

Grainger County Schools plans a return to traditional schedule and attendance guidelines. All students will attend classes with daily teacher lead instruction at school where they are enrolled. GCS does not plan to offer a full- time virtual option during this school year.

Our system safety recommendations and plans include, but are not limited to:

- All students will attend classes in person each day with no full-time virtual option.
- Virtual education may be provided to students that are quarantined.
- Assuming the Tennessee Department of Education allows virtual education for the masses, virtual days of instruction may be required during periods of quarantine, school or system closure. Attendance will require students to be logged in during the school day and participate in real time for classroom instruction and assignments. The teachers will monitor attendance of students.
- Daily cleaning and disinfection of all buildings and buses will continue.
- Face coverings or masks for all students and staff (PreK-12) are **OPTIONAL** in the schools. However, per federal regulations, masks are currently required for public transportation which includes school buses. This status of masks may change. Masks will be provided by the school system for both students and staff if they so choose to wear.
- Social distancing will be utilized as much as possible.
- Temperature checks will not take place for all students daily; however, students who have symptoms or visit the nurse may have his/her temperature taken. We ask parents to monitor children health conditions and not send students to school if they have a fever or experiencing some other type of health issue. Any such absence would be unexcused without medical documentation.
- Contact tracing will take place for students testing positive to COVID-19. Quarantine will be based on a case by case basis due to the level of exposure so parents can monitor for COVID related symptoms. Seating charts in all areas will continue due to contact tracing for exposure. However, it is not really feasible to have seating charts in the gym, cafeteria, or any large assembly location.
- Students will be changing classes in all the schools except for a self-contained environment.
- Students who test positive will be required to stay at home for the recommended days via CDC guidelines of positive test results will be required. Students who are household contacts of a positive case will be required to stay home for the recommended amount of days via CDC guidelines. If students continue to log in and do their work virtually, it will be classified as excused absences. The quarantined student must log into some audio/visual

communication such as Google Meets or Zoom and attend during the regularly scheduled time.

- The quarantine period for any student/staff testing positive for COVID-19 is ten (10) days, and will return to school on the eleventh (11th) day as long as they are symptom free for at least 24 hours. The quarantine time for household contacts will be based on a case by case basis.
- Staff and students will not be sent home based on COVID symptoms! Staff and students will be quarantined only if the school officials determine that they have been exposed or have tested positive. The decision to quarantine will be made on a case by case basis.
- Employees will not be offered COVID days. Any time missed will require the employee to use his/her sick or personal days.
- Frequent hand washing will be encouraged and access to hand sanitizer for all classes will be available.
- Meals will only be served in the cafeteria. Meals will not be delivered to other locations in the school *unless local COVID conditions warrant distancing that requires optional locations for meals. Meals may not be served outside the cafeteria without explicit written approval by the Director of Schools.*

All students will be eligible for free lunch next school year, but parents are encouraged to complete the free/reduced lunch application to be eligible for other state benefits.

- Touch free filtered water stations will be provided for students to fill their water bottles. Water bottles will be provided to the students by Grainger County Schools.
- Visitors will be allowed in the schools but limited to protect health and safety of students and staff. We will slowly begin to open up schools to visitors this year. We understand parents want to visit and bring students into schools and we want you to feel welcome in schools, but our first priority is to keep everyone safe. Please be patient as we limit visitors at the beginning of the year and monitor the number of positive cases in our county. We will lift some of these precautions as the school year progresses. For example, IEP meetings, scheduled principal meetings, scheduled teacher meetings, health plans/504 could be attended by parents/guardians. However, a parent would not be allowed to freely walk down the hallway to take a student to his/her classroom.
- Only faculty that are working bus duty will be required to arrive at 7:30AM. This will go back to the pre-COVID schedule. Standard school hours will be utilized. Therefore, administrators will have students gathering in the gym or cafeteria when they get off the bus in the mornings.

We will follow the traditional schedule and in-person attendance if conditions for COVID spread are not considered as high risk for our area. We will continue to monitor state guidelines and health updates. If there is a surge in cases or new health guidance for our county or state, parents should be prepared for the potential of optional schedules or periods of quarantine.

If conditions are considered at higher risk level for COVID spread, classroom, building, school or entire system may be closed for extended periods of time during the 2021.2022 school year. The decision to follow a Blended Schedule or to Close classroom, school or entire system will be determined by the Director of Schools for the safety of all students based on current health conditions and updates. Parents and families will be notified when/if we require transition from one plan/schedule to another (Traditional, Blended, Closure or Quarantine). Employees may be “repurposed” during the 21.22 school year. This applies to all employees. For example, it is possible that some teachers and/or teaching assistants will be pulled from their home school for assistance with the virtual option. This is just one of many ways that the Director of Schools may repurpose employees during the 21.22 school year.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE ACCESS AND LEARNING SUPPORT:

Students will be provided and issued a device to utilize in classrooms and/or home as needed during periods of blended schedule or closure. A device will be issued to all students at the beginning of the school year. This 1:1 initiative will assist if we must quickly implement virtual instruction. Grainger County Schools will use Google Classroom as the platform for any required on-line instruction as well as in the classroom with in-person instruction

PRIORITIZING HEALTH AND SAFETY

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Grainger County Schools ("District") has been exploring different and reasonable ways to provide services to all students. The District has worked with state and local agencies, including our local health department, to draft and implement guidelines moving forward regarding cleaning, screening, etc. Though the District and its agents will work hard to implement and abide by those guidelines, neither the guidelines themselves nor even recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") would ever allow the District to guarantee an environment that is entirely free of COVID-19 related risks.

By allowing your child to return to school, you must understand that your child's attendance will require him/her to physically interact with the District's staff members, other students, and even

some limited volunteers. As such, despite all reasonable efforts on behalf of the District, physical interaction with the public at large may pose some unavoidable risks to you, your child, and your family due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the District hopes that everyone remains safe and healthy during this trying time, we also want to remain both honest and transparent with our parents about the very real risks posed by COVID-19 both inside and outside of our schools.

TRANSPORTATION

- All buses will run on a regular schedule.
- Masks are required at this time for all students on buses at the beginning of 21.22 school year due to federal laws requiring masks for public transportation.
- Requirements for masks may be adjusted as indicated by number of active cases and other health updates and federal guidelines
- Buses will be sanitized after morning and afternoon routes
- Buses will have assigned seats

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021-22:

Currently our school calendar has an **August 4** start day for students.