

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans



District Name:	Gahanna-Jefferson City Schools
District Address:	160 S. Hamilton Road
District Contact:	Jill Elliott, Assistant Superintendent
District IRN:	046961

The recently passed American Rescue Plan (ARP) provides substantial federal resources to support states and local school districts. As a result, local school districts receiving ARP funds are required to develop a plan which outlines details regarding a safe return to in-person instruction and the continuity of services plan within the district. This plan was developed with stakeholder feedback and will be reviewed, monitored and adjusted as necessary through September 30, 2023.

Federal guidance requires that each local school district's plan include, or be modified to include, the extent to which it has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the following mitigation strategies:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks;
- Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding);
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state, local, territorial or tribal health departments;
- Diagnostic and screening testing;
- Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff and students, if eligible; and
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies.

Each local school district's plan should describe how it will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services that identify and address students' academic needs, and students' and staff social-emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

In addition, local districts should seek public input and periodically review and revise its plan as appropriate.

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Health and Safety Mitigation Strategies:

Maintaining a healthy, safe learning environment remains our top priority. We are grateful to our school community for their support and cooperation during the past year of the pandemic. Working together, our students, teachers, staff and families helped minimize the impact of COVID-19 on our district.

Over the course of the 2020-2021 school year, we worked closely with local health agencies and consulted with our COVID Task Force made up of local medical experts within the Gahanna community, district nursing staff and representation from Franklin County Public Health. The ongoing guidance from our Task Force has been invaluable as we implemented and adjusted health and safety protocols and learning models for our students and staff.

Ohio and local governments have lifted health orders, and the CDC has adjusted its guidance on COVID-19-related protocols to reflect reduced cases and widespread vaccination efforts. As a result, we have also begun lifting our COVID-19 restrictions.

During the summer, the district expectation is that facial coverings must still be worn in classrooms and on school transportation vehicles for summer programming and all indoor school activities. This is due to the fact that many of our students remain unvaccinated, and mask wearing has been an important factor in our remarkable success to prevent in-school spread thus far. In addition, we want to decrease the possibility that students will miss instructional days during summer school. While outdoors on school property, facial coverings are encouraged, but not required, for school-related activities or events.

Our intention, unless required by health order or law, is for Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools to operate the 2021-22 school year without masks, social distancing or other COVID-19 restrictions or protocols. We will remain diligent about encouraging healthy hand hygiene practices and hand sanitizer will be available throughout our buildings. Students will be encouraged to sanitize when entering and exiting our learning spaces and cough and sneeze etiquette will be taught and reinforced.

Our building ventilation systems have been updated with MERV filters and cleaning protocols will return to pre-pandemic practices. Additionally, district administration

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and nursing staff will implement any contact tracing, isolation, or quarantine protocols as directed by and in accordance with public health requirements.

Diagnostic and screening tests will continue to be available within our school clinics and central office as supplies are made available by public health. The district will purposefully utilize available test kits for COVID concerns in order to keep students safe in school.

The district will continue to encourage teachers, staff and students to be vaccinated for increased protection. We have hosted vaccine clinics for all age groups and will continue to partner with local health organizations to make vaccines available for our students.

To further support our students with disabilities exhibiting unique health needs, the district will work with IEP teams to develop appropriate plans which may include specific health and safety mitigation practices and/or alternate service models.

Continuity of Services:

In August of 2021, Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools will return to full time in-person learning for students and staff. To accommodate the interests and needs of our families, a blended learning option will be available using SchoolsPLP, a 3rd party provider for the 21-22 school year.

Our Continuity of Services plan is designed to support the academic, social-emotional and nutritional needs of our students as well as the mental health needs of our staff.

Approaches to Identifying Academic Needs:

In Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools, we use a variety of data to identify academic and social-emotional needs for students. Data is gathered in an on-going manner at various points in the school year. Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools staff will administer and analyze the following data sources:

- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- K-3 Third Grade Reading Guarantee diagnostic assessment
- Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan progress monitoring
- Benchmark Assessment System
- Ohio State Tests/End of Course Exams
- Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment
- PSAT

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- SAT
- Panorama SEL Survey
- Cognitive Abilities Test
- MTSS benchmark and progress monitoring
- Classroom-based formative and summative assessment data
- Coursework and grades
- Credit attainment and progress toward graduation
- Attendance data
- Information from school counselors and mental health specialists
- Universal Screener*

* District leaders and staff will implement a new universal screener beginning in the fall of 2021. The data received from the universal screener will be added to the data currently collected and will allow us to identify academic needs more efficiently in both reading and math districtwide.

Data will be analyzed collaboratively to identify students with learning needs or gaps. Additionally, teachers will identify student needs from daily observation and assessment of engagement and performance.

Approaches to Academic Gap Filling:

Teachers will continue to formally and informally assess students and will provide differentiated instruction and intervention/enrichment support based on that data. Teachers in Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools will utilize high quality learning experiences to support student engagement and gap filling.

Literacy specialists will continue working with students at the elementary level to intentionally target identified reading and writing gaps and to supplement classroom instruction. This literacy support will be provided in the one-on-one setting as well as small groups.

Middle school students will receive additional support to address learning gaps during intervention periods worked into the school day. The high school will utilize regular class and support periods to address identified academic and SEL needs during the school day.

Building and grade level teams will utilize the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process involving data-based problem solving and decision-making across all levels to address specific academic learning gaps. Once specific interventions are identified and implemented for students, staff will monitor progress in an ongoing manner using various assessment tools and making adjustments along the way as appropriate.

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After school tutoring sessions will be provided to K-12 students needing academic support in addition to the intervention plans already in place during the school day. This after school supports will be content specific and will provide additional exposure and remediation for at-risk students.

Our traditional summer school program, Journey to Learning (JTL), will operate each summer and will offer reading, math and social-emotional support. It targets students that need additional remediation in grades PreK-8 as well as our K-12 EL students. We also offer summer credit recovery classes for grades 9-12 in English Language Arts (9-12), Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II), Social Studies (Modern World History, US History, Government) and Science (Physical Science, Biology).

In addition to traditional summer school offerings, PK-12 Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools students will have opportunities to engage in high interest experiential learning that will support social-emotional needs, build learning stamina and extend curriculum exposure in a variety of ways. These opportunities will be hands-on and project-based embedding literacy, math and STEM experiences.

Every Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools student will have summer access to the supplemental tech tools that have been used during the school year to support literacy and math. We will implement an incentive program to encourage students and families to continue use throughout the summer.

During the 2021-22 school year, building teams and classroom teachers will use the newly purchased universal screener in tandem with the MTSS process to identify students' needs and develop intervention plans to support any additional gaps that may exist. Instructional coaches and grade level/content teams will continually review curriculum guides and adjust lessons to embed prerequisite skills into the lessons as needed. Our support staff in the buildings will continue to provide small group and individual support (such as Reading Recovery, LLI, math interventions, SEL groups) based on the needs of the students.

Approaches to Social-Emotional Needs:

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools staff and students will benefit from our return to in-person teaching and learning which provides increased engagement and monitoring of social-emotional needs. All students in grades 3-12 will participate in the Panorama Social-Emotional Learning Survey providing data on our students' sense of belonging, self-management, emotional regulation, and social awareness. All GJPS staff will also complete the staff Panorama survey and data from both groups will be used to develop school and districtwide plans for support.

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Teachers, counselors and support staff will observe students within the school setting (virtually and in-person) and will work collaboratively with parents to identify SEL needs of students. Students may receive individual or small group counseling support focused on a variety of mental health needs including but not limited to anxiety, depression, low motivation/engagement, social skills and problem-solving.

At the elementary level, all students are engaged in daily morning meetings to help them start the day in a balanced place where they are able and ready to receive instruction for the day. Morning meetings are used to teach students social-emotional strategies they can use throughout the day to cope and problem-solve various situations.

Building and grade level teams will utilize the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process involving data-based problem solving and decision-making across all levels to address specific social-emotional needs. Once specific interventions are identified and implemented for students, staff will monitor progress in an ongoing manner using various assessment tools and making adjustments along the way as appropriate.

School counselors and mental health specialists will support classroom teachers with strategies and plans for in-class support and monitoring. At the elementary level, school counselors provide in-class lessons to strengthen various social-emotional skills. The mental health team will also provide parent support resources including virtual presentations on identified topics of need.

Through a partnership with Concord Counseling, students have additional counseling support during the school day and after hours. We also utilize Safe Schools Helpline to provide round the clock reporting for needed social-emotional support.

All buildings have been equipped with SMARTLabs to serve as a safe space for students to decompress, work through social-emotional plans and receive support or intervention from a trained adult. Additionally, staff will engage in professional learning to support restorative practices in our buildings.

Alignment:

We are committed to the academic and social-emotional well being and success of all Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools students and staff. Our Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services plan is in direct alignment with our Vision, Mission and Beliefs, our Continuous Improvement Plan and our Equity & Access Plan. Many of the opportunities described in the plan are standard practices used to meet the variety of needs present for our students prior to the pandemic.

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	Others are extensions of current practice that aim to provide additional exposure, intervention, enrichment and engagement.
Periodic Review and Input:	
	<p>This plan will be reviewed periodically through September 30, 2023 using district data, stakeholder feedback, and federal and state guidelines.</p> <p>Public comment is collected using the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Feedback Survey and/or by emailing GJPS Superintendent, Steve Barrett at barretts@gjps.org or Assistant Superintendent, Jill Elliott at elliottj@gjps.org.</p> <p>To learn more you can access information using the American Rescue Plan link</p>