

GCSEC RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

Dear Parents and Staff of GCSEC,

I would like to begin by stating that we are trying to take a very straightforward approach with regard to our Return to School Plan for this coming fall. Some of you are not going to agree with the policies and procedures that we put in place. You may not want your child to wear a facemask all day, or your child may not be able to wear a mask at all. The daily, early dismissal may not fit your schedule very well. You may find flaws or disagreements with other facets of the approach. **We Understand.** The term that we continue to stress and utilize is that this is all **TEMPORARY.** Hopefully, very soon, a treatment or vaccine will be developed to get us back to “normal.” Until then, these are temporary policies that have been developed to best create a safe environment in our schools in order to get our kids back to where we feel they belong, in school! Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding during these very challenging times.

GCSEC would like to Thank the following individuals for their time and invaluable contributions in the development of this document:

**Jenny Adler
Stephanie Benson
Sarah Bohac
Holly Daggett
Julia Easter
Nikki Ferrero
Rick Gravatt
Pat Hendrix
Amy Kolodziej
Karleen Nalepka**

**Rochelle Prospero
Kate Ross
Neil Sanburg
Erica Schramm
Carol Senica
Janna Siron
Stephen Veach
Kim Xoxakos
Lisa Zajdzinski**

Since June, a School Reopening Transition Team composed of cooperative leadership, teachers, support staff and union leadership have been meeting regularly to discuss and collaborate on a plan to reopen schools for the 2020-2021 School Year and transition back to in-person learning as allowed in Phase 4 of the Reopen Illinois Plan. The Reopening Transition Team is grounded in the following foundational beliefs:

- School may look different this fall than what our families are accustomed to, but our focus remains the same: every student receives a high-quality education.
- GCSEC's goal is to return to in-person instruction, and we will prioritize the health and safety of students, staff and their families first and foremost.
- GCSEC is committed to providing every student with a high-quality public education and the opportunity to succeed regardless of which platforms are used to provide educational services.
- We will be providing in-school blended or remote education this fall.
- The GCSEC Re-Opening Team followed the guidance of the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education when making decisions about what the fall will look like.
- COVID-19 has greatly impacted the lives of students, teachers and families. GCSEC will continue to seek ways to help students, families and educators with social and emotional support as they address issues such as grief, stress and missing social interactions.
- Protecting the health and safety of all students and staff to the greatest extent possible is the top priority.
- Re-establishing relationships and ensuring that the social emotional needs of students and the basic wellness needs of families will be a priority.

Illinois is currently in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. During Phase 4, IDPH guidelines will:

- 1. Require the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings.**
- 2. Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space.**
- 3. Require that social distancing be observed as much as possible.**
- 4. Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings.**
- 5. Require an increase in school wide cleaning and disinfection.**

Below is the plan to return to school for the 2020-2021 school year based on the latest Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health requirements and recommendations. **Please be advised that as guidance from ISBE and /or IDPH changes, these plans may be modified.**

- 1. Student Instruction** - For student(s) enrolled in Grundy County Special Education Programs, parents will choose in-person blended learning (instruction will occur in the classroom in-person for part of the school day with a remote learning component for a total of 5 clock hours) or remote learning (instruction will consist of 5 clock hours and will occur with a combination of the teacher live teaching during specific times and online activities via video conference software while your student is at home with a computer). If remote learning is chosen, parents will need to commit for an entire academic period (i.e. one semester). Some of our staff could be assigned to full time remote instruction to work with students in lieu of traditional teaching duties. Every student with an IEP will have an Individualized Blended Learning Plan, which will outline the instruction and related services delivery. This plan will also detail the instruction and related services if we return to a full remote instruction service delivery model at some point in time during the school year.
- 2. Classroom Environment** - Provide assigned seating for students and require them to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible. Rearrange desks so that there is a 6 foot distance in all directions between the desks and face the desks in the same direction if possible. Restrict or discourage student to student borrowing or sharing of any items. Clean and sanitize items after use. Suspend the use of lockers or cubbies. Staff will rotate through classes rather than requiring movement/mixing of student groups. Provide hallway supervision using hall and bathroom monitors to ensure a limited number of persons enter bathrooms at one time. Place floor markings to delineate 6 foot distance between students in locations where they line up. Students will be encouraged to bring their own personal, reusable water bottles. Drinking fountains will be covered and not allowed for use.
- 3. Attendance/Grading** - Teachers will resume traditional grading and attendance practices in both in-person blended and remote learning instructional settings.
- 4. IEP Meetings/Student Evaluations and Reevaluations** - Staff will adhere to all timelines regarding IEP meetings, including annual reviews, as well as required evaluations. Zoom will be utilized as the primary tool for virtual meetings,

although phone conferences may also be substituted when virtual formats are not achievable. The cooperative will additionally be investing in an electronic signature system for the fall.

5. School Day/Hours - All GCSEC Programs housed in Minooka Elementary School District #201, Saratoga School District #60C, and G.S.W High School District #73, will follow the calendar and school day of the respective district. GCSEC Programs will mirror the instructional hours of the district/building in which the program is housed. For example, STARS Classrooms in the Minooka Elementary District #201 Schools will follow the Minooka Elementary School District bell schedule and calendar. All GCSEC programs will operate on an early release schedule. REACH High School in-person instruction will be five days a week on an early release schedule (8:00 to 11:30). River's Edge Academy, the REACH Program and the REACH Transition Program will operate 5 days a week with early release days (8:00 to 12:00). Early Childhood/Developmental Kindergarten Classes at Gardner Grade School will be in session for 2 instructional hours. See the chart below.

District	First Staff Day	First Student Day	Hours in Session	Days in Session	Start Time	End Time	Additional Notes/Information
REACH Transition - Shabbona Building	8/12/20	8/20/20	4	5	8:00	12:00	Grab and go lunch. Breakfast night before or for the whole week.
River's Edge Academy	8/12/20	8/20/20	4	5	8:00	12:00	Grab and go lunch. Breakfast night before or for the whole week.
Coal City Unit Dist. #1	8/17/20	8/18/20					
Coal City Early Childhood Center	8/17/20	8/18/20	4	5	7:45	11:45	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Coal City Elementary	8/17/20	8/18/20	4	5	8:10	12:10	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Coal City Intermediate	8/17/20	8/18/20	4	5	8:00	12:00	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Coal City Middle School	8/17/20	8/18/20	4.17	5	8:20	12:30	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch

Coal City High School	8/17/20	8/18/20	4.25	5	8:00	12:15	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
M.V.K. School District #2C	8/13/20	8/19/20	6	5	8:25	2:10	12:25 dismissal on 8/19 for all students
Nettle Creek School Dist. #24C	8/24/20	8/25/20	4	5	8:10	12:00	One hour of remote in the afternoon for 8/25 through 9/11, then re-evaluate
Morris Grade School Dist. #54	8/20/20	8/24/20	3.5/4.25	5	8:00	11:30 (6-8 Grades)/12:15 (K-5 Grades)	
Saratoga School Dist. #60C	8/24/20	8/31/20	5	5	8:00	1:00	First 4 weeks 11:30 dismissal. No lunch, can grab and go. TI: 8/24, 8/25. Remote planning: 8/26, 8/27, 8/28
Gardner Grade School Dist. #72C	8/13/20	8/17/20	4	5	8:00	12:00	1 hour remote
GGs EC/DK	8/13/20	8/20/20	2	5	8:00/1:00	10:00/3:00	Students will attend for 2 hours daily (8:00-10:00 or 1:00-3:00) - no snack during the session
G.S.W. High School Dist. #73	8/12/20	8/20/20	4	5	8:00	12:00	1 hour remote
S. Wilmington Elementary School Dist. #74	8/14/20	8/17/20	6	5	7:55	1:40	First two weeks will dismiss at Noon for 1st-8th, Kindergarten will dismiss at 10:00 for first 2 weeks dismiss at 11 after that
Braceville Elementary School Dist. #75	8/13/20	8/17/20	4	5	8:00	Noon	1 hour remote
Morris Community High School Dist. #101	8/13/20	8/17/20	4.6	5	7:40	12:15	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch

Minooka High School: Central Campus	8/10/20	8/12/20	5	2/3	8:00	12:58	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
REACH High School: Central Campus	8/10/20	8/17/20	3.5	5	8:00	11:30	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka Elementary School Dist. #201	8/17/20	8/19/20	4	5			No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka Primary Center	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	TBD	TBD	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Aux Sable Elementary School	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	8:35	12:35	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka Elementary School	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	8:35	12:35	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Walnut Trails Elementary School	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	8:35	12:35	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka Intermediate School	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	7:35	11:35	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka Junior High School	8/17/20	8/24/20	4	5	7:40	11:40	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch
Minooka High School South Campus	8/10/20	8/12/20	5	2/3	7:45	12:43	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch.
REACH Program: South Campus	8/10/20	8/12/20	3.5	5	7:45	11:15	No lunch served. Grab and go lunch.

6. Related Services - Virtual and Teletherapy to the greatest extent possible. Additionally, therapies should be provided by pushing into the classroom to the greatest extent possible to help preserve the integrity of the classroom structure and minimize the potential for cross-contamination. Desktop shield guards and clear masks may be used when deemed necessary and appropriate. Face coverings must be worn and social distance must be maintained.

- 7. Transportation** - Transportation will be limited to 50 students per bus, so this may have an impact on the start and end times of programs. Students must undergo symptom and temperature checks before boarding a bus. Drivers and monitors must wear approved and appropriate PPE and perform regular hand hygiene and symptom checks.
- 8. Lunch** - Lunches will not be served in any GCSEC Program Setting. Rather, all students will be provided with boxed/sack lunch to eat at home. Since all programs will be on an early release schedule, staff will receive their duty free lunch and plan time after students leave.
- 9. Face Coverings:** Face coverings ***must be worn at all times*** in school buildings even when social distancing is maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn outside if physical distancing is maintained. We encourage you to practice wearing face masks with your students (especially younger children) before school begins. Schools will develop strategies and practices for students and staff to take safe, periodic breaks throughout the day to remove face coverings. Additionally, it would be beneficial to have multiple cloth masks, as those will need to be washed regularly. Any student who is ***unable or unwilling to wear a mask, for any reason, MAY NOT enter the school and will be provided with remote instruction for the duration of this restriction.*** (The accommodation for students who are unable to wear a mask due to medical conditions will be remote learning.) Face shields are currently not allowed by ISBE unless worn over a mask. Students and families must provide their own face mask. One cloth face mask will be provided to all staff and students. GCSEC and the districts will have additional masks available.
- 10. Technology** - Any staff or students requiring specific technology for blended or remote learning should contact J.D. Morrison at jmorrison@grundyspecial.ed.org.
- 11. Community/Cooking:** Currently, all community trips, field trips, community jobs, and cooking classes are suspended.
- 12. Social Distancing:** Staff and students will practice social distancing to the maximum extent possible. Students will be spaced out in the classroom to the greatest extent possible. Teachers will develop a marked path of travel inside the classroom to maintain social distancing from the entry point to the student's assigned seat. Limit who is in the classrooms to those required for instruction. Build in time for hygiene. Staff and students should abstain from any form of

physical contact, including, but not limited to handshakes, high fives, hugs, etc.

13. Hand Hygiene: Staff will encourage frequent and proper hand washing. Staff will adhere to safe hand sanitizer use.

14. Student Symptom Checks: Do not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. These are symptoms provided by ISBE and the IDPH. Car riders/walkers will need temperature screenings. A fever of 100.4 or higher (per the CDC) necessitates immediate separation from the rest of the school population. If a student exhibits symptoms during the school day, additional temperature checks will be taken with the possibility of quarantine. Quarantine procedures will be disseminated.

15. Staff Symptom Checks: Staff and students will adhere to the symptom screening and temperature check procedures of the district/building to which they are assigned. River's Edge Academy (REA), REACH Transition and the Minooka REACH Program will temperature check students using a forehead thermometer prior to them entering the buildings.

16. Responding to Sick Students/Staff - Communicate with families and staff that any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or who shows any signs or symptoms of illness should stay home. Families and staff should also report confirmed or possible cases to administration. If a student has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, they will immediately be sent home. Students must be picked up within an hour of parents being notified (phone call, voice message, email, etc.). If a student is sent home with a temperature, they must be fever free for 72 hours prior to the return to school. Those who had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 should isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days.

Remote Learning: EVERYONE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO MOVE TO REMOTE LEARNING AT ANYTIME

1. GCSEC will be providing professional development on remote learning platforms (i.e. Google Classroom, Zoom) on August 6th and 7th.
2. Staff will develop Individual Blended Learning Plans. More information on these documents will be forthcoming.

3. There will be minimum online requirements. More information will be provided as these plans get finalized.
4. Students requiring technology should alert their teacher.
5. Work packets will only be utilized for supplemental instruction or independent work.