

# Granite State Arts Academy

## 2021-22 return to school plan

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Welcome back to school!

# Student and Staff Health Considerations

## Health Screenings

All students and staff will be encouraged to do Daily Health Check at home, as described below.

### Daily Health Check: 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.
- When a student appears unwell or becomes ill at school. Please see Building Considerations / Modifications regarding isolation rooms in the school building.
- Granite State Arts Academy 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 upon entry to the school.
- During cold weather months, Granite State Arts Academy will set up an indoor location for Daily Health Checks, which conform to the first point of contact.

## School Staff

### The following guidance applies to school staff, as well as contractors.

The following individuals might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. If you have staff members or teachers age 65 or older, or with serious underlying health conditions, encourage them to talk to their healthcare provider to assess their risk and to determine if they should avoid in-person contact in which physical distancing cannot be maintained.

### Temperature check protocol:

Temperature checks will occur as needed. A non-contact thermometer is strongly recommended.

- Wash 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. If non-contact thermometers are used, they must be cleaned routinely.

Follow instructions provided by the manufacturer for any device used.

**Based on what we know now, those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:**

- People 65 years and older

**People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:**

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised, including those undergoing cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, and those with immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and/or other immune weakening medications
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

## **Stay Home When Sick: Exclusion/Inclusion Policies**

Schools should coordinate decision-making around a student's care with the family, school nurse and the family's healthcare provider if there are specific health concerns, chronic disease, or complex social or emotional dynamics in the home.

Students who arrive from out-of-state must follow ACCD and Health Department guidance around quarantine before returning to school, which includes travel out-of-state at any point during the school year. 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.

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a fever (temperature higher than 100.4°F)</li><li>• Have a significant new rash, particularly when other symptoms are present</li><li>• Have large amounts of nasal discharge in the absence of allergy diagnosis</li></ul> |
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If above signs and symptoms begin while at school, the student (or staff member) will be sent home as soon as possible. GSAA will keep sick students separate from well students and limit staff contact as much as reasonably possible, while ensuring the safety and supervision of the sick student(s) until they leave.

- 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 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Advil, Tylenol).
- Materials, toys, and furniture touched by the student who is sent home will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- Healthy students and staff with the following symptoms/conditions are not excluded from in-person school activities:
- Allergy symptoms (with no fever) that cause coughing and clear runny nose may stay if they have medically diagnosed allergies and follow medical treatment plans.
- Well-controlled asthma.

## Cases of COVID-19 in School

### **If COVID-19 is confirmed in a student or staff member:**

- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting; wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfecting to allow droplets to settle.
- Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
- Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas and shared electronic equipment used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children.
- Participate in contact tracing as requested by the Health Department.
- Communicate with staff and parents/caregivers with general information about the situation. It is critical to maintain confidentiality.

Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 should self-isolate according to guidelines set forth by the New Hampshire Department of Health.

If a staff person or student has been identified as a close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should self-quarantine: stay home. Please refer to the Health Department's website for what it means to be in close contact and for instructions for isolation, quarantine, and self-observation.

## 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 or the entrance process will be rerouted through a different entrance nearest the sink, so that students can sanitize/wash their hands before they enter, or immediately upon entry into the facility.
- Students should go directly to their assigned classroom once they have completed all required screening.
- Parents/caregivers will not be allowed to enter the building with the student.

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 to do so in advance.
- All parents/caregivers who enter the school building must wear a facial covering and must leave immediately upon completing drop-off.
- Individuals who are self-quarantining due to close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual should not do drop-off or pick-up.



# Hand Hygiene

Granite State Arts Academy will put the following procedures into practice to ensure effective hand hygiene:

• All students, staff and contracted service providers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival to the facility
  - After staff breaks
  - Before and after preparing food or drinks
  - Before and after eating, handling food or feeding students
  - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
  - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
  - After coming in contact with bodily fluid
  - Before and after handling facial coverings/face shields
  - After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
  - After playing outdoors
  - Before and after playing with sand and sensory play
  - After handling garbage
  - Before and after cleaning
  - Prior to switching rooms or locations
- 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.

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

- Students will be reminded about the importance of handwashing.
- Faculty and staff will be reminded about the importance of handwashing.
- Granite State Arts Academy will place posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.



## Facial Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment

All staff and students are required to wear facial coverings while in the building, as well as outside where physical distancing cannot be maintained. CDC recommends facial coverings in settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Adults doing drop-off and pick-up should wear facial coverings. 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:**

- Facial coverings are developmentally appropriate when children can properly put on, take off, and not touch or suck on the covering.
- Students who have a medical or behavioral reason for not wearing a facial covering should not be required to wear one. These decisions should be made in partnership with the health care provider and school nurse.
- 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.
- Granite State Arts Academy will be purchasing voice enhancing headset and speaker to help project their voices to support communication with all students especially when there is ongoing contact with individuals who are hearing impaired.
- The use of clear facial shields for students and adults is allowable as long as they meet all of the health guidance of the New Hampshire Department of Health. Face shields should extend below the chin and to the ears laterally, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece.



## Operational and Facilities Considerations

### Cleaning and Disinfecting

Granite State Arts Academy will engage in frequent thorough cleaning each day. All staff will be trained in proper cleaning and disinfecting.

At a minimum, common spaces and frequently touched surfaces and doors will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day. Schools shall continue to follow regulations regarding cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

#### **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as:**

- All surfaces, especially where students eat
- Bathrooms
- Frequently used equipment including electronic devices
- Door handles and handrails
- Items students place in their mouths, including toys
- Metal and plastic equipment in the Music, Theatre, Dance and Visual Arts rooms

Specifically, regarding shared bathrooms, bathroom use should be kept to the groups that are already in cohorts together. Schedule restroom breaks to avoid overcrowding.

Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used, including items such as soft toys, dress-up clothes and puppets.

Unnecessary cloth furniture should be removed from the classroom and other spaces.

Students' books, art supplies and other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

#### **The following products will be used for disinfecting:**

- Diluted household bleach solutions
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol

- Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants

## Group Size, Integrity of Group/Homeroom, Physical Distancing and Modified Layouts

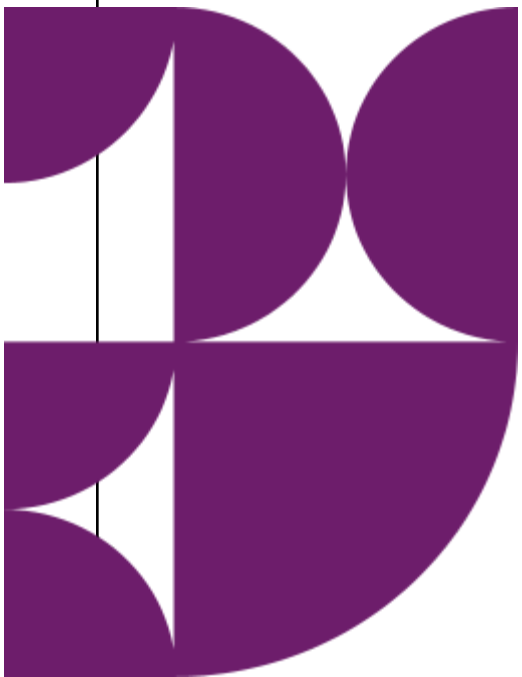
- Physical distancing in order to reduce the frequency of close contact between individuals is still the single most effective way to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

### **General principles to promote physical distancing and reduce viral spread:**

- Students must be kept in groups, not to exceed the maximum number allowed by state guidance, including teachers and staff.
- Install physical barriers in reception areas and employee workspaces where the environment does not accommodate physical distancing.
- Students standing in line should be spaced apart (consider tape marks on the floor).
- Flow of traffic in hallways will be marked out with arrows to ensure a 1-way flow of students moving to their next class.

### **Limit sharing of materials:**

- Keep each student's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies or lockers wherever possible. Used items should be taken home each day and cleaned.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, lab equipment, computer equipment etc. assigned to a single student) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of students at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Do not share electronic devices, toys, books, musical instruments, games or learning aids.

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- Art supplies will be cleaned off in between each class, all used items will have to be placed into a bin to ensure they are not mixed with any sanitized items.
  - Students will be asked to bring their own laptop or Chromebooks to school to limit the spread.
  - Chromebooks may be signed out with a signed waiver by the parent and student upon request for the entire year to limit cross contamination.

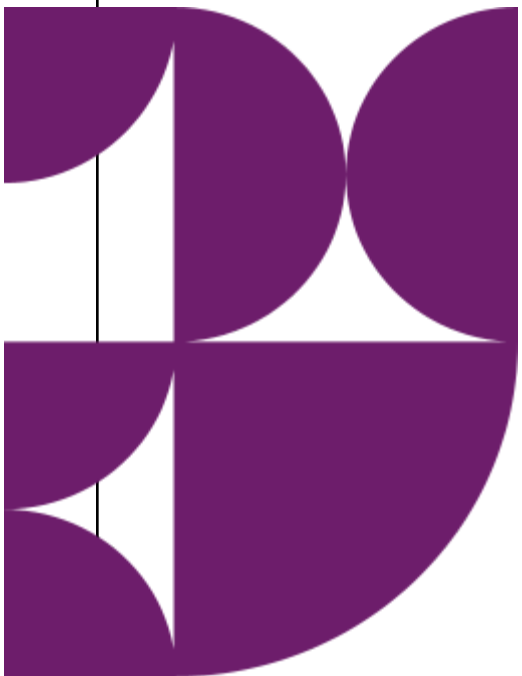
**Step II Guidance:**

- Whenever feasible, keep classes together to include the same group of students each day, and keep the same teachers and staff with the same group each day. This will need to be addressed differently to meet the education needs of high school students.

- Restrict mixing between groups whenever possible.
- Space seating/desks (head-to-toe positioning) to at least 6 feet apart whenever possible.
- Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- Close the staff/teacher's lounge.
- Hold virtual meetings with students, families and staff.
- Rearrange employee workstations to ensure they are separated by six feet whenever possible.

**Additional strategies we will consider:**

- Moving classes outdoors whenever possible.
- Only allowing supervisors and staff who are required for instruction to be in the classrooms.
- Planning activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple students.

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- Rearranging furniture to avoid clustering in common areas.
  - Not allowing anyone to enter the school outside of students and staff.
  - Having call ahead pickup for students that need to be dismissed early.
  - Having all mail and deliveries left at the front door when possible.
  - Limiting outside vendors when possible.

## Communal Spaces, Large Group Activities and Public Use of Schools

### General guidance:

- Large group activities must conform to the maximum number allowed by current state guidance.
- School sponsored or school supported before- and after-school programs may continue, but attendance records must be kept.
- Fire and safety drills must continue to occur according to state regulations.
- Administrators and school safety teams must develop protocols to do this safely in the context of this guidance and for physical distancing of staff and students.
- Group activities with the potential to generate increased respiratory droplets and aerosols should be avoided. This includes activities such as singing (e.g. choir, glee club, a cappella groups, musical theater, etc.) and music that involves woodwind or brass instruments.
- School-sponsored/associated events and extracurricular activities (dance, music, theater, etc.) may occur in accordance with parameters outlined by the Governor.
- The public may not use school buildings, including

restrooms.

- Signs will be posted about wearing facial coverings and physical distancing.

**Step II Guidance:**

- Communal spaces such as our cafeteria will be closed for their intended use; these spaces, however, may be used as an extension of the classroom to allow for physical distancing.
- Limiting school-sponsored/school-associated gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities to those that can maintain physical distancing, support proper hand hygiene, and restrict attendance of those from higher transmission areas.

## **Volunteers, Visitors, Field Trips**

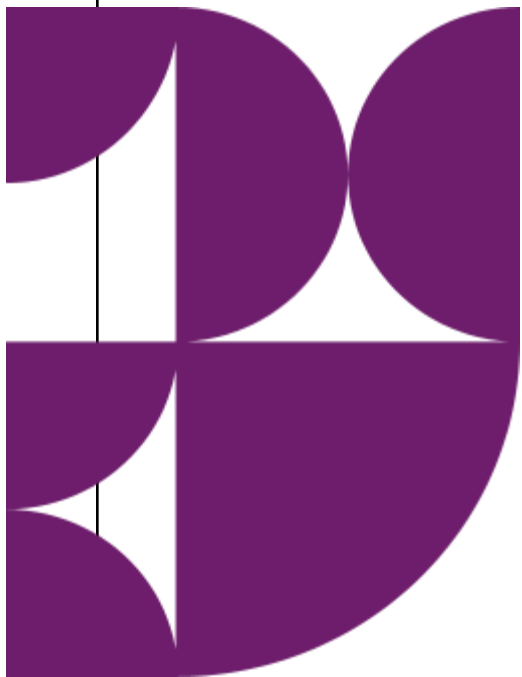
**Granite State Arts Academy will implement the following requirements for Volunteers, Visitors and Field Trips:**

- 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 district.
- Field trips are only allowed if the program is able to maintain all health guidance, as well as guidance from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, as it relates to public outdoor spaces and pools.
- Minimize parent/family visits and require them to occur only in the school's conference room.
- Post maximum occupancy numbers on doors.
- Restrict the number of people in the school building that are not students or staff to a minimal number and ensure that someone is assigned to enforce the rules.

## **Building Considerations/Modifications**

**Guidance for operating and modifying school buildings:**

- Hand sanitizing stations must be set up at the entrance of



the facility, or the entrance process could be rerouted through a different entrance nearest the sink, so that students can sanitize/wash their hands before they enter, or immediately upon entry into the facility.

- Open additional entrances for drop-off and pick-up.
- Make hallways or entrances one-way, when possible.
- Prior to the restart of schools, all buildings must secure two separate areas (Clean and Isolation) to serve the school population.
  - A Health Office should serve as the school's clean office space to accommodate medication administration, triage students, health screenings, etc.
  - The school must have separate isolation spaces (the area must be structured with a door and must allow for ventilation to the outside) to serve as an extension of a Health Office to accommodate symptomatic students and staff. Isolate symptomatic students/staff as soon as possible. Set up separate, well-ventilated triage areas and place student/staff with suspected COVID-19 in an isolation room with the door closed.
    - Add signage to clearly mark all closed areas.
    - Place (tape) markings at all entrances so distancing is easy to establish.
    - With regard to ventilation and HVAC, follow these recommendations:
      - Prior to re-occupancy, ensure the school ventilation system is properly cleaned and meets all required operating standards per manufacturer.
      - Prior to re-occupancy, operate HVAC systems in occupied mode for a minimum period of one week while assuring the outside air dampers are open.
      - Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air.
      - The following modifications to building HVAC system operation should be considered, as recommended by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE):
        - Increase outdoor air ventilation (disable



demand-controlled ventilation and open outdoor air dampers to 100% as indoor and outdoor conditions permit).

- Improve central air and other HVAC filtration to MERV-13 (ASHRAE 2017b) or the highest level achievable. Change filters every 3-4 months.
- Keep HVAC systems running longer hours (24/7 if possible, but a minimum of two hours prior to occupancy and through the duration of occupancy). Keep bathroom exhaust fans operating 24/7 on school days. Ensure staff understand the importance of ventilation fans – they must run all day.
- Add portable air cleaners to classrooms whenever possible. Use HEPA or high-MERV filters with due consideration to the clean air delivery rate (AHAM 2015).
- Maintain temperature and humidity as applicable to the infectious aerosol of concern. Typically, temperature should be maintained between 68-78°F and humidity between 40-60%.



## Food Services Guidance

Granite State Arts Academy does not currently have or operate a lunch program. We will be providing fresh vending.

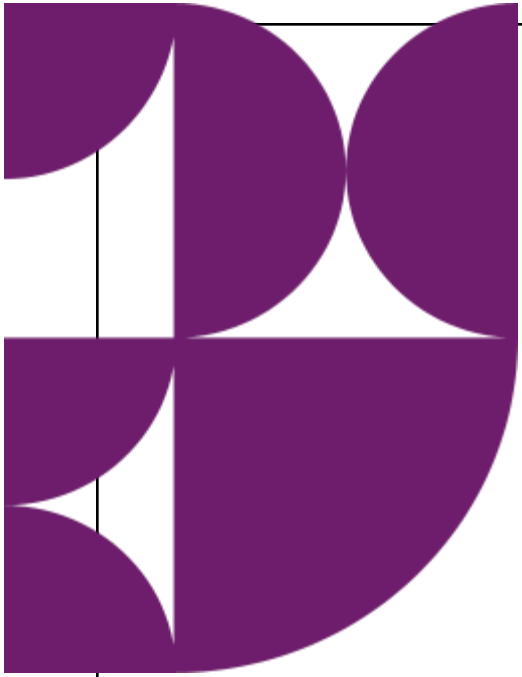
- Students are encouraged to bring a bagged lunch in an isolated lunch box with an ice pack if necessary, as refrigeration will not be available.
- Students are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle or sports bottle preferable spill proof.
- Lunch will be held in the student's 5<sup>th</sup> period classroom to limit mingling in the café.

### **Additional Considerations**

#### **Social-Emotional Health of Staff and Students In general:**

Schools will coordinate with families, school staff, and community and State resources to assess and assist in the psychological and emotional recovery of staff and students:

- In partnership with mental health partners, develop and implement universal social and emotional screenings in order to identify students who need support.
- Recognize that all students have had different experiences from COVID-19 and not everyone in the school will be in the same place. Be prepared to validate that some students are disappointed, some had fun, some are grieving, some are exhausted from added responsibilities at home, some have experienced trauma and some preferred remote learning and are reluctant to return.
- Establish a process, including community, social services and mental health partners, to help identify and provide support to students or staff at potentially higher risk for significant stress or trauma from COVID-19. This should involve triage to see who needs crisis intervention and support.
- Those who have experienced a death.
- Those with significant disruptions to their lifestyle (food insecurity, financial insecurity).
- Those with a history of trauma and chronic stress or pre-existing mental health problems.

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- Those with exposure to abuse and neglect
  - Those who have experienced significant anxiety, depression and/or suicidal ideation.
  - Develop a referral system for individuals who need targeted supports and/or community services.
  - Develop strategies and supports for students, families and staff members for each phase of recovery (before reopening, immediately after reopening and long-term support).
  - Develop social emotional supports for the potential of schools re-closing and/or a need to stay home and isolate due to exposure to the virus or becoming infected with the virus.
  - Teach students how to screen themselves, take care of themselves and protect themselves during COVID-19.
  - Explain, in a developmentally appropriate way, to students why school looks different and how changes are linked to individual, family and community safety.

**Addressing Staff Needs:**

- Schools recognize that the social emotional health and well-being of staff is important to the social emotional health and well-being of the students and their families:
- Identify community resources available to support school staff.
- Work with human resources to determine procedures for staff to take sick leave due to COVID-19 concerns for themselves and/or their family.
- Establish system-wide approaches to address secondary traumatic stress and compassion fatigue (e.g., tap in, tap out; buddy classrooms; boundary setting; self-care).

### **Addressing Family Needs:**

Schools understand that families will need support to feel comfortable sending their children back to school and to help implement the new guidelines during COVID-19:

- Ensure that all efforts to engage and communicate with families are culturally sensitive.
- Ensure all written and oral communications are available in easily accessible formats, with multiple languages and translation services upon request.

Provide activities to help families feel comfortable sending their children back to school such as:

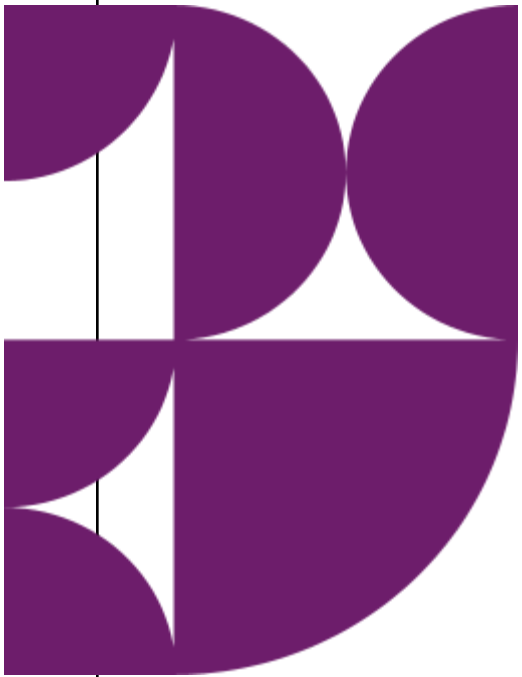
- Back-to-school open houses at the school or in the community, with the ability to ask questions, meet teachers and request opportunities to talk with school employed mental health staff, with appropriate COVID-19 precautions in place.
- A dry run of getting to school before school starts.
- Engage families to get a better understanding of their concerns regarding student needs and ways to collaborate to support a successful re-entry plan.

## **Communication Systems**

Granite State Arts Academy will have clear, consistent, and regular communication with staff, students, families and community members during this time, including changes to policies and operations, such as health screenings, drop-off/pick-up, classroom arrangements, etc.

### **Communications will include:**

- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering in visible areas for students and staff to view.
- Employee handbooks and student handbooks should include information on how to recognize the signs of infection and directives not to come to school if sick.
- Basic information on COVID-19 and measures families can take to stay safe when not at school.
- Clear direction in student handbooks on when to keep a



student home and the process for notifying the school.

- Communicate your expectations for modeling respiratory etiquette, physical distancing, wearing facial coverings, refraining from touching their face, staying home when sick and supporting employees who need to take care of sick family members.
- The importance of mandatory immunizations and locations where they can be obtained, as well as the importance of flu vaccinations.
- Information on trauma-informed practices and helping students cope with stress and tragedies (see section on social emotional health).

**Availability of community resources, including:**

- Mental health resources
- Food security
- Medical/dental providers
- Health insurance
- Economic aid
- Housing assistance
- Prepare communications to the public sharing the practices that the school is implementing to keep staff, students and community members healthy.
- Identify a school nurse leader for the SU/SD or independent school who is or works closely with the COVID-19 Coordinator. That nurse can develop consistent health forms for enrollment, illness, COVID-19 notices and return to school consistent across all schools in the SU/SD or independent school.
- Use all communication channels available to you, including direct communications (face-to-face, letters), electronic communications (your program's or school's website or social media pages), and remote parent meetings to share updates.
- Ensure all communications are culturally and linguistically

	<p>appropriate as well as accessible for individuals with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intentionally and persistently combat stigma. Misinformation about coronavirus and COVID-19 can create fear and hostility that hurts people and makes it harder to keep everyone healthy. We are stronger as a community when we stand together against discrimination. Take advantage of these resources from the CDC to prevent, interrupt and respond to stigma.</li></ul>
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## Contact Tracing

Role of the Health Department Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of an infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, and therefore are at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus. A contact tracing team from the New Hampshire Department of Health calls anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19. They ask the patient questions about their activities within a certain timeframe – to help identify anyone they have had close contact with.

- (Close contact means being closer than 6 feet apart for a long time while the person was infectious.) Those contacts might include family members, classmates or coworkers.
- When there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school, a member of the contact tracing team will reach out to the case to identify close contacts. The contacting tracing team will also reach out to school administration to determine next steps regarding exposure to students and staff. If there is a cluster of cases in the school, the Health Department will work with school administrators to address and mitigate the situation.

## Role of Schools

Take measures so that persons exposed can be more easily traced:

- Use assigned seating for each class.
- Take attendance for every class and include all staff/contractors who were in the classroom.
- Use sign-in sheets for in-person meetings to document attendees.
- Keep accurate records of any persons other than students and staff that enter the building, their reason for being there, names of the people they came within 6 feet of and the locations in the building they visit.
- Provide a name and contact number for the COVID Coordinator when a family has a positive COVID-19 case to the family so they can notify the coordinator in off hours and share with the contact tracing team.
- Staff will be encouraged to keep a daily list of other people they

	<p>are in close contact with. As the state reopens, you should consider keeping a contact journal. If you do get sick, this will make it easier to get in touch with those people, and so they can take proper precautions to prevent further spreading of the coronavirus.</p>
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