

Granite State Arts Academy

20-21 Return to School Plan



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We will open with one of the following models:

Option 1: A full return to classrooms for all students and staff with proper CDC safety protocols in place.

Option 2: A full return to classrooms for all students and staff with proper CDC safety protocols in place with remote learning component for students and staff who are unable to return to school.

Option 3: A full remote learning environment for students and staff.

The above options were created with the idea that this is a fluid situation and circumstances may require an additional option.

Highlights of safety protocols required as part of the full return to school option:

- We will require face masks or other coverings for students and staff when necessary and appropriate.
- We will emphasize social distancing to six feet whenever possible.
- We will require and facilitate frequent hand washing/sanitizing.
- Building access will be limited to students and staff except by appointment.
- All non-school related evening functions and activities will be limited.
- Cleaning protocols are consistent with standards acceptable to CDC.

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Upcoming Events

First day for teachers
8-31-2020

First day
Freshman Orientation
9-8-2020 – 9-12pm

First day for all students
9-9-2020

School Hours:
M-Th 8-3:00pm
Friday- Remote

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Introduction

Granite State Arts Academy will reopen in the fall bearing in mind the safety and well-being of staff, students, and the community.

Our schools were closed on March 16, and since that day New Hampshire has come back by way of a slow and methodical reopening process. Efforts by citizens to maintain social distancing guidelines and wear masks in public have resulted in dramatic decreases in cases of COVID-19 and reductions in hospital stays.

In light of the current trends, we feel that a return to in-school learning is imperative. This reopening plan establishes a quality and meaningful learning experience for all students while maintaining a safe learning and teaching environment.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, in its June Guidance for School Re-entry, emphasized the important role in-school learning plays in the educational, social-emotional, nutritional, and general well-being of students.

“Schools are fundamental to child and adolescent development and well-being and provide our children and adolescents with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, physical/speech and mental health therapy, and opportunities for physical activity, among other benefits.”

We have developed strategies to accommodate both in-school and at-home learning. In school learning will be a priority, and at-home or remote learning will be determined by students and staff who cannot return.

Our in-school instruction will be nimble enough to transition to all remote learning if community or state spread of this virus leads local or state officials to call for temporary transitions to learning from home.

Accordingly, we were challenged to develop this reopening plan in the midst of uncertainty. However, we have to acknowledge that inherent risks exist, and we must coordinate interventions to minimize these risks.

We rely in the best information available to us from the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, state health officials, and other sources.

Reopening is predicated on three key factors:

1. We will maintain social distancing to six feet whenever possible.
2. Everyone will wear a mask when necessary and appropriate.
3. We will require frequent hand washing and or sanitizing.

Finally, our plan was developed with input from many stakeholders. Nonetheless, we must reserve the right to modify the plan as new information becomes available or circumstances direct us to change our learning environment or structure. Moving forward, we will follow directives from state and local health and government officials.

Health Screenings

All students and staff will have a Daily Health Check at the first point of contact, as described below.

Ask the following questions:

1. Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19?
2. Do you feel unwell with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?

For example, have they had a cough, temperature, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell?

Conduct temperature screening, using the protocol provided below:

- Students who answer either of the above questions affirmatively or have a temperature greater or equal to 100.4°F must be returned to their parent/caregiver as soon as possible.
- GSAA will communicate with parents/caregivers about this requirement so that plans can be put in place if students do not pass the Daily Health Check.
- During cold weather months, GSAA will set up indoor locations for Daily Health Checks, which conform to the first point of contact.

In-School Instruction Safety Protocols

This plan provides GSAA's guidelines regarding social distancing expectations, mask requirements, building access, and health screening to provide an in-school instructional environment that balances educational and safety considerations for both students and staff. Additional protocols are included for safety issues related to personal protective equipment (PPE), custodial services, and sanitizing protocols.

Social Distancing and Mask Requirements:

- Upon arrival ALL students and staff will have their temperatures checked before entry.
- Students and Faculty will be asked to sanitize hands upon entry.
- Students who refuse to wear masks will not be allowed to remain in school.
- 1-Special "singers" mask will be provided to each member of chorus. (modeled after the Broadway singers' masks)
- Dancers will be spaced out in the dance room and given a taped off dance square space to assist with social distancing in the classroom.
- Students in the visual arts room will be limited to 1 student per table to assist with social distancing.
- Used art supplies will be placed in bins to be sanitized.

Temperature check protocol:

- Temperature checks will occur before entrance and near sink/hand sanitizer station. A non-contact thermometer will be used.
- Wash or sanitize hands.
- Wear a facial covering, eye protection and a single pair of disposable gloves.
- Check each child's temperature.
- If disposable or non-contact thermometers are used and the screener did not have physical contact with a child, gloves do not need to be changed before the next check.
- Remove and discard gloves in between students if contact is made.

Hand Hygiene

Granite State Arts Academy will encourage the following procedures into practice to ensure effective hand hygiene. All students, staff and contracted service providers should engage in proper hand hygiene.

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

Steps for proper handwashing can be found on the CDC website.

- Students, and staff will be reminded about the importance of handwashing.
- Granite State Arts Academy will place posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.
- Granite State Arts Academy has replaced all faucets with touchless faucets.
- Granite State Arts Academy has replaced all hand dryers with automatic paper towel dispensers.

Facial Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment

All staff and students are required to properly wear facial coverings while in the building, as well as outside where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Adults doing drop-off and pick-up should wear facial coverings if exiting their car. Instructions for making, wearing, and washing facial coverings can be found on the CDC website.

The following stipulations are for students, as well as staff, where applicable:

- Students/staff will not have to wear facial coverings during lunch.
- Facial coverings may be removed during outdoor activities where students and staff can maintain physical distancing and have ready access to put them back as needed when activity stops.
- Students and staff will be required to properly wear masks covering their mouth and nose. All masks should be intact without holes, lace, or stocking material. CDC recommends 2 layers of cotton material.
- It is encouraged that masks should be cleaned regularly.
- It is encouraged for students and staff to have multiple masks for each day of the week. These should be supplied by parents/staff. Disposable masks will be available in cases where masks were forgotten.
- The NH Department of Health & Human Services does **NOT** encourage masks with exhaust valves.

Follow these five hand washing steps every time.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Limits to Building Access and Facility Use

Restrictions on building use and access are recommended to minimize exposure for students and staff. GSAA will only be utilized by staff and students to the extent practical.

- Vendors and service contractors will be allowed by appointment only and all individuals will be required to wear a mask and sign in at the front desk.
- No outside visitors and volunteers except for employees or contracted service providers for the purpose of special education or required support services, as authorized by the school, or sending district.
- Parents must schedule appointments in advance.
- For now, facilities will be available only for activities for Granite State Arts Academy students.

Stay Home When Sick

Granite State Arts Academy will coordinate decision-making around a student's care with the family, and the family's healthcare provider if there are specific health concerns or chronic disease.

- Granite State Arts Academy *students who are from Massachusetts* must follow New Hampshire Health Department guidance around returning to school. More information is available on the [New Hampshire Department of Health's](#) COVID-19 travel site.

Students and staff will be excluded from in-person school activities if they:

- Show symptoms of COVID-19, such as a cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell.
- Have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have a fever (temperature higher than 100.4°F)
- Have a significant new rash, particularly when other symptoms are present.
- Have large amounts of nasal discharge in the absence of allergy diagnosis. If above signs and symptoms begin while at school, the student (or staff member) will be sent home as soon as possible.
- Students and staff will be excluded from school until they are no longer considered contagious.
- Students and staff with fever greater than 100.4°F and no specific diagnosis should remain at home until they have had no fever for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Advil, Tylenol).

COVID-19 Exposure outside of the School

- If a student or member of a student's household our staff has come in contact with someone who has tested positive with COVID-19, must report their exposure to the Director of school.
- If a student or member of a student's household our staff has come in contact with someone who has tested positive with COVID-19, they will quarantine for 14 days before being allowed to return to school.
- Remote option will be available for those who must quarantine.

COVID-19 Like Symptoms in School

Granite State Arts Academy will have a separate isolation space (the area will be structured with a door and will allow for ventilation to the outside) to accommodate symptomatic students and staff until they can go home.

Positive COVID-19 Tests or Exposure

- If a student or member of a student's household has tested positive with COVID-19, the family should notify the Director.
- If symptomatic: Staff/student must remain out of the building until fever free for 3 days without fever reducing medications, respiratory symptoms have subsided, and at least 10 days have passed since the first day of their positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- If asymptomatic: Staff/student must remain out of the building until 10 days have passed since the first day of their positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Granite State Arts Academy will not be conducting testing of staff or students for COVID-19. As part of the process of self-assessing symptoms, parents and staff will be required to report any positive test results to the school Director.
- If anyone in your immediate household is being tested for COVID-19 or has been placed under quarantine, the student must stay home until they test negative or the quarantine has ended.
- Provide remote learning options for students unable to enter the building due to illness or exposure.

Increased Cleaning, Sanitization, & Ventilation

Granite State Arts Academy will be making an additional commitment to cleaning high-touch areas as recommended by the CDC to address potential surface contamination.

- Granite State Arts Academy will be adding HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air Purifiers) in each classroom.

- Granite States Academy's landlord currently uses hospital grade air filters in the HVAC units and will be changing filters every 3 months.
- Granite State Arts Academy will be conducting the cleaning of the building and bathrooms on a regular basis with CDC and state guidelines in mind.

Food Service

Granite State Arts Academy does not have a traditional lunch program. Students will be required to bring a bagged lunch with them every day.

- Students should pack their lunch with an ice pack if necessary. Refrigeration will not be available. No microwaves, toasters will be available for use.
- There will be no vending machines at this time.
- Students will eat meals within their classroom.
- Mealtimes will be adjusted to allow for cleaning of table surfaces between meal periods.
- Students should bring a spill proof sports bottle with water as water fountains will be turned off to reduce the spread of germs.
- A touchless water bottle filling station has been added to the water fountain to allow a safe way for students and staff to refill their water bottles. Bottle filling station contains automatic sensors to fill the bottle without the need to touch or drink from the fountain.

Drop-Off and Pick-up / Arrival and Departure

The following procedures must be in place:

- Signs will be posted at all entrances clearly indicating that no one may enter if they have symptoms of respiratory illness or fever.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility.
- Students should go directly to their homeroom classroom once they have completed all required screening.
- Parents/caregivers will not be allowed to enter the building with the student when dropping them off or picking them up.

Parents/caregivers should drop off their child outside and leave as soon as their child has safely entered the building and passed the health screening to avoid congregating.

- If a parent/caregiver needs to talk with school personnel, they should make arrangements in advance. Remote meetings will be held when possible.

- All parents/caregivers who schedule a meeting must enter the school building wearing a facial covering, be screened upon entry (screening questions and temperature check) and must leave immediately after meeting.
- Individuals who are self-quarantining due to close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual should not do drop-off or pick-up.

Student Wellness and Support Services

Whole Child Supports to alleviate student anxiety, special attention will be paid to easing the transition back to school, including:

- Meetings will be held with students who have 504's.
- Granite State Arts Academy will work collaboratively with the sending school districts to discuss individual education plans (IEP's).

Physical Distancing and Modified Layouts

Granite State Arts Academy will limit physical distancing to reduce the frequency of close contact between individuals as that is still the single most effective way to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

General principles to promote physical distancing and reduce viral spread:

Individual student desks have been purchased for most academic classrooms to assist with social distancing.

- Install physical barriers in reception areas and employee workspaces where the environment does not accommodate physical distancing.
- Floors will be marked with tape to assist students with social distancing.
- Flow of traffic in hallways will be marked out with arrows to ensure a 1-way flow of students moving to their next class wherever possible.
- There will be no sharing of electronic devices, books, musical instruments, games or learning aids. Students will be encouraged to bring their own musical instruments.
- Students will be encouraged to bring their own laptop or Chromebook to school to limit the spread of germs.
- Chromebooks may be signed out with a signed waiver by the parent and student upon request for the entire year to limit cross contamination. A fee may be assessed for lost or damaged Chromebooks.

Contingency Planning

With a future as uncertain as ever, we need to be flexible. While we may do everything possible to reduce the spread in our schools, we may experience increased cases if community members, parents, staff, or students are not diligent in taking similar precautions. The reopening plan includes contingency plans for several scenarios.

State Ordered Closures and Transition to Remote Learning

If we see a local spike in cases of COVID-19, local or state health officials might recommend that we close school for a period of time. If schools are closed for more than two days, we will transition to a remote learning environment.

The following preparations will be included in 2020-21 staff and curriculum planning to account for the possibility of being required to transition to a remote learning environment:

- Students will receive instruction to fully utilize online learning tools at the start of the year focusing on the school's digital tools used in remote learning.

Remote Learning Alternative

The reopening plan is designed intentionally for in-school instruction but allows for a remote learning alternative to be determined on an **individual student** basis with the parents and administration.

- Students who are taking part in remote learning will be attending class **LIVE** through zoom during the classes scheduled time. Students should follow their class schedule as if they were in the building.
- The online learning commitment will extend through the quarter of the school year unless approved by administration. Prior to the start of the next quarter, parents can change their enrollment. Otherwise, students will not be permitted to move back and forth during this period.
- Students who are not able to attend in-school instruction due to documented underlying medical issues will receive instruction via Google Classroom and Zoom.
- Students' progress will be monitored by the Granite State Arts Academy teachers.
- Some courses, and particularly advanced level courses, may not be available online.
- Students in remote learning will be required to meet the same deadlines regarding classwork as if they were in the building.

- It is the responsibility of the remote learning student/parent to maintain a higher level of communication with the teacher with any questions, concerns or issues regarding academic lessons and assignments due to the remote learning environment. Students with IEP's should also include the SPED Director with all communications.

Communication

Communication efforts related to the plan will focus initially on providing both staff and parents with specific details related to the reopening plan.

- This comprehensive plan will be posted on the website.
- GSAA will communicate with parents as needed.

Reopening Plan Process and Approval

This reopening plan reflects the combined efforts of all faculty and staff members along with parents and board members who examined issues and provided recommendations within the following areas:

- Administration, Operations, Academics, Special Education, Student Wellness, Technology.
- This is an ever-changing situation as such this is a fluid document and will be updated as needed.

Reopening procedures were voted on and approved by the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, July 21, 2020.

This plan and other COVID-19 resources and links can be found on our website: www.gsaanh.org/covid