

RETURN TO LEARN

PLAN:

A Guide to the Challenges of COVID-19 Within the Public School Setting

*If you need this in another language we recommend using Google translate.
[Translate.Google.com](https://translate.google.com)*

2021-2022

GREGORY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GREGORY, SD



Revised: January 10, 2022
Approved: January 10, 2022

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The Gregory School District is fully committed to working towards “Return to Learn” for in-person learning at our schools and has constructed a district-wide community committee to address this need.

As COVID-19 continues to change the world we live in and change our landscape as a school district, we will continue to work together, share best current practices, and allocate for state and federal waivers to allow us to provide the best possible programs for all of our students. This document provides a plan for our district as we prepare for the upcoming school year. This committee worked tirelessly to provide educational opportunities both in and out of the classroom for the 2020/21 school year. For the 2021/22 school year, the Gregory School District plans to return to “normal” with few changes and disruptions to the school experience.

Our plan will be individualized to the needs of the Gregory School District. There is no one-size-fits-all in regards to reopening our schools. Based on current information, we are devising a plan for our school district based on guiding principles, current planning considerations, and pertinent information from public health and the Department of Education. These plans are subject to change based on new guidance from state & federal departments.

Many thanks to the school district staff and local medical community members who have helped to develop these guidelines.

Sara Anderson
Superintendent

Go Learn! Go Live! Go Succeed! Go GORILLAS!
Daily Symptom Screening Checklist

Home-Based Symptom Screening

Caregivers: If your child has any of the following symptoms, they might have an illness they can spread to others.

- Temperature external of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Sore throat
- Cough (for students with chronic cough due to allergies or asthma, a change in their cough from usual)
- Difficulty breathing (for students with asthma, check for a change from their baseline breathing)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- Experiencing recent loss of taste and/or smell with no other explanation

Check your child for these symptoms before they go to school. Check symptoms for changes from usual or baseline health.

If YES to ANY of the questions, DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL and seek guidance from your medical provider. Contact your school to inform them of you/your child's symptoms. You may also contact the South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) at 1-800-592-1861 with questions.

If NO to ALL questions, go to school.

Students who are sick with contagious illnesses should not attend school. Most illnesses do not require the same level or length of isolation that COVID-19 does. Excluding students from school for longer than what is called for in existing school policies (e.g., fever free without medication for 24-hours) based on COVID-19 symptoms alone risks repeated, long-term unnecessary student absence.

The South Dakota Department of Health and CDC have established guidance and recommendations for school districts across the state. Please refer to their websites for additional information.

ACADEMICS

In-Person/On Campus Learning

On-campus learning (in the classroom) will be the only learning option provided by the Gregory School District during the 2021/2022 school year. In the event of an acute illness or surgery required of the student, distance learning may be provided for a period of time at the request of a medical professional and/or digression of the district level administration.

Returning to the classroom like “normal” is what is best for our students for their educational and social/emotional development. The best protection possible will be given to all staff and students within the Gregory School District. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the vaccines when available and consult their physician.

General Guidelines

- The Gregory School District and board of education has been diligent and responsible in handling the COVID-19 pandemic. For the 2021-2022 school year, we have determined that masks would NOT be required by students and staff in our buildings. Masks will only be required when the CDC guidelines permit due to positive test and/or close contact. However, we encourage and recommend proper face coverings be worn. You can learn more about mask wearing at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

- The District encourages physical distancing throughout the school day and school activities when manageable.
- Frequent handwashing through the day, before and after eating, and after using shared equipment is recommended.
- Water bottles are highly recommended. Fill stations are available in every building.
- Visitor access during lunch will be allowed at the present time. If additional mitigation strategies are necessary the lunchroom will be closed to those outside the school.
- COVID-related extended absences will be addressed individually based on students' specific situations. Students will have access to classroom resources and/or learning management systems.
- Accommodations to health and safety policies will be made on an individual basis to ensure all students including students with disabilities have access to instruction and district services.
- Facilities will be regularly cleaned and maintained in accordance with guidelines set forth by the CDC.
- You can find more information about proper hygiene here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Notification Process

When a positive case is identified in the building, those identified as close contacts will be notified. Student privacy will be of the utmost importance. If a staff member is identified as positive, the students in the classroom will be notified if considered a close contact.

The district will work closely with the DOH and review recommended CDC guidelines regularly and see how those fit with the Gregory School District. DOH will be utilized when necessary and use them as guidance in determining issues moving forward.

Safety & Well-Being Considerations

The safety of our employees and students is our first priority. Upon reopening, our schools have been cleaned and disinfected. In addition to the deep cleaning of facilities, the district is committed to protecting students and staff in order to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

The Gregory School District counseling office is committed to providing counseling opportunities for all students and staff. The school counseling staff, in addition to classroom teachers, will provide counseling sessions, educational information and resources to promote emotional health. Collaboration with students, families, teaching staff and outside resources will continue to be an integral part of the process. To address the individual needs of each student and staff member, school staff will continue to work with these resources to identify essential

services that can be provided both, directly and indirectly, when on the school campus or when in a remote learning environment.

- Staff and students should stay home while exhibiting symptoms of illness. It is recommended the symptomatic individual consult his/her healthcare provider for testing, guidance, and care.
- Families are encouraged to watch for symptoms at home when there is a positive case in the building.
- Staff members and students deemed to be close contacts outside of school through contact tracing completed by the South Dakota Department of Health, or who test positive for COVID, may be excluded from school in accordance with state guidelines.

Daily Practices/Food Services

To assist us in promoting safety for all, please encourage the following:

- Proper handwashing and other hygiene practices
- A water bottle for personal use (water filling stations will be available)
- No sharing of snacks or treats
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In addition to general safety practices, the district will:

- Provide additional distancing to the greatest extent possible
- Provide hand sanitizer
- Prop doors when possible
- Cafeteria time spaced/more isolated if possible
- New lunch tables/more seating available
- Enhanced cleaning protocols
- Provide training for all staff for effective and safe practices

- Establish district-wide protocols for cleaning and disinfecting school facilities and equipment
- Limit gatherings of students and staff in hallways and common areas such as gym, lunchroom, library, etc.
- The Gregory School District purchased a bi-polar ionization system to improve the indoor air quality within the district level buildings on campus.

Covid Positive Cases/Quarantine

- The Gregory School District will continue to follow the recommendations of the SD Department of Health and the CDC. Students and staff who test positive will follow the isolation guidelines of the CDC.
- If you have had your COVID-19 booster vaccination OR completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months OR completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months: Wear a mask around others for 10 days from your last exposure (day zero). You do not have to stay home. Test on day 5, if possible. If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.
- If you are not vaccinated for COVID-19 vaccine OR completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted OR completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted: Stay home for 5 days from your last exposure (day zero). After that continue to wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days. If you cannot quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days. Test on day 5 if possible. If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

Foundational Practices to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

- All employees were provided with the knowledge and resources to be vaccinated.
- The social distancing of 3 feet will be applied when possible.
- Students and Staff will be asked to follow routine handwashing protocols.
- The school district will maintain clean and sanitized facilities.
- Touchless technologies are located for water bottles and will be encouraged at water fountains.
- One-to-one nonshared technology will be used in the district.
- Reminder for parents to screen children at home before sending them to school.

Transportation

- Transportation will be provided for all students, however, it will be considered “ride at your own risk” due to the fact that minimum distancing cannot occur on our busses.
- Hand sanitizer will be available.
- District transportation will be disinfected daily.
- The district will not be able to accommodate social distancing on district transportation. Family members are encouraged to sit together.

Services to Address Students' Academic Needs

The Gregory School District realizes that there is a great need to accommodate student learning loss and student social, emotional, and mental health needs through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Because of this, the district has invested in our students' through:

1. Utilizing progress monitoring for our students in English/Language Arts
2. Utilizing progress monitoring for our students in mathematics
3. Utilizing a summer school program for student learning loss
4. Purchase new programs and curriculums for students' academic gain
5. Utilizing the ICU program at the middle school level for missing assignments/late work/tutoring
6. Utilizing the Everfi program to address social/emotional needs of students
7. Utilizing the DIAL virtual school for credit recovery for high school students
8. Utilizing the Heggerty program for early elementary and Bridge the Gap for middle level learners
9. Utilizing IXL to systematically provide support to students learning at all levels

Activities & Communications

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Gregory School District will maintain the extracurricular programs, organizations, and activities that are so important to the physical, mental, and social well-being of our students. Activity protocols and restrictions that are developed by the South Dakota High School Activities Association will be followed if applicable. Information will be made available to all stakeholders as it changes.

Communication

To stay current on the most up-to-date district information, please make sure your contact information on Infinite Campus Parent Portal is correct. If it is not correct, please contact ashley.lozano@k12.sd.us or call 605-835-9651 to update your information. Updated information will be communicated through district messaging systems, our website, and social media platforms.

Stake-Holder Input and Public Comment

Members of The Return to Learn Task Force utilized prior to the 2020-2021 school year were all invited to participate in a review of this opening plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

This meeting was held on: July 12th, 2021. Members included certified and classified staff, business manager, technology coordinator, principal, superintendent, activities director, administration, a school board member and members of the medical community. This plan received 100% support from all the members present.

This plan was presented for board adoption on: July 15th, 2021.

This plan was available to parents on July 16th, 2021.

This plan was reviewed on December 13th, 2021.

This plan was revised on January 10th, 2022.

Reviewing schedule, at regularly scheduled school board meetings:

- December 2021
- June 2022
- December 2022
- June 2023

We strived to utilize a “common sense” approach in developing and revising this plan to best fit the needs of the Gregory School District.