

GOUSD School Re-Opening Plans 2020-2021

The Gold Oak Union School District is committed to working together to prepare for bringing our students back to school. In order for this to happen, much planning has been done and will be continued to be done to ensure that our students and staff are safe and that we are able to provide the best educational program possible under our new normal.

Teams of teachers and staff have provided input into this document and this document will continue to be revised as additional guidance from the state and county are provided. What we plan today may change by tomorrow and so this document is expected to be fluid and responsive as needs change.



COVID-19 Planning Assumptions

Public Health Assumptions:

- The virus that causes COVID-19 will remain in circulation until a vaccine is developed and widely used.
- A vaccine is not likely to be in broad use during the next 12-18 months.
- During this time, improvements in understanding of the virus and in testing will allow public health officials to act with greater precision when taking steps to slow the rate of infection. Broad stay-at-home orders and long-term school closures are not likely to be needed in the future.
- While El Dorado County did not see a high number of cases in the spring (111 cases out of a population of 192,000 as of June 10), a second wave of infection may affect our community. This wave may result in short-term closures of schools or districts in our county.
- Children and staff with significant health conditions will continue to be vulnerable during this time.
- Teaching and reinforcing prevention behaviors (handwashing and cough/sneeze etiquette) will continue to be important strategies in slowing the spread of this and other infectious diseases.
- Frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces will be needed throughout this period.
- A greater percentage of families may request home-based independent study programs.
- Families, students, and staff will be impacted by illness.

Economic Impact Assumptions:

- State funding for education will likely be reduced.
- Declining enrollment due to families moving from the area due to unemployment or fears of returning to school too quickly is likely.
- Increased expenses related to COVID-19 are expected. Costs associated with cleaning, appropriate staffing and changes to our educational model all may increase costs to the district.
- While the District received funding to address COVID-19 needs, this money is one time money.
- There will be a decrease in attendance rates as students and staff will be encouraged to stay home if experiencing symptoms. County substitute teachers, who are already in short supply, will be in more demand.

Educational Impact Assumptions:

- Many students will begin the school year with learning deficits due to the spring school closure.
- Multiple models planned for re-opening will be necessary in order to be able to pivot to different models as conditions change.
- Models must consider social-distancing requirements, health and safety of staff and students, and curricular decisions made for the best interests of students.

Social-Emotional Assumptions:

- Fear, loss, and isolation will result in the need for mental health supports.
- Social distancing requirements will impede schools' ability to engage students through athletics, music and other extracurricular programs that involve close contact or large gatherings.

Community Assumptions:

- There will continue to be a broad spectrum of opinions in the community regarding government and school responses to COVID-19.

GOUSD Re-opening Plans for 2020-2021

When schools re-open in August, the daily program will be different. Multiple educational models have been developed with the assumptions considered in the design of each model. Multiple models are necessary due to the continual updates in information about the virus and the need to change to adjust to the current situation. Due to the number of cases in El Dorado County and the current testing capacity in the county, the Gold Oak Union School District will start the school year in a Distance Learning model.

We appreciate the input that shaped and informed this document. Input was received from parents, staff and community in the development of this document. Input included survey data, informal interviews, planning team input, staff input, guidance from the El Dorado County Public Health Department, the California Department of Public Health, and planning teams from bargaining units.

Once schools are cleared to have in-person learning, schools will be following the following guidance.

General Guidance

Health Screenings at Home

Families will be asked to screen children daily for any symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath. Families will also be asked to take students' temperatures daily before leaving for school. Students with fevers of 100.4 F or above or experiencing any symptoms of illness should be kept at home and not sent to school. Parents should notify the school as soon as possible if the parent keeps a student home from school that is showing symptoms of COVID-19.

Students should thoroughly wash hands before coming to school.

Transportation

While waiting for the bus, students will be encouraged to maintain physical distancing.

Students will be spaced as much as physically possible on school buses. As 6 feet of physical distancing will not be possible, students riding the bus will be required to wear face coverings. Windows on the bus would be down to allow for better air circulation, weather permitting. Siblings would be required to sit together to lower the number of contacts.

Bus drivers will be required to wear face coverings when passengers are present.

Buses will receive nightly disinfecting by staff. Cleaning products used will be approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved list. Staff with the responsibility of cleaning and disinfecting the bus will be provided proper protective equipment.

Arrival at School

Staff and students in grades 3-8 will be required to wear face coverings. Students in grades TK-2 will be encouraged to wear face coverings. The following individuals are exempt from wearing a face covering:

- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.
- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Those with an exemption will need to provide a medical note.

Parents will have limited access to the campus. Parents will be asked not to enter the campus during student drop-off and will not be allowed to congregate in the parking lots. Students will be asked to go directly to their classrooms upon arrival. Students who get a school breakfast in the morning will go directly to the cafeteria. Students will be required to sit at least 6 feet apart while eating their breakfast.

Safety Precautions during the School Day

Schools will follow cleaning/disinfection guidelines provided by the California Department of Education and the California Department of Public Health. Nightly disinfecting by custodial staff using cleaning products approved for the use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved list. Custodial staff with the responsibility of cleaning and disinfecting the school shall be equipped with proper protective equipment, including gloves, respiratory protection and other appropriate protection as required by the product.

Students may be temperature screened before entering the classroom for the day.

Students will be organized into cohorts to limit the number of contacts during the day.

Physical barriers may be installed in offices or other locations where social distancing isn't possible.

Students and staff will be asked to wash hands or use hand sanitizer on a regular basis throughout the day—including each time they enter or leave a building. Soap and hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.

Schools will limit as much as practicable the sharing of school supplies.

Classrooms will be set up to maximize spacing between students.

Face coverings will be required for staff and students (grades 3 and up) while in the classroom, but the district recognizes that this may be a challenge, particularly with the younger children. Face coverings for children in grades TK-2 will be encouraged to wear face coverings. Staff will also be provided face shields as an alternative, if desired. See face coverings in previous section.

Students will be taught to provide social distancing in classrooms and while navigating the campus. Students will also be educated in good hygiene practices and will be asked to follow good hygiene at all times. The following will be reinforced with students and staff:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice physical distancing of 6 feet from other individuals as much as possible.
- Wearing a face covering as outlined in this document.

Breakfast and lunch items will be “grab and go” style of meals. Weather permitting, students will be seated outside as much as possible. Facial coverings and gloves will be worn by cafeteria workers.

Visitors will be strictly limited at this time. Parents will not be allowed to congregate on campus or to accompany students to classrooms. While we value parent volunteers on our campuses, until we are allowed more flexibility and to ensure fewer contacts to each student, parent volunteers will not be allowed in our classrooms.

Educational Program

The district has prepared for three different educational scenarios for the 2020-2021 school year. The district will begin the school year in Distance Learning. The District will review the current conditions in El Dorado County after four weeks to determine if the district can open in a hybrid by the beginning of October or if we will continue in Distance Learning.

Model One—Return to School Five Days Per Week

This model would allow students to return school five days per week, only if the state and county health departments were to allow for it. This model would still require social distancing and health and safety considerations as outlined in the guidance above.

Students would be spaced as much as practicable in the classroom and throughout the campus. Recess and lunches would be staggered as needed to provide social distancing. High risk activities, such as contact sports, would not be permitted. Rules for large gatherings, visitors, transportation would also be in effect.

Staff will provide full access to curriculum and instruction using district adopted curriculum and resources. Staff could continue to utilize technology embedded instruction and build on some of their key learnings from distance learning.

What are the benefits of Model One?

- Allows for students to be back in classrooms to receive direct instruction from teachers.
- Allows students to receive regular social-emotional support.
- Allows for parents who need to return to work the ability to do so.
- Allows more opportunities for students who require special services or remediation.
- Allows for equity and access for our students.
- Support staff (aides, nurse, counselor) would be available for students up to five days per week.
- Students would be able to access food services five days per week at the school site.

Model Two—The Hybrid Model

This model is designed to limit the number of students on campus at any one time to allow for greater social distancing requirements. Students will be divided into two groups—Group A and Group B. Schools will work to keep siblings in the same group.

Group A would attend school Monday and Thursday each week for the regular school hours.

Group B would attend school Tuesday and Friday each week for the regular school hours.

Wednesdays would at home learning days for students and be days to allow teachers to plan and prep for three days of at-home lessons, attend training, and collaborate with other teachers. Teachers may hold whole class or small class virtual meetings.

Teachers will utilize standards based materials and will assess students to measure and monitor learning loss. Intervention materials will be implemented as necessary to support students demonstrating learning loss.

Teachers may opt to have students most at risk of learning loss attend for some in-person lessons, either individually or in small groups with teachers, on the asynchronous days. Some of these lessons may be virtual. Support staff may also support in this manner.

Teachers will monitor participation in synchronous and asynchronous learning daily and will connect with students not actively engaged. Students who continue to not actively engage will be referred to administration for a higher level of support/intervention.

What are the benefits of Model Two?

- Allows for greater social distancing with 50% fewer students on campus.
- Allows for less exposure of students and staff to others on a daily basis.
- Allows for face to face, in-person instruction of students two days per week rather than zero in full distance learning.
- Even with 50% of students on campus, students will have the benefit of being able to socially interact with other students in a safe manner.
- Lunch and recess would be modified to follow safety guidance, but there would be less students to guide.
- Buses could run with half their load to help with social distancing.
- Drop off and pick up times would be reduced with fewer students.
- Support staff (aides, nurse, counselor) would be available for students as opposed to Distance Learning.
- Food services available on the two days in attendance. Off days would require pick up of food items.

Model Three—Distance Learning

This model would not allow students to return to the school site due to health and safety concerns following direction of the County Health Department. Students would receive instruction virtually.

Students would receive daily, live interaction with teachers through online lessons that align with state standards. Staff will regularly monitor students' work completion and participation and provide families with a regular schedule of synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

According to SB98, in the 2020-2021 school year, Distance Learning will require a minimum number of daily instructional minutes, which is inclusive of the live lessons and independent work. The minimum minutes are: Grades TK-K: 180 daily minutes; Grades 1-3: 230 daily minutes; Grades 4-8: 240 daily minutes.

Teachers will utilize standards based materials and will assess students to measure and monitor learning loss. Intervention materials will be implemented as necessary to support students demonstrating learning loss.

Teachers may opt to have students most at risk of learning loss attend for some in-person lessons, either individually or in small groups with teachers. Some of these lessons may be virtual. Support staff may also support in this manner.

Teachers will monitor participation in synchronous and asynchronous learning daily and will connect with students not actively engaged. Students who continue to not actively engage will be referred to administration for a higher level of support/intervention.

What are the benefits of Model Three?

- Allows for a safe alternative when the schools need to close due to an outbreak or when conditions do not allow for a safe transition to in-person learning.

Remote Learning Option: Long-term Distance Learning

As an alternative to the three models above, parents who are concerned about their children being on campus in the fall due to health reasons may opt to place their child on Long-term Distance Learning. Long-term Distance Learning is not an alternative curriculum and Long-term Distance Learning students are expected to meet the same educational objectives as all other students. By law, Long-term Distance Learning education is to be equal in quality and quantity to classroom instruction. Due to these requirements, Long-term Distance Learning will be a more rigorous program than distance learning in the spring of 2020 and will require parent oversight of work assigned by a classroom teacher. Regular work completion, regular live online interactions with teachers, and assessment will be required. (Board Policy 6158)

Parents interested in this option will complete an application. Those who participate will be assigned to a Long-term Distance Learning Teacher. Parents will need to commit to this option for at least one trimester to minimize disruptions to the student's learning program.

Other changes—Courses and Extra-curricular programs/events

Courses: To promote safety and social distancing, the manner in which some of our courses are taught will need to be modified. Physical Education courses will be modified to allow for social distancing. Certain games and activities will need to change to ensure this. Students in the middle school will not change out in the locker room for PE due to concerns around sanitation and social distancing.

Music, choir and Instrumental music classes will not be offered in the 2020-2021 school year. The structure of these classes raise concerns around an increased risk for spreading the virus.

Sports: At this time, contact sports or those sports that draw large groups congregated together will not be permitted. If conditions change, this may be altered.

Other programs/events: At this time, field trips will not be permitted. Virtual field trips may be considered.

Assemblies, dances or other school activities in which students are congregated closely will not be permitted at this time.

Events such as Back to School Night and Harvest Festival where large groups of people congregate, will not be permitted at this time. Alternatives, such as a virtual Back to School Night, will be put into place as an alternative.

Connectivity

Students without devices for distance learning will be allowed to check out a Chromebook from the school sites. A limited number of mobile hot spots will also be available, prioritized by student need. The District will also make available a variety of ways students/families may access free internet at different locations, including the school parking lots and the local market parking lot (EDCOE Wireless on Wheels Program). In addition, the District has created a “Connections Room” on campus that allows students a two hour block of time to join a virtual class and/or download material. Students attending the Extended Day Program on campus will also have access to school internet. The Connections Room will be supervised by district staff.

Suspected and Positive Cases

When students return to in-person instruction, there will be strict health protocols in place. Staff and students reporting COVID-19 symptoms are to stay home. Symptoms may include a

fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, persistent cough, or shortness of breath. Students who while at school report COVID-19 symptoms or who are found to have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, will be sent to the office. The nurse or office staff will conduct a temperature check and notify the family. While waiting for parents to pick up the students, students will be kept in a location away from other students. While students are showing symptoms, students are to stay home. Parents are to contact their physician to determine if a COVID-19 test is required. District will contact the County Health Department to report possible infections and will follow the direction of the County Health Department and Contact Tracers. If a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19, the district in consultation with the County Public Health Department, decide whether school/classroom closure is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the community as determined by the local Public Health Officer. County Health Department Contact Tracers will notify families and staff that need to be tested.

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. Students and staff may be asked to quarantine by the County Public Health Department in addition to being asked to test. The length of the quarantine will be determined by a physician or public health official.

The Gold Oak Union School District is working in partnership with the El Dorado County Office of Education and the El Dorado County Department of Public Health to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. The District will continue to closely monitor the rates of infection within our county and follow and guidance set forth. The District plans are varied to be able to adjust as conditions change and this document is considered a living document. We appreciate the ongoing support and cooperation of our parents, students, teachers and staff in these challenging times. We encourage families and staff to also reference the El Dorado County Office of Education reopening document: "Addressing the Challenges of COVID-19" at <https://bit.ly/2P6mLCt> This document is updated as information and conditions change.

