

Groveton Independent School District
Updated Return to School Plan
2021-2022



"We believe that the purpose of this district is to educate all students to high levels of academic performance, while fostering growth in social/emotional behavior and attitudes. We accept the responsibility to teach all students so they can attain their maximum educational potential."

Instructional Information for Families

Groveton ISD's in-school instructional practices ensure the safety of students and staff to the best of our ability. **Students will attend classes five days a week, with additional safety measures, in alignment with state and federal guidelines and recommendations.**

- Students will engage in high-quality learning experiences aligned to Groveton ISD curriculum and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills;
- Groveton ISD will utilize the strategies and best practices associated with blended learning to design learning activities for all students;
- Resources will be provided for students to access the curriculum, assignments, and instruction;

Return to School Health and Safety Protocols

Below are the Return to School protocols for Groveton ISD campuses and administration buildings. Since this is an ever-changing situation, the district may need to change protocols at any time to address specific needs and circumstances in order to protect the health and safety of students, employees, and the community. Please note, health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. As a result, Groveton ISD will continue to consult available guidance through governmental agencies and other information deemed relevant to monitor the situation. The district will comply with applicable federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety standards, and accessibility standards to address individual needs.

School Preparations

Groveton ISD ensures all staff, resources, and supplies are prepared for school, including but not limited to assigning sufficient staff to carry out protocols, ensuring proper training, and stocking inventory of necessary supplies.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance, recommendations, and resources to assist with plans and protocols for health and safety. Groveton ISD implements health and safety plans that include:

- Ensuring adequate supply inventory (e.g., cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.);
- Cleaning with products approved by governing authorities and per guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- Ensuring compliance with CDC, Health and Human Services, the Texas Education Agency, and other jurisdictional policies;

- Providing communication of procedures and expectations upon entering facilities and throughout buildings.

Groveton ISD is committed to the health, safety, and welfare of all students and staff members as well as our community. We will follow the guidance and best practices of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Public Health Region 04/05N Health Department, Texas Education Agency (TEA), and local governance. This is a living document, which is subject to change based upon government mandates or changes. The information within is to be used to help families make decisions for the well-being of their children and the protocols and policies listed below are recommendations for the safety of all.

Masks / Face Coverings - Masks or face coverings (restatement of pre-August 19th guidance document) Per GA-38, school systems cannot require students or staff to wear a mask. GA-38 addresses government-mandated face coverings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other authority to require protective equipment, including masks, in an employment setting is not necessarily affected by GA-38. School systems must allow individuals to wear a mask if they choose to do so.

Visitors - Due to the increase in COVID-19 cases within our area and state, no visitors or parents will be allowed to come to school for lunch until further notice. If you need to visit our campuses for any reason, please call ahead and make an appointment to enter our facilities. GISD will evaluate this protocol on a monthly basis and will make future determinations in the best interest of our students and staff members.

Self-Screening for Staff & Students - Teachers, staff, and students must report to campus/district administration if they have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry. Additionally, teachers, staff, and students must report to campus/district administration if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined in this document, and, if so, must remain off campus for a period of 10 days.

Close Contact - Currently, the CDC defines a “Close Contact” as someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. At this

time, there are no quarantine requirements from GISD for individuals who are considered a “close contact”. However, school administrators can exclude any student or staff member from attendance if they are exhibiting symptoms or suspected of having COVID-19. GISD does recommend that individuals who are identified as close contacts should follow CDC recommendations to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. Recommendations for close contacts are to quarantine or self-isolate, get tested, and wear well-fitting masks after exposure to COVID-19.

Protocols for Individuals Confirmed, or Suspected to COVID-19 - *Students*

School systems must exclude students from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19, and school systems must immediately notify parents if this is determined while on campus.

A school administrator shall exclude from attendance any child having symptoms or suspected of having COVID-19. Exclusion shall continue until the readmission criteria for the conditions are met. The readmission criteria for a student is as follows:

Children who test positive for COVID-19 must stay home until at least 10 days have passed after the day they tested positive. Before returning to school, students must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius) or higher.

Staff Members

Staff members who have COVID-19 are similar to students, school systems must exclude staff from attending school in person who are actively sick with COVID-19, who are suspected of being actively sick with COVID-19, or who have received a positive test result for COVID-19. The readmission criteria for a staff member is as follows:

Staff members may not return to school until at least 5 days have passed after the day they tested positive. Before returning to school, staff members must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medications. Fever is a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius) or higher. Before returning, staff members will need to test at one of our two testing locations in the morning, before the start of the school day on the day they return, the third day, and the fifth day to meet the recommended requirements of the CDC and TEA. We will also ask staff members to wear a mask once they return for at least 5 days, as recommended by the updated CDC guidelines.

GISD testing locations are in the nurse’s office on the Elementary campus and at the administration building. Staff members needing to test, please contact Nurse Barrett for

testing procedures and entry protocol at the Elementary campus, or contact Mrs. Huff or Mr. Dillard for testing procedures and entry protocol to the administration building.

Parents

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is test-confirmed with COVID-19, until the conditions for re-entry are met. To help mitigate the risk of asymptomatic individuals being on campuses, school systems may provide and/or conduct recurring COVID-19 testing using rapid tests provided by the state or other sources. Testing is required for staff members suspected or confirmed with COVID-19. Testing can be conducted with students with parent permission or prior written permission of a parent or legal guardian. Parents requesting for their child to be tested need to contact the office personnel of your child's campus at (936)-642-1473 and ask to speak to Nurse Barrett.

Reporting Measures for Students or Staff Members - If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the District must notify Public Health Region 04/05N Health Department and the Trinity County Emergency Health Care Manager in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Communication / Questions – In the event that you have questions about any of the information outlined in this document please feel free to contact our offices or school health professionals. Our offices are open 7:30 to 3:30 Monday through Friday and appointments can be scheduled by calling (936)-642-1473. For further guidance about COVID-19 protocols and best practices the following websites are helpful resources for providing families with additional information:

CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) – www.cdc.gov

TEA (Texas Education Agency) – <https://tea.texas.gov>

UIL (University Interscholastic League) – www.uil-texas.org

Cleaning/Sanitizing/Disinfecting

Frequent cleaning and disinfection will support a healthy learning and work environment for students and staff.

Custodial Cleaning/PPE/Disinfecting

- Provide multiple hand sanitizer stands to each campus;

- All restrooms cleaned two times per day;
- Student classrooms will be disinfected daily;
 - Custodians will clean classrooms, locker rooms, gyms, athletic equipment, and restrooms daily;
- Teacher desks and computers will be wiped and disinfected per request;
- Elementary and Secondary campuses will clean floors every night in hallways;
- Custodians will wear gloves while handling trash and cleaning.

School Arrival & Dismissal

Please check with your child's campus for specific arrival and dismissal procedures. Parents picking up students during the day will need to call ahead so that students can be ready upon arrival.

Transportation

The Groveton ISO Transportation Department offers the following guidance to parents and caregivers regarding school bus transportation for daily bus routes, as well as field trips.

Bus routes will run at regular capacity. Although the district is implementing the safety protocols and disinfecting efforts described below, families are encouraged to drop students off, carpool, or walk with their student to school to reduce possible exposure on buses.

- It is strongly recommended parents help with supervising their child at the bus stop until the bus arrives;
- Use hand sanitizer (provided near the bus stairwell);
- Standard Groveton ISO transportation rules apply.

Disinfecting Protocol

At end of each school day:

- School bus drivers, bus assistants, and staff will disinfect each bus daily focusing particularly on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and stairway handrail;
- When possible, bus windows will be open to allow outside air to circulate in the bus.

Cafeteria - Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch will be provided free of charge to all students and meals will be consumed in the cafeteria. If further mitigation is required throughout the school year, then other eating areas will be explored at that time between the campus administration and the Child Nutrition Department.

Even though meals will be free this year, parents/guardians will be requested to fill out an income questionnaire or meal application for the purpose of establishing rollover data for the start of the 2022-2023 school year and to help students qualify for certain programs offered throughout the school year.

The Groveton ISD Food Service Staff will continue to adhere to strict cleaning and sanitizing procedures as required by local food code and monitored by the local Health Department.

Campus Visitors

All campus visitors are required to check in through the campus front office per standard District protocols.

School Events and Activities

Any schoolwide events that are approved to be held on campus must adhere to requirements outlined by Groveton ISD, TEA, and UIL. (Examples: grade level pep rallies, assemblies, performances, etc.).

PTA and Boosters must collaborate with and seek approval from campus/district administration prior to any event that is planned.

Emergencies and Drills

Groveton ISD will follow the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and its emergency actions of Secure (Lockout), Lockdown, Evacuate and Shelter in Place.

Required safety drills will be scheduled per Texas School Safety Center guidelines.

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can positively impact a student's attitude, behavioral, and academic outcomes. Groveton ISD is committed to SEL and the well-being of all students. With SEL, children and adults both acquire and apply the knowledge and skills that are necessary in managing emotions, achieving goals, showing empathy for others, maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions.

Student

- Students are encouraged to contact the school counselor in person, by phone, or by self-referral;

- All students will participate in social and emotional learning activities.

Parent

- Parents are encouraged to talk with their child about their social and emotional well-being;
- Assist in supporting your child's social and emotional needs by contacting the counselor by phone, email, or in person
- Keep consistent schedules and routines at home.

Counselor

- Deliver social and emotional learning lessons;
- Provide counseling for students;
- Provide trauma-informed/grief support;
- Provide information on community resources for mental health and social and emotional well-being;
- Support the development of coping and self-regulation skills, such as managing emotions, impulse control, and perseverance;
- Check in with students in need of assistance, as well as new students transitioning to their new campus.

Administrator/Teacher/Staff

- Educators will consistently incorporate opportunities for social and emotional learning practice and reflection;
- Provide multi-tiered systems of support to students to address behavioral and social and emotional needs;
- Refer students in need of assistance to counselors.