

Gibraltar School District

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Dear GSD Families,

July 14, 2021

I hope that everyone is enjoying their first month of summer and that it is filled with relaxation and time with family. It's hard to believe that the start of the 21-22 school year is not far away and I know with the unpredictability of last year, many are anxious to know what next year will look like and if it will bring more of the same. As we have learned these last 17 months, when we are responding to mandates from state and local agencies, things change quite frequently and often, sometimes with little to no notice. Although we may all understand the unpredictability with this pandemic, it can also be frustrating to not have answers about next year. My goal with this communication is to provide the most current information we have and provide some clarity about our decision making process as we determine what school may look like at GSD in the fall of the 21-22 school year.

As of the date of this letter, MDHHS has only produced recommendations for the 21-22 school year and the State of Michigan has lifted all COVID-related mandates and restrictions. At this time, GSD is following these mandates, which means that masks are optional for all staff and students in GSD summer school and other summer programs. If things stay as currently described, masks would be optional for students and staff in the fall of 2021. We are still over nine weeks away from the start of the 2021 school year and as has been the case throughout the pandemic, this decision is subject to change at any time should there be a change in local COVID data and/or public health mandates.

MDHHS also recommends that schools consider weekly antigen testing as a potential mitigation measure. The only antigen testing conducted by GSD during last school year (2020-2021) was for student-athletes wanting to compete in their sport, consistent with the MHSAA and MDHHS requirements, which have since been rescinded. Additionally, MDHHS does not require COVID vaccinations for students in their recommendations. Please note that GSD does not anticipate initiating any mandatory antigen testing or vaccinations for students or staff in our summer programs or in the fall for the 2021-2022 school year given that as of the date of this letter, there are no mandates from the State or MDHHS on vaccinations or antigen testing.

We continue to strongly encourage anyone who is unvaccinated to wear a mask indoors and for everyone to maintain other successful mitigation strategies (social distancing, handwashing, etc.). Contact tracing and quarantining, where applicable, will still be in place as the Wayne County Health Department (WCHD) requires.

We recognize that it is uncomfortable to not know what the future holds, but rest assured that GSD will communicate any changes to all families as we approach the start of the school year. Please remember that GSD will offer full five days of in person instruction this coming school year. Additionally, families who wish to have their child's instruction in a virtual setting can opt for placement of only virtual classes through our Lakeshore Virtual School (LVS) for the 2021-2022 school year. Information on making this selection will be sent to all families closer to the end of July.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back on September 7, 2021 and please enjoy the rest of your summer.

Your Partner in Education,



Amy Conway
Superintendent