

Gallatin County Community Unit School District

2022-2023

Back to School Plan

This document is an ever changing outline based upon the recommendations and guidelines set forth by the CDC, Illinois State Board of Education and IDPH and may be updated based on school community, and county positivity numbers and after consultation with local public health officials. Modifications to this plan could include increased mitigation measures to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to increasing social distancing and other appropriate mitigation measures. School strategies in this plan may be removed or increased based upon local conditions, levels of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial, or high), local vaccine coverage, use of screening testing to detect cases in K-12 schools, and consultation with local public health officials to determine the prevention strategies needed. School officials will communicate any changes in plans to staff members, students, and parents through the district's regular communication platforms. The plan will be regularly reviewed, but no less frequently than every six months, taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools. In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the District will seek public input and take such input into account. If the CDC Guidance has been updated at the time the District revises this plan, the revised plan will address the District's policies for each of the CDC's safety recommendations.

Dr. Judy Kaegi, Superintendent of Schools

Board of Education

- Mr. Gary Clayton, President
- Mr. Matt Seely, Vice President
- Mr. Rob Wood, Secretary
- Mr. Nick Hunt, Board Member
- Mr. Shane Patton, Board Member
- Mr. Josh Drone, Board Member
- Mrs. Erin Kirkie, Board Member

Introduction: The goal of Gallatin CUSD 7 will be to provide the highest quality instruction while ensuring that necessary measures are being taken to provide a physically safe environment for students, staff, and visitors. We will face the challenges of the 2022-2023 school year with determination and focus. For the 2022-2023 school year, masks are an option for those that determine that is the best choice to protect their health. Additionally, public school systems are required to operate in compliance with existing state laws and regulations; therefore, we will continue to maintain our traditional in-person instructional procedures and schedules.

In-Person Instruction: In accordance with the Illinois State Superintendent of Schools July 9, 2021 declaration, Gallatin County CUSD 7 will be open fully for in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 2022-23 school year. The following mitigation strategies will be considered based on the most up-to-date recommendations from the local health department and guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health, and Illinois State Board of Education.

Registration: Registration is currently open on the district website. Any questions or requests for help may be directed to building secretaries by call 618 272-3821.

Staff: In-Service District staff will begin in-service training for the school year on Thursday, August 11. In-service training will focus on auditing and addressing safety and security issues. Attention will be given to reviewing the Emergency Procedures chart, Emergency Operations Plan, Threat Assessment Team, and emergency drills.

Parent and Student Night: Open House will be held from 6:00-7:30 on the evening of August 15. The Parents In Action, Booster Club, and FFA Alumni will have their membership tables with information and merchandise available. Class schedules, and school supplies will also be available. Pat Koester will be available to answer questions that you may have about bus routes. As always, teachers will be available if you wish to meet your child's teachers on that night. Masks are not required for this event.

Handwashing: The District will encourage frequent and proper handwashing and will continue to teach respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes). Handwashing with soap and water is always the first recommended line of defense, but where this is not feasible or readily accessible, the use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol may be used.

Following the Illinois State Board of Education guidelines, Gallatin CUSD 7 will only offer Face to Face/In-Person instruction. We will be committed to the health and safety of all staff and students. Recommendations from the Governor's office, ISBE and local health departments will guide the protocols in this plan.

In order to be compliant, Gallatin CUSD 7 will schedule additional strategies to help remediate students to address instructional needs identified by the Star Reading and Star Math assessments during the fall and spring of this year.

Physical Distancing: To the extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning. School Staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through food service lines and while eating. Aside from the cafeteria, additional spaces for mealtime seating may be utilized(e.g., weather permitting). Physical distancing measures will be done in an equitable manner that does not perpetuate academic, racial, or other tracking (e.g., separating people into fully vaccinated and non-fully vaccinated cohorts).

Safety of Students: Individuals who test positive for COVID-19, are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be excluded from school. Students and staff suspected of having COVID-19, whether they were tested or not, are to follow the CDC guidelines to determine when they can return to school. If an individual who has been in a school is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school will immediately notify our local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

1. School systems can no longer require students or staff to wear a mask.
2. As provided in the Illinois Department of Public Health Rules, school systems must exclude students from attending school in person who have or are suspected of having COVID-19, and must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on the district campus. As noted in the rule, exclusion shall continue until the conditions for re-entry are met:
 - a. For children with symptoms, at least five days have passed since symptoms onset, and fever free, and other symptoms have improved.
 - b. Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least five days after the day they were tested.
 - c. Staff members who test positive or who have symptoms must stay home until they are fever free and symptoms improve.
3. Parents must ensure they do not send a sick child to school if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met.

Diagnostic and screening testing- including encouraging families and staff to check for symptoms at home: A temperature check system is in place if needed. The district will not temperature check or screen students and staff until there is determined a need by the Superintendent based on current conditions. We will be asking all parents to continue helping eliminate the spread of any virus by keeping their students home when they are not feeling well.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: School custodial staff and transportation staff will continue to clean surfaces daily. When possible, staff will open doors and windows, use child-safe fans, and may have activities, classes, or lunches outdoors when circumstances allow. When it does not pose a safety risk, transportation staff will keep vehicle windows open at least a

few inches to improve air circulation. If a school building has had a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, the District will clean and disinfect the space.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies:

1. Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems should contact their student's case manager or principal to discuss the need(s)
2. Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems or a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered by Title VII of the Civil rights Act of 1964) should contact their school's principal to discuss the need(s) and request accommodations. Staff members with weakened immune systems are advised to contact their healthcare professional about the need for continued personal protective measures after vaccination.
3. When returning to in-person instruction, continuity of services will be ensured, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.
4. District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with County Health Department officials throughout a pandemic on various logistics and decision-making including, but not limited to school health and safety protocols, screening testing, contact tracing, vaccine clinics and emergency school closings.
5. Through September 30, 2023, this plan will be reviewed no less frequently than every six months and revised as appropriate based on school, community, and county positivity numbers and after consultation with local public health officials and considering public input. Revisions will address the most recently updated safety recommendations by the CDC, provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA, and made publicly available on the district's website.

We look forward to a very productive and enjoyable 2022-2023 School Year for all students, staff and parents!

WE ARE **GALLATIN!** **ALL IN!**

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