

# **Groton Area School District 06-6**

## **Learn On - 2022**



This document is the District's plan for a safe return to instruction for the 2022-2023 school year based on the best information available at the time of publication. Periodic reviews to this plan are required at a minimum of once every six months and more often as local conditions require.

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## Return to Standard District Calendar

For the 2022-2023 school year, the Groton Area School District will operate on a standard five day per week school calendar. The full [school calendar](http://www.grotonarea.com) is available online at [www.grotonarea.com](http://www.grotonarea.com).

The traditional calendar allows for a resumption of normal start and end times for the school day.

Elementary:                      Start Time 8:21 AM                      End Time 3:22 PM

Middle/High School:        Start Time: 8:30 AM                      End Time 3:30 PM

As usual, the district will communicate changes to the calendar with the following tools:

1. School District Website, [www.grotonarea.com](http://www.grotonarea.com)
2. School District App Push Notifications – the app is available for free download for both Apple and Android Devices. Search “Groton Area Tigers, SD” in the app store.
3. Apptegy mass calling system
4. Facebook
5. Groton Daily Independent

## Traditional Learning Plan

For the 2022-2023 school year, students will continue in-person instruction.

In-person instruction will be augmented with the use of Brightspace (online learning platform). This will better prepare student and staff for a seamless transition into blended learning or fully remote learning and build on the work done during the previous two school years.

Students will participate in hand-washing and frequent use of hand sanitizer.

The district is prepared for a situation that would require implementation of a remote learning plan for all students. In such an instance, instruction will be provided online using teacher created content through Brightspace. Students absent from school for self-isolation, quarantine, or other reasons may participate in learning via Brightspace to stay current with lessons and assignments.

The School Counselor and Opportunity Coordinator as well as community-based counseling services are available to help address student social, emotional, and mental health needs.

The District is implemented NWEA Maps testing during the 2021-22 school year and will continue into the 2022-23 school year to seek out/identify students who may have fallen behind during the pandemic or who are otherwise in need of additional academic support. The District operates a Response to Intervention program at the elementary level to support students and provides Connect 4ED Summer Programming for elementary aged students identified as in need of additional academic supports. The District provides ICU Programming for MS/HS aged students who’ve fallen behind and individualized services for HS aged students identified as “at-risk.”

## Continuity of Instruction Summary

The summary of learning options below represents the district's best options for providing an appropriate learning environment based on local health data. Movement between plans will be determined based on local health conditions and may not necessarily follow a linear progression.

| <a href="#">Traditional Learning Plan</a>  | <a href="#">Blended Learning Plan</a>   | <a href="#">Remote Learning Plan</a>  |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Students will participate in regular in-person instruction. Traditional learning will be augmented with the use of the Brightspace Learning Management System.</p> <p>The District will continue basic measures to support student and staff health and safety at school facilities</p> <p>Remote learning will be provided through the Brightspace Learning Management System for students who are absent from school.</p> <p>The School Counselor and Opportunity Coordinator as well as community-based counseling services are available to help address social, emotional, and mental health needs of students or staff.</p> | <p>Students will participate in two days/week of in-person instruction and two days/week of remote learning.</p> <p>The District will continue measures to support student and staff health and safety at school facilities.</p> <p>Students in the gold group will attend school on Mondays and Tuesday. Students in the black group will attend school on Thursdays and Fridays. Wednesdays will be used for instructional planning and facilities maintenance.</p> <p>Students with health concerns may opt-in to fully remote learning or choose the option for traditional homeschooling pursuant SDCL 13-27-3.</p> <p>Remote learning will be provided through the Brightspace Learning Management System for all students not in physically attending.</p> <p>Student participation and assignment completion will be required on all scheduled days for instruction. Student "attendance" and engagement will be measured by analysis of student activity with the Brightspace Learning Management System.</p> <p>The School Counselor and Opportunity Coordinator as well as community-based counseling services are available to help address student social, emotional, and mental health needs. These services may be offered remotely or by telephone to best accommodate the needs of all students and staff.</p> | <p>All students will participate in remote learning via the Brightspace Learning Management System.</p> <p>Student participation and assignment completion will be required on all scheduled days for instruction. Student "attendance" and engagement will be measured by analysis of student activity with the Brightspace Learning Management System.</p> <p>The School Counselor and Opportunity Coordinator as well as community-based counseling services are available to help address student and staff social, emotional, and mental health needs. These services may be offered remotely or by telephone if the schools are closed for remote learning.</p> |
| Minimal Physical Distancing  | Moderate Physical Distancing  | Maximum Physical Distancing   |

## Student Learning

Temporary school closures in the spring of 2020 followed by the resumption of online and remote learning for the final nine weeks of the 2019-2020 school year resulted in lost learning opportunities for students of all backgrounds across our District.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the District resumed in-person learning with the exception of a small subgroup of students who opted-in to remote learning opportunities provided by the District. While the majority of students learned in a traditional classroom environment, many experienced periods of absenteeism due to quarantine or isolation as recommended by Centers for Disease Control and the South Dakota Department of Health for the purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Combined with new distractions as our focus shifted more heavily toward providing a safe and healthy physical environment, our students lived a much different educational experience throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

In order that we gain a more complete understanding of the impact of these significant changes on student academics, the District has implemented a more cohesive system of informal assessments to inform decision making pertaining to relevant and necessary interventions and continue or expand existing opportunities for student academic support.

The Groton Area School District has implemented NWEA Maps testing to help in identifying the full scope of learning loss by student including specific skills where additional support, interventions, or curriculum adjustments are necessary. The District has operated a Response to Interventions program in grades K-5 including benchmark testing and progress monitoring. The NWEA Maps testing will be extended through the upper grades and have the benefit of longitudinal monitoring of students and programs.

The Groton Area School District will continue to operate a Connect 4 ED Summer School Program for students in grades 1-5 with an identified academic need.

The Groton Area School District will continue to operate in person ICU (Instructional Intensive Care Unit) program for students in grades 6-12 in need of additional academic support. The program is designed to meet immediate needs of students facing academic difficulty in meeting course requirements either needing academic support or behavior support (i.e. assignment completion).

## Health and Safety

The Groton Area School District will continue to operate with measures in place to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. We cannot guarantee that students or school personnel will not become infected with COVID-19.

To avoid the unnecessary transmission of any contagious illness including COVID-19, students and staff who are experiencing symptoms of contagious illness should stay home and consider evaluation by the individual's primary care provider for direction or treatment.



**Monitor your symptoms.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control<sup>1</sup>, symptom screening should not try to identify every known symptom of COVID-19. No single symptom indicates someone has COVID-19, and many COVID-19 symptoms can occur when a person does not have COVID-19 or any infectious illness (See Appendix A). The presence of any of the symptoms below generally suggests a student has an infectious illness and should not attend school, regardless of whether the illness is COVID-19. For students with chronic conditions, a positive screening should represent a change from their typical health status.

- Temperature 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 baseline)
- Difficulty breathing (for students with asthma, a change from their baseline breathing)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

Students should not attend school in-person if they or their caregiver identifies new development of any of the symptoms above.

If your child has any of the symptoms above:

- Keep them home from school.
- Contact School Nurse, Beth Gustafson at 605-397-8381 or your primary care provider to discuss testing for COVID-19.



**If sick, stay home except to get medical care.**

### **Classroom Safety**

Students will be seated in each class to promote learning according to the teacher's plan for lesson delivery. This may include small group settings, pods, or rows.

Student and staff will be encouraged to bring water bottles from home for personal use. Students will not be allowed to share water bottles and will be encouraged to take their bottles home each day to get washed.

In the 2020-2021 school year, the District increased outside air intake to the maximum extent possible to improve ventilation of the Groton Elementary School and installed air conditioning in the Groton High School facility to improve ventilation and to allow the opportunity for correct mask-wearing.

The Groton Area School District is committed to meeting the needs of all students while prioritizing the health and safety of individual students, teachers, and staff members. Children with specific health and educational needs should discuss their options with their teachers or appropriate building principals to determine what accommodations are appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html#symptoms>

## Hand Hygiene

Proper hand hygiene is an important tool in limiting the spread of infectious illness, including COVID-19. The District provides supplies necessary for students and staff to perform appropriate hand hygiene. All elementary classrooms are equipped with sinks, soap, and paper towels to allow for regular hand washing.

Hand sanitizer will be available and used on entry to and exit from classrooms.

[Know When to Wash Your Hands](#)

[CDC – Wash Your Hands](#)



**Clean your hands often.**

## Respiratory Etiquette

Individuals with a cough should exercise precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory droplets by covering their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, then place the used tissue in the trash, and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.

[CDC – Cover Your Cough](#)

## Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

The district utilizes the services of a full-time K-12 school counselor and coordinates closely with community mental health agencies to address acute social, emotional, and mental health needs of students.

The district will further address the needs of employees through specific activities and speakers at inservice times to address the social, emotional, and mental health of staff.

## Transportation



Hand sanitizer will be provided for use when boarding school district transportation.

No children will be permitted to use district transportation who are sick or who become sick during the day.

Drivers will perform enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces following each trip.

## Food Service

The Groton Area School District will operate a School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program with adopted modifications to support a healthy environment for congregate eating.

Federal financial assistance that provided free meals to all students during the 2021-2022 school year has not been extended. Therefore, we encourage all families who may qualify for free or reduced priced meals based on income to complete the application process to gain eligibility for meal benefits for the household.

### [Application for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals](#) [Income Eligibility Guidelines for 2022-23](#)

All non-disposable food service items will be handled minimally and washed with hot water and soap or in the dishwasher. Disposable food service items may be used.

As a general hygiene practice, items in the food service setting should not be shared.

If schools are closed for an extended period of time, food services may be offered on-site or on a “to-go” basis if permitted by USDA. Service updates will be provided to families following the announcement of a closure on the district website, app, social media, and mass-calling system.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

For more information, contact the SD Department of Education, Child and Adult Nutrition Services at 605-773-3413.

### **Custodial Services**

Increased routine cleaning procedures implemented as a result of COVID-19 likely help in protecting from the spread of many common contagious illnesses in addition to COVID-19.

Given the frequency with which items will need to be cleaned and sanitized some of these responsibilities may be carried out by school personnel other than custodial personnel. School personnel will be trained in the proper use and storage of cleaning products.



Hand sanitizer dispensers will be systematically checked and refilled.

Adequate supplies will be provided to allow for necessary and appropriate hand hygiene (soap, paper towels, hand sanitizers).

Restrooms will undergo frequent cleaning and sanitizing.

### Protocols for Handling Cases of COVID-19

Staff and students will be provided with information about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 including when symptoms preclude attendance at school or school-sponsored activities and when they can return to school or school activities.

If a student shows or develops symptoms in the school setting:

Symptomatic individuals will be immediately given a face mask if they're not currently wearing one and isolated in the designated area at the school. They will be sent home to isolate and seek medical care. Families must have someone designated to pick their children up from school in these situations. Symptomatic students will not be provided transportation home.

Symptomatic students will be required to wear a cloth face covering or face mask while they're waiting to leave the facility.

Returning to the school setting:

If a person has shown symptoms of COVID-19 but has not been exposed to someone with a COVID-19 diagnosis, they may return to school following the [Groton Area School District communicable diseases policy](#).

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a medical professional or a positive COVID-19 test they may return to school only after ALL of the following conditions are met:

- A. It has been five days since the person first had symptoms or since the first positive test if the person remains asymptomatic.
- B. It has been at least 24 hours since the person has had a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- C. The person's symptoms have improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

Intermittent school closings may be necessitated by positive cases of COVID-19 within the school buildings dependent on the full context of the situation. It is possible that one facility may be closed while the other remains open. For example, if elementary-aged students or staff test positive without a corresponding increase at the MS/HS, we may be required to close the elementary facility for a short period followed by full facility cleaning and disinfection but may be able to safely continue operating the high school facility.

### Close Contacts and Quarantine Recommendations

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines a close contact in the school setting as someone within six feet of an infected individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. In **K-12 Indoor Classroom** settings, the definition excludes students who were within 3-6 feet of an infected student where both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks and other K-12 school prevention strategies were in place.

The Groton Area School District will not restrict attendance solely on the basis of close contact to a positive case of COVID-19.

### Masks and/or Cloth Face Coverings

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently issued new guidance recommending indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools regardless of vaccination status<sup>2</sup>.

The use of face coverings has become a widely politicized and highly debated topic. “Mask-shaming” of any kind will not be tolerated and will be addressed under the appropriate behavior policy for each school.



The current position of the Groton Area School District is that the use of face coverings or masks are welcomed for individual students or staff members who choose to use one.

### COVID-19 Testing

The Groton Area School District, with the support of the South Dakota Department of Education and the South Dakota Department of Health will provide two testing options for the 2022-2023 school year.

The Abbot BiNax NOW test for symptomatic individuals utilized by the District during the 2021-2022 school year will continue to be offered. This test is a nasal swab antigen test conducted on symptomatic individuals with results available in 15-30 minutes.

A second, new testing opportunity is available for the 2022-2023 school year. Through partnership with the South Dakota Department of Education and the South Dakota Department of Health, the District is able to connect students, staff, and families with Quidel QuickVue At-Home OTC COVID-19 test. Like the Abbot Binax Now tests, the Quidel QuickVue At-Home OTC COVID-19 test has been authorized for use by the FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization for the detection of proteins from the SARS-CoV-2 virus.









### COVID-19 Vaccination

The Groton Area School District does not require students or staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. We encourage each person to discuss their vaccination options with their primary care provider.

COVID-19 vaccinations are currently approved for people aged 5 and older. The South Dakota Department of Health provides resources on COVID-19 vaccination on its [website](https://www.sddoh.gov/covid-19).

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html#anchor\\_1625662058182](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html#anchor_1625662058182)

# Symptoms of COVID-19

| Symptoms of COVID-19   | Strep Throat | Common Cold | Flu | Asthma | Seasonal Allergies |
|--|--------------|-------------|-----|--------|--------------------|
| FEVER                   | ✓            |             | ✓   |        |                    |
| COUGH                   |              | ✓           | ✓   | ✓      | ✓                  |
| SORE THROAT             | ✓            | ✓           | ✓   |        | ✓                  |
| SHORTNESS OF BREATH    |              |             |     | ✓      |                    |
| FATIGUE               |              | ✓           | ✓   | ✓      | ✓                  |
| DIARRHEA OR VOMITING  | ✓            |             | ✓   |        |                    |
| RUNNY NOSE            |              | ✓           | ✓   |        | ✓                  |
| BODY/ MUSCLE ACHES    | ✓            | ✓           | ✓   |        |                    |

✓ Symptom of illness



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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## Groton Area School District 06-6

Testing Protocols – Reviewed 7/28/2021

**Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Point-of-Care Rapid Antigen Test<sup>3</sup>**

Enrolled students and staff members are eligible for rapid COVID-19 testing.

Patient must be [symptomatic](#) and within the first 7 days of the onset of symptoms.

Patient or patient's parents, in the case of students, must consent to testing prior to test administration.

Families should not send symptomatic children to school for the purpose of being tested. If a student becomes symptomatic outside of school hours, the family should contact Mrs. Beth Gustafson, RN at 605-397-8381 to schedule an appointment for drive-in testing. Drive-in testing will occur by appointment only during regular school hours in front of the GHS Arena lobby. This is not a substitute for care and evaluation by your medical provider.

Students who begin to exhibit symptoms consistent with Covid-19 while in attendance at school will report to the office of their respective building for evaluation and consideration for testing by Mrs. Gustafson. If testing is appropriate, consent will be requested.

If a patient tests positive, he/she will be excluded from school and advised to self-isolate for a period of ten days from the onset of symptoms. The School District will begin its contact tracing protocols upon receipt of a positive test, and the South Dakota Department of Health will contact patients or their parents for contact tracing purposes and to provide information on the appropriate course of action.

If a patient tests negative and his/her symptoms resolve, he/she may return to school according to the District [Student Communicable Diseases Guidelines](#).

If a patient tests negative, and his/her symptoms persist, he/she should consult with their healthcare provider. A second test may be required.

All test results will be reported as required to the South Dakota Department of Health via the Department of Health online reporting system.

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<sup>3</sup> The Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Test resources are provided to the South Dakota Departments of Health and Education via federal government distribution as a part of the national response to the 2019 SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic under Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).



## Groton Area School District 06-6

### Release of Information and Informed Consent to COVID-19 Testing Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Point-of-Care Rapid Antigen Test<sup>4</sup>

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Please carefully read and sign the following Informed Consent:

1. I authorize this COVID-19 testing unit to conduct specimen collection and laboratory testing for COVID-19 through nasal swab, as ordered by an authorized medical provider or public health official.
2. I authorize my test results to be disclosed to the South Dakota Department of Health and School District Contact.
3. I acknowledge that a positive test result is an indication that I must self-isolate and/or wear a mask or face covering as directed to avoid infecting others.
4. I understand that South Dakota Department of Health or the Groton Area School District is not acting as my medical provider. This testing does not replace treatment by my medical provider, and I assume complete and full responsibility to take appropriate action with regard to my test results. I agree I will seek medical advice, care, and treatment from my medical provider if I have questions or concerns or if my condition worsens.
5. I understand that, as with any medical test, there is the potential for a false positive or false negative COVID-19 test result.
6. I, the undersigned, have been informed about the test purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions before I sign, and I have been told that I can ask additional questions at any time. I voluntarily agree to this testing for COVID-19.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>4</sup> The Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Test resources are provided to the South Dakota Departments of Health and Education via federal government distribution as a part of the national response to the 2019 SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic under Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).



## Groton Area School District 06-6

### At-Home Testing: Quidel QuickVue OTC Materials

SY2021-22

#### Parental Information Form & At-Home COVID-19 Testing Registration

The South Dakota Department of Health has made free over-the-counter COVID-19 rapid tests available to students for at-home use. This testing program will give students who do not have COVID-19 symptoms the opportunity to test each week using a rapid COVID-19 antigen test. These tests can also be used at-home for students with symptoms of COVID-19. The test can be self-performed by any student 14 years of age and older; adults must perform the test for those 2-13 years of age.

All students can receive a free, weekly test kit for home-use but participation in this program is completely voluntary. All free testing supplies will be provided to each school for distribution to participating students. Here are a few details about this testing opportunity:

- ✓ Testing is voluntary.
- ✓ Testing is free.
- ✓ Testing only takes 10-12 minutes.
- ✓ Test kits include simple instructions that are easy to follow. Instructions are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). You can also watch an [instructional video](#).
- ✓ Testing can be performed on asymptomatic students as a screening test for COVID-19.
- ✓ Testing can also be performed on students with symptoms of COVID-19, but we also recommend that you consult your healthcare provider if your student has COVID-like symptoms.
- ✓ Test kits provided by the Department of Health are the same kits that can be purchased at many locations throughout South Dakota. The kits provided by the Department of Health are not marked for retail sale so please do not try to return them to a retail location. Unused kits can be discarded if opened or returned to your school if unopened.

The Groton Area School District will distribute tests to students who've indicated interest as often as supplies are available for distribution. Families may opt-in or opt-out of this program at any time.

Please see the Quidel website for additional information about the QuickVue At-Home OTC COVID-19 Test. The website can be found here: <https://quickvueathome.com/>

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#### Please complete this section and return to the school.

Student's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this form and would like my student to receive an over-the-counter COVID-19 rapid test kit each week during the 2021-22 school year.

Check one:

☐ Yes, please provide my student a weekly test kit for at-home use.

☐ Yes, please provide my student a one-time test kit for at-home use. If I would like additional tests, I will contact the school.

☐ No, do not provide my student a weekly test kit for at-home use.

Parent's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_