition to the curriculum.

A middle school student's day will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 1:55 p.m.

- The school day will follow the two-hour delay nine (9) period schedule allowing for students to be directly instructed by teachers at the time (and period) the student would be with that teacher during in-class instruction. This will prevent conflicts in schedules from occurring.

A high school student's day will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 2:18 p.m.

- The school day will follow the two-hour delay eight (8) period schedule allowing for students to be directly instructed by teachers at the time (and period) the student would be with that teacher during in-class instruction. This will prevent conflicts in schedules from occurring.

Period attendance will be taken for all students in middle and high school.

Remote Learning Protocols

Responsibilities:

- **Teachers and Related Service Providers will:**
 - Ensure that all students are familiar with the learning management system that will be used.
 - Establish virtual meeting expectations and practice with students how to log in to Google Classroom, Google Meet, Seesaw, and/or Zoom.
 - Remind students and parents of procedures when a remote learning day is announced, and make sure students are prepared with Chromebooks and/or appropriate materials.
 - Require elementary students to participate in approximately one – two hours daily of direct instruction (with the teacher) with additional independent practice time required.
 - This time requirement may include synchronous and/or asynchronous instruction.
 - The teacher will determine the type of instruction based on the needs and age of the students being instructed.
 - The direct instruction time may be broken down into multiple smaller sessions of instruction based on the age and needs of the students in addition to the curriculum.
 - Require middle and high school students to participate in approximately three – four hours daily of direct instruction with additional independent practice time required.
 - This time requirement may include synchronous and/or asynchronous instruction.
 - The teacher will determine the type of instruction based on the needs and age of the students being instructed.
 - The direct instruction time may be broken down into multiple smaller sessions of instruction based on the age and needs of the students in addition to the curriculum.

If remote learning is not possible, based on the needs and age of the students being instructed, teachers may choose to provide paper copies of work to be completed and office hours (during the hours of a normal school day) during which time families can contact teachers with questions.

The district will ensure that instructional materials are received by students prior to the school closure.

Remote Learning Protocols

Responsibilities:

- **Parents will:**

- Ensure children are prepared to log on to remote instruction should a remote day be called.
- Notify the school immediately if your family is in need of a hotspot to provide Wi-Fi. Please call (315)287-1949.
- Remind children of procedures should a remote learning day be announced, and make sure students are prepared with Chromebooks and/or appropriate materials.

Assessing student learning gaps or areas of need after an extended period of remote instruction will continue to be an important part of a teacher’s job. Formative assessment is frequently used to assess student understanding of pre-requisite skills and will continue to be a common practice.

Acknowledging that the typical content in a given grade level or course may need to be adjusted, standards will be prioritized to ensure that students receive instruction for key understandings and skills necessary for students’ success in future study.

Grading practices will follow a standards-based/performance indicator framework designed to provide direct feedback regarding students’ understanding of course content.

Emergency Drills

All schools are required to conduct fire (evacuation) drills and lockdown drills in accordance with Education Law §807. Each school building must conduct twelve (12) drills during each school year, including eight (8) evacuation drills to be completed by December 31st and four (4) lockdown drills. Such drills must be conducted without exceptions. It is also a requirement to run at least one (1) full evacuation exercise for the district each year.

Each school building will instruct employees and students in emergency drill procedures and protocols. Every effort will be made to conduct drills without modifications. Should modifications be required, employees and students will be made aware in advance of the drill(s).

Employees and students will be instructed that if it were an actual emergency that required evacuation or lockdown, the most imminent concern is to get to safety; maintaining modifications in an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown would not be possible and should not be the first priority.

Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism

Attendance of any school-age student of compulsory age, who resides in the district or is placed by a parent/guardian in another public school district, a charter school, or is placed by a district administrator or the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the school district in educational programs outside the district, must be reported in Student Information Repository System (SIRS). To date, the reporting of daily attendance of Prekindergarten students is not required.

Attendance must be reported by any reporting entity that is required to take attendance. Resident students of compulsory age who were not in attendance in a public school, including charter schools, nonpublic school, or approved home-schooling program in the current school year must be reported until they exceed compulsory school age, they no longer reside in the district, or the district has documentation that the student has entered another educational program leading to a high school diploma. Students who drop out while still of compulsory school age must be kept on the school attendance register until they exceed compulsory school age or move out of the district.

The Gouverneur Central School District will maintain all student attendance records in the Schooltool database. Attendance will be taken daily and by period based on the grade level of the student and student attendance will be reported to the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) as required.

Special Education

The Gouverneur Central School District will work to ensure equity in education for our students with disabilities while keeping the health and safety of our students and staff foremost in our plans. The district will continue to offer a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to our students with special needs, as well as continue to provide mandated programs, services and supports as indicated on student Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

District staff and contracted service providers will document all special education services and supports provided to students and families, as well as communications with both students and families.

The Gouverneur Central School District will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities by maintaining current Individual Education Plans (IEPs) established in conjunction with parents/guardians. Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Preschool Special Education meetings will be scheduled following NYSED compliance guidelines either virtually or in-person to discuss initial evaluations, reevaluations, annual reviews, and program reviews in the parent/guardian’s preferred language and mode of communication. All students will be provided with their mandated services pursuant to their IEP/504 Plans.

- All providers will be assigned a caseload of students.
- Students will be scheduled into the appropriate Self-contained, Integrated Co-Teaching and Resource Room classes.
- Staff will read student IEPs/504 Plans for students on their roster to ensure the provision of mandated services, accommodations, and modifications.
- Educators and providers will collect data to track progress toward attainment of IEP goals.
- Progress Reports will be issued at least as often as report cards.
- Service accountability will be provided for all Special Education/504 students.
- Instruction will focus on direct teaching and guided instruction with ongoing assessment and ongoing feedback for students and families.
- Specific hours/minutes per week will be established and schedules clearly communicated to students and families.

Special Education

The Gouverneur Central School District will continue to collaborate with special education service providers, for students served through the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and the Committee on Special Education (CSE), to ensure a consistency and appropriateness of provision is maintained. All providers will be participating in CSE/CPSE meetings, documenting student service provision and student/family communications. The District's CPSE and CSE will work closely with St. Lawrence-Lewis B.O.C.E.S., Jefferson-Lewis B.O.C.E.S., and additional contracted service providers to maintain mandated services, for both the school age and preschool special education populations, which will allow for continuation of service provision for all learning environments.

Should the district be required to shift to remote learning, all related service providers will:

- Ensure that students are familiar with the learning management system that will be used.
- Establish virtual meeting expectations and schedules, and practice with students how to log in to Google Classroom, Google Meet, Seesaw, and/or Zoom.
- Remind students and parents of procedures when remote learning is announced, and make sure students are prepared with Chromebooks and/or appropriate materials.

Social Emotional Well-Being

The Gouverneur Central School District recognizes that the social emotional well-being of our students and staff is critically important. The district has developed a network of mental health supports, resources, and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional needs of students and employees.

This has been developed by a district committee that included school building and/or district leaders, community-based service providers, certified school counselors, and other pupil personnel service providers. The Social Emotional Learning/Mental Health Reopening Committee formulated the comprehensive development of a student focused social emotional well-being plan, including culturally responsive instruction.

Gouverneur Central School District
“Delivering the Promise of a Brighter Future”

The district will continue to provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students to develop coping and resiliency skills for students and employees.

The district has developed a network of mental health supports, resources, and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional needs of students and employees. Please contact the building administration, school counselors, or social workers for more information.

Building Administration

- High School:** Cory Wood, Principal, wood.cory@gcsk12.org (315)287-1900
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- Middle School:** Robert Kotz, Principal, kotz.robert@gcsk12.org (315)287-1903
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- Elementary School:** Kayley Learn learn.kayley@gcsk12.org (315)287-2260

Bilingual Education & World Languages

The Gouverneur Central School District will complete the English Language Learners (ELLs) identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for all students who enroll in the district.

A New York State certified teacher is responsible for the identification of students qualifying for ELL support. The district will provide the required instructional Units of Study to all ELLs based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during the initial ELL identification assessment – NYSITELL.

Former ELLs at the Commanding level of proficiency within two years of exiting ELL status will continue receiving former ELL services in the form of integrated ENL or other former ELL services approved by the Commissioner under Part 154-2.3(h) during in-person or hybrid learning. The teacher providing ELL services will collaborate with the classroom teacher to create a schedule that allows full support for all ELL students. Classroom teachers and the service provider will maintain regular communication with parents/guardians of ELLs to ensure that they are engaged in their children’s education and provide all communications for parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language and mode of communication. Teachers will maintain a log of student and family contact.

All ELL students will receive the appropriate number of minutes of instructional support. ELL students will improve their English Language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The teacher providing ELL services and classroom teacher will analyze student performance on the selected assessments to ascertain student growth and identify strengths and areas of weakness.

Digital Equity and Access

Sufficient access to a computing device and high-speed internet broadband is essential for education equity.

The Gouverneur Central School District will continue to survey student families to ascertain whether they have access to reliable high-speed internet.

All students in Kindergarten through 12th grade will be issued a Chromebook and charger and will be permitted to transport them between home and school, if necessary. Those students without access to Wi-Fi will be issued a hotspot with sufficient data to complete instructional learning tasks.

The district will provide multiple ways for students to participate in learning and demonstrate proficiency in learning standards if school should be closed due to an emergency.

- **Seesaw** and **Zoom** or **Google Meet** will be the learning management system used by all teachers in UPK – Grade 3.
- **Google Classroom** and **Google Meet** will be the learning management system used by all teachers in Grades 4 - 12.

Teachers and Related Service Providers will:

- Ensure that all students are familiar with the learning management system that will be used.
- Establish virtual meeting expectations and practice with students how to log in to Google Classroom, Google Meet, Seesaw, and/or Zoom.
- Remind students and parents of procedures when a remote learning day is announced, and make sure students are prepared with Chromebooks and/or appropriate materials.

Ongoing communication with families will take place through Seesaw, Google Classroom, email, and/or ParentSquare.

Please notify the school immediately if your family is in need of a hotspot to provide Wi-Fi.

Communication and Family and Community Engagement

One priority of the Gouverneur Central School District is the health and safety of all students, parents, employees, and community members.

Public Communications

To ensure regular and informational communications with the public, the Gouverneur Central School District will implement the following methods of communication:

<i>Communication Method</i>
Local TV, radio, and newspapers
District website
Social media platforms
Meetings

Families and Students

All public communications methods outlined above may be used by the Gouverneur Central School District, in addition to:

<i>Communication Method</i>
ParentSquare
Emails to parents/guardians
Letters
Social media platforms

All District Staff

All communications methods outlined above may be used by the Gouverneur Central School District, in addition to:

<i>Communication Method</i>
Gouverneur Central School District – All-staff email list
Newsletters (print and digital)
ParentSquare
Direct supervisor communications
Letters home, if necessary
Staff meetings
Shared Documents

The school district will ensure all students and employees follow health and safety protocols, including but not limited to hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene.

Additionally, the Gouverneur Central School District provides copies of this document in the language(s) spoken at home among families and throughout the school community: Spanish, Chinese, etc.. To request copies of this document in other languages or to request written plans accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments, contact Jacquelyn Kelly, Superintendent, at kelly.jackie@gcsk12.org or (315)287-4870.

The District will continue to work with the district-level and building-level shared decision-making teams to solicit family feedback to identify and address needs and concerns.