

August 13, 2020

Dear Students/Parents/Guardians/Faculty and Staff:

While the year ahead has unique challenges, we are firmly committed to the development of our students as lifelong learners and global citizens. After careful planning and evaluation, The Gilbert School has chosen to pursue teaching and learning through a hybrid-learning model in the fall. By making this decision, our teachers and students can focus on the significant task of preparing for hybrid and remote learning.

This summer we were prepared for our students to return to campus and to resume their education and experiences that they anticipated, but it became clear that a hybrid-learning model is the best option for our students' health, safety, and educational well-being. In addition to student health, the driving factors behind the decision were the inability to meet state guidelines for full reopening, the main one, social distancing.

Students will begin hybrid days starting on September 8. The schedule included in the following documents will be used for hybrid school days. It includes increased time between classes to allow for staggered dismissals, time for hand washing and cleaning, and an opportunity for appropriately distanced masks-off time while outside.

Updated Practices & Policies for Safe Learning

The following changes in practices and policies have been put in place to best facilitate a safe learning community while attending class in the hybrid model:

- The number of hand-washing and hand-sanitizing stations will be increased;
- Cleaning protocols will be adjusted to abide by state guidelines;
- All water fountains will be off;
- Water bottle refill stations will be available;
- Each student and employee will be provided with a mask if they do not have one;
- All after-school activities will be virtual with the exception of sports;
- The Library Media Center will be closed at 2:16 p.m.;
- No visitors in school buildings, including parents. All meetings (guidance, discipline, 504, Special Education, teacher) will be done virtually;
- Student dismissals must be done in advance with a note or via a phone call;
- Buildings will be open at 7:30 a.m. for students to enter and closed at 2:16 p.m. Students may not plan to stay after school unless participating in an athletic practice or game. There will be no place to wait on campus if a practice or game starts at a later time;
- Breakfast will be provided the day before as a grab and go meal;
- All students will use their student accounts for lunch payments. (No cash will be used);
- Students in study halls that are scheduled during the first and/or last block are encouraged to arrive late and/or be dismissed early;
- Parking will be available for seniors to drive to campus.

Expectations

With the return to in-person hybrid instruction, employees and students must agree to comply fully with the following expectations. All students and employees will:

- Wear masks;
- Comply with building travel restrictions to include one-way stairways, entrances, and exits;

- Wash hands and sanitize when entering building and classrooms;
- Observe structured bathroom access during class time and hall passing;
- Eat lunch in the three lunch waves in the cafeteria or designated areas (there will be no food service delivery to classrooms; however, students are encouraged to bring their own meals);
- Do a self-assessment and stay home if feeling unwell;
- As feasible, maintain appropriate physical distancing;
- Participate in health screenings as requested;
- Only ride your assigned bus;
- Notify the nurse's office if traveling to a CDC "hotspot" or state with a travel restriction as identified by the Governor's order;
- Students coming to TGS from outside of CT must quarantine for fourteen days;
- Follow quarantine protocol as appropriate.

Remote Learning

If it is determined that we have to move to remote learning, our plan allows us to provide consistent remote learning to all students daily.

Anthony Serio, Ed.D.
Head of School/Superintendent

Susan O. Sojka
Principal