

COVID-19 APPENDIX TO THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Gibraltar Area School District

This Policy shall apply in addition to all other policies contained in the Employee Handbook until such time as this Policy is withdrawn with prior notice. To the extent that this Policy conflicts with the policies in the general Employee Handbook, this Policy shall control while it is in effect.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies and pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 118, 120 and 121, the Board has authorized the Superintendent or his/her designee to determine school closures or methods of remote work and/or virtual instruction and to develop and implement District level mitigation measures (including but not limited to: mask use, social distancing, and quarantine periods), based on guidance from public health agencies. Please be aware that this policy, as well as the structure of the 2021-2022 school year, may change based on recommendations or guidance from appropriate public agencies. Please read your school emails carefully as any changes will be provided in that manner.

Duty to Report

As a matter of first importance, during the public health emergency of coronavirus (COVID-19), all staff are required to report to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor if they receive a diagnosis of COVID-19. Additionally, all staff are required to report to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor if a family member or individual with whom they have been in close contact in the previous 14 days advises the staff member that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Daily Screening

For the safety of all, staff members will be required to participate in a daily self-screening prior to reporting to work. If, in the course of self-screening, the staff member identifies a fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, 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, or diarrhea, the staff member should immediately report those symptoms to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor. The District Compliance Officer or Supervisor will advise the staff member whether to report to work.

It is possible that the District will choose to require mandatory testing for COVID-19. This will not be an anti-body test. If testing is made mandatory, all staff will be required to comply.

All information provided by screening or by testing will be kept confidential as required by applicable laws. The District will use the information provided only to advise and protect other staff members and students from any transmission of the virus.

Return to Work

If a staff member has symptoms based upon either their own daily screening or the observation of school officials upon reporting to work, the staff member will be required to stay home until a COVID-19 test is completed, a negative test result obtained and the staff member receives medical clearance to return to work. Unless the staff member receives and provides to the District specific

documentation to that effect, and subject to any other health department recommendations, the staff member will be required to self-isolate away from the school building for 14 days and until he or she has been symptom free for at least 7 days.

Close Contacts

Employees who are considered close contacts and are **not** up-to-date on COVID vaccinations (up-to-date, as of February 17th, 2022, means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) within 30 days of eligibility and availability) and are asymptomatic must quarantine for 5 full days, and should get tested for COVID-19. After the 5 day quarantine period, employees may return to work but must continue to wear a mask and monitor symptoms for 10 days after the initial exposure. If employees develop symptoms, they must isolate and get tested for COVID-19.

Employees who are considered close contacts and are up-to-date on COVID vaccinations and are asymptomatic, do not need to quarantine at home following an exposure (they can continue to attend school in-person and participate in other activities), but should still get tested for COVID-19. Employees within this category must continue to wear a mask and monitor symptoms for 10 days after the initial exposure. If employees develop symptoms, they must isolate and get tested for COVID-19.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, must isolate for 5 days and may end isolation after 5 days, if the employee is fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, and if symptoms are improving. Employees must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after receiving a positive test, even after isolation has ended.

On-Duty Conduct

All staff in the building are expected to comply with the following guidelines:

- Stay home if you are sick. There may be leave time available to you as an employee or staff member.
- Wash hands frequently and utilize hand sanitizer if you are not able to wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your face and eyes.
- Cover any cough or sneeze with a Kleenex or elbow.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces in the classroom regularly.
- Avoid sharing physical materials as much as possible.
- Maintain social distance of 6 feet from others as much as possible. If social distancing is not possible, wear a face covering.
- Face coverings should be worn at all times, to the extent feasible. Contact a District Compliance Officer if this will present a difficulty.
- Comply with all instructions regarding frequent cleaning care of personal spaces and classrooms. This includes cleaning desks in-between classes if students will be switching classrooms.

- Remove objects from the classroom that can be shared as much as possible. Especially for younger students, avoid the need to share classroom materials.
- If it becomes necessary to specify times when particular staff can and cannot be in the building, comply with the schedule and make accommodations to work from other locations as required.

Drinking fountains will not be available, so staff members should plan to provide their own water and food as much as possible.

It is important in the case of an outbreak in the school that the District is able to identify who was in close contact with the infected person. If a staff member or student moves to a room other than where they are scheduled to be, please document changes to the schedule or location of instructional services.

Copyright Policies

Ensure all staff are complying with special permissions and fair use agreements if it is necessary to record copyrighted materials and post them online for further access. If staff members have questions about the specifics of these rules, please contact an administrator for guidance.

Supporting Students

As the learning environment changes throughout the year, whether by classroom arrangements, limitations on how many students report to school at any given time, partially remote learning options or any other variation on the learning structure that may become necessary, please be aware of students who may not respond well to these options for a variety of reasons. If teachers or support staff need additional help accommodating for a particular student's needs, please contact an appropriate administrator to seek support.

If a teacher is required to provide for students who are not able to attend class in person, the teacher should ensure that the materials received at home and at school, as well as the lessons, remain as coordinated as possible and that transitions between periods of virtual instruction and in-person instruction remain as cohesive as possible. Increased reliance on the teacher's designated web page may satisfy this purpose. However, teachers should be careful to avoid violating the District's social networking policy.

Throughout this time, make an effort to increase direct communication with parents to solicit their feedback and concerns during the pandemic. Pay special attention to families who may not have the ability to access school or community resources, and to students who have difficulties accessing instruction or problems with the increased independence posed by virtual and distance learning.

Collaboration with colleagues may also require additional effort when it is less likely that employees will casually occupy the same space during school hours. Please be intentional to communicate student assignments and student specific needs with supporting teachers as necessary.

Visitors

Any non-essential people should be approved prior to being invited into the building. This includes family members who may come in to set up classrooms with staff members, or parents who may come to volunteer. All visitors to the building will be required to complete a screening questionnaire and sign in at the front office. Visitors will be expected to proceed directly to the destination for the visit (classroom or other building location) and to leave directly from there to minimize exposure to other individuals or spaces.

Early Notice

If, at any time, an employee determines that he or she is not comfortable returning to work or that he or she will require an accommodation based on a medical disability or that he or she will need leave for child care, please contact a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor as soon as possible. Notice should be provided pursuant to the individual contract terms where applicable or per board policy, but where not otherwise specified, no less than a minimum of 30 days of notice prior to resignation is preferred. The more notice an employee is able to provide, the more easily the District may be able to accommodate the request while also ensuring the District operations are covered.

Amended Accommodation Policy

To the extent that an employee believes he or she requires a reasonable accommodation based on a medical disability related to COVID-19, the staff member should contact a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor as soon as possible to discuss potential accommodations. The District will provide reasonable accommodations as appropriate. Be advised that conditions that put an employee at higher risk for contracting or suffering extreme symptoms or medical consequences of COVID-19 may be considered legal disabilities for the pandemic time period, even if such symptoms or medical consequences would not previously have qualified under non-pandemic circumstances. Examples of higher risk conditions include being over age 60, or various underlying medical or health conditions, including heart conditions or obesity. If a staff member has been advised by a medical professional that he or she is at higher risk for complications of COVID-19 based on the examples identified or other conditions, please address those concerns to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor.

Teleworking/Remote Work

While it is not the intent of the District to operate virtually for the entire school-year or for all programs, the District may be able to make reasonable accommodations based on a particular situation to allow individuals to work from home. This policy will be used in response to disability requests discussed above, as well as possibly during times of self-isolation or quarantine where the individual does not display symptoms, but has been asked to avoid coming into the building. Unless otherwise approved, staff is expected to report to the building for the regularly scheduled

school day. An individual should contact a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor if the individual believes he or she may qualify for a remote working option. In the event permission is granted to work from home, it is the staff member's responsibility to maintain relationships with students in a manner comparable to in-person classroom relationships. Under such circumstances, the staff member should engage in communication with students to assist in accessing educational resources and instruction.

Amended Discrimination Policies

In addition to the normal prohibitions on discrimination within the school district, this policy adds that no person should be discriminated against based a COVID-19 related disability or high-risk categorization. Additionally, in considering COVID-19-related accommodations, leave requests, or school reopening structure and organization, the prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin will still apply. Any complaints should follow the discrimination procedure referred to in the Employee Handbook.

Amended Discipline Policies

Anyone who fails to comply with the additional rules set forth in this handbook will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, if the violation is egregious or repeated. Staff should contact a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor if they have any concerns about their ability to comply with these rules or are concerned that their behavior may be viewed as non-compliant.

Additionally, any bullying related to wearing a mask or not wearing a mask or any perceived high-risk categorization or designation will not be tolerated. Staff members are required to report comments from other staff members or students that are perceived as bullying or if the comments are bullying in nature.

Leave Generally

It is the District's intent to provide access to leave in a flexible manner. Employees may have PTO or sick time available to them that can be used as otherwise provided by the District. Employees should contact a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor with any leave questions or concerns to determine if other arrangements can be made. It is the employee's responsibility to communicate concerns to the District.

The District will provide PTO in lieu of personal PTO to cover COVID-related absences for employees following CDC guidelines for full vaccination. Employees who wish to file for an exemption to vaccination must submit the request in writing to the District by March 7th, 2022.

The District's primary goal is to provide continuous, uninterrupted in-person teaching and learning. In order to maintain the staffing levels needed to meet this goal, the administrative team will use the following language in the Employee Handbook to approve or deny PTO requests:

- The availability of qualified substitute personnel will be a condition of approving a planned PTO request.

- A teacher's principal or immediate supervisor shall be given forty-eight (48) hours advance notice for planned PTO. A lesson plan covering the period of absence shall be provided by the end of the school day prior to the planned PTO.
- A request to use consecutive, multiple days of planned PTO must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor or principal. This type of request may be denied in order to sustain continuity of instruction and professional duties.
- The Board reserves the right to require a physician's examination report in support of an Employee's continuing absence from duty when it is deemed necessary.

Concluding Comments

The administration is aware that these conditions will make this year more challenging than most. We appreciate your understanding and consideration as we try to navigate this situation in a responsible manner. Should any questions or concerns arise as to any rule or policy specified in this document, please bring your concerns to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor. Additionally, if you believe that a situation could be addressed in a different or more effective way, please forward your suggestion to a District Compliance Officer or Supervisor. While there are many factors at play in the decision-making process, we are hopeful that we can address the current COVID-19 situation in a way that is satisfactory to all members of our community.

Acknowledgement

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received the above *COVID-19 Policy Appendix* to the 2021-2022 Employee Handbook. I understand the information contained herein and agree to comply with the requirements of this Appendix until advised that it has been withdrawn. I further agree that there may be further amendments or changes to this Appendix and understand that I will receive notice if and when such changes take place.

Name

Date