

GCPS Opening Plan – 2022-23 SY

As many are aware, Giles County Public Schools (GCPS) resumed in-person instruction on August 23, 2021 under as normal of circumstances as possible. For the start of the 2022-23 SY, GCPS resumed in-person instruction for all students. The following information will be updated periodically and will help guide the return to school for our students and staff.

UPDATED INFORMATION:

For the start of the 2022- 23 SY, no student or staff member will be required to wear masks while inside the school building or while on school transportation. But, if someone chooses to wear a mask, that is up to them and is okay.

GCPS will continue to operate using these guidelines moving forward. In the event that it is determined that another course of action needs to be taken, it will be communicated with the community as quickly as possible.

Phase I:

- Masks are **OPTIONAL** on school transportation for all students (PreK-12) and staff.
- Masks for **students** within the school building are optional based on parental choice. Parents will need to communicate with their child what their expectations are for them moving forward.
- Masks for **staff members** within the school building are optional based on personal choice. Staff members may elect to wear a mask while on school grounds during the school day.
- Continue frequent and correct hand washing and/or hand sanitizing.
- Regular cleaning schedules will be continued throughout the school day.
- If someone is sick (e.g. experiencing any of these symptoms – fever of 100 degrees or more, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, fatigue, headache, cough, nausea, loss of smell and/or taste, congestion, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, chest pain, or any other symptoms associated with COVID-19) they need to stay home until symptom-free for 24 hours.
- School visitors will be limited within the schools by appointment. Visitors will not be allowed during lunches.
- Isolation rooms will be maintained by each school.

Additional Information

- COVID screening testing will be available through the VISSTA program and will be offered for students and staff members depending on prevalence within the schools and availability
- Masks may be worn if individuals want to continue this practice (schools will have masks available)

- Updates to Athletics, Extracurricular activities, and other school activities will be provided when necessary
- Schools are encouraged to use outdoor spaces whenever possible.

Again, for the 2022-23 SY, GCPS will not require masks to be worn by students or staff, but they may choose to wear one if they want. We will continue to monitor the health metrics and health recommendations from CDC, VDH, and DOE. We will also continue to work with our VDH and our local health department to evaluate situations that may arise and any operational changes that may need to be made due to increased illnesses within our schools and school division.

Amended Personnel Policy
Prevention of SARS-CoV2/COVID-19

Based on Virginia’s Final Permanent Standard Enacted September 8, 2021

Giles County Public Schools, in accordance with Virginia Code 16VAC25-220-40, establishes the following amended guidelines to ensure compliance with requirements of the Virginia Code to protect employees from workplace exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Self-Monitoring - Employees are encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

(This list is not inclusive of all possible symptoms. Please see the CDC website as updates will be provided when additional symptoms are discovered.)

If you test positive for COVID-19 and have [symptoms](#) (Contact their supervisor and follow normal call-in procedures)– you may end after day 5 if:

- You are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication)
- Your symptoms are improving

If you still have fever or your other symptoms have not improved, continue to isolate until they improve.

If you had [moderate illness](#) (if you experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing), or [severe illness](#) (you were hospitalized) due to COVID-19, or you have a weakened immune system, you need to isolate through day 10. If you had [severe illness](#) or have a weakened immune system, consult your doctor before ending isolation.

When you can stop wearing your mask

Even if you've ended isolation, wear your mask through Day 10. Visit [CDC's website](#) to see how you might be able to stop wearing your mask sooner.

- VDH COVID-19 hotline at 877-ASK-VDH3 (877-275-8343)

VDH Updated 11/3/2022

Notification of Positive Test – Should an employee test positive, the School Nurse and/or the School Health Coordinator must be notified immediately. Confidentiality of the confirmed Covid-19 employee shall be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 USC § 1201 et. Seq) and other applicable federal and Virginia laws and regulations.

The GCPS School Health Coordinator is required to report to the VDH and the DOLI the discovery of three more cases of its own employees present at the place of employment within a 14-day period testing positive for COVID-19. (<https://redcap.vdh.virginia.gov/redcap/surveys/?s=LRHNP89XPK>)

Anonymous Complaints – Employees who wish to place anonymous complaints regarding policies and procedures that are not being followed may complete the following employee complaint form through the following link: <https://forms.gle/wfAaZYaKAXXDvZa8> This form will be anonymous. Complaints will be investigated and handled according to current COVID-19 standards and guidelines. Employees shall not be reprimanded nor retaliated against in any way for reporting violations.