

# Gibraltar School District

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Amy Conway, Superintendent  
19370 Vreeland Road, Woodhaven, MI 48183  
Visit our website at: [www.gibdist.net](http://www.gibdist.net)

Phone (734) 379-6351

Fax (734) 379-6353

Dear GSD Families,

November 15, 2020

GSD made a commitment to provide in person learning for families that chose that option of learning for their child this year. We approached this school year knowing that in this pandemic there would be a high probability that there would be some periods of remote instruction in specific buildings and even districtwide. As we continue to see an increase in COVID cases across the county, our administrators and myself have sent out reminders about our Remote Learning Wednesdays as a great way to prepare our students, staff, and families for a possible pause for in person learning and a pivot to remote learning for a period of time.

Unfortunately, the time has come that the district must pivot to remote learning for the next 3 weeks as the number of positive cases and quarantined staff and students is growing at a rate that is too difficult for the district to manage while providing a sustainable mode of instruction. This rapid increase in positive cases has been correlated with increased activity outside of schools (ie. parties, travel sports, and other activities) and increased prevalence of the COVID-19 virus within our community (positive parents, grandparents, siblings, etc..). The district's strong mitigation strategies have made it possible for our district to operate for a full ten weeks of school with very little interruption. As we all have undoubtedly realized throughout 2020, the impacts and changes to our daily lives as a result of this pandemic are often determined by many more factors than our own personal preference and choices. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts and desire to remain in-person, we have always known that the impact of COVID-19 on our community would determine our district's ability to maintain our current in-person learning program option.

**Gibraltar School District will be suspending all in-person learning and transitioning all district classrooms to remote learning, beginning on Monday, November 16, 2020 for Carlson High School and Tuesday, November 17, 2020 for Shumate Middle School and the four district elementary schools (Chapman, Hunter, Parsons, and Weiss). All district schools will return to in person learning beginning on Monday, December 7, 2020.**

**\*\*As we move into this temporary period of remote learning, we may receive additional information from state and local governing bodies that changes this return date or other aspects of what remote learning looks like. As soon as we have this information, we will communicate the necessary adjustments and our plan to ensure students continue to learn at high levels.**

Monday, 11/16, is a regularly scheduled school day for our middle and elementary school students only. Beyond the instruction that will occur on Monday, we want to provide this extra time to ensure a successful transition to remote learning that we know our younger students so often need. Our goal is for our families to use this time to finalize their remote learning plan for their children. Additionally, this time will provide our students an opportunity to remove anything they may need from school and to work with their teachers to understand the schedule for the next three weeks and feel confident in their ability to be successful in this remote setting. Carlson High School, however, has been on a remote learning schedule for the last two weeks and a

continuation of remote learning ensures that there are no unnecessary transitions for students in and out of school.

As the district takes this 3-week pause of in person learning, specific remote learning program-related information will be shared through individual school building communications as well as extra-curricular programs and events. The district will maintain as many of these programs as possible while learning remotely in an attempt to provide outlets for students when safe, feasible, and allowable.

### **District Food Service**

District Food Service will be transitioning to a pick-up service model similar to how it operated during the spring closure. Pick up will take place on Wednesdays (11/18, 11/25, and 12/2) in the SMS/CHS bus loop from 1:00-2:30. Breakfast and lunch for seven days will be provided.

### **Technology Support**

If you are experiencing trouble with your technology, you have a couple of options. If the Chromebook is broken, you can book an appointment with the Technology Department on our scheduling website, [bit.ly/gsdsupport](http://bit.ly/gsdsupport). There is also a map to show you our location behind Shumate Middle School. When you arrive, pull up to our office, knock on the door, and we will swap out the device. If it is a software issue or if you are unsure what is wrong, you can email [technology@gibdist.net](mailto:technology@gibdist.net) with your student's name and grade and a detailed description of the trouble you're experiencing. Our technology department will work through each problem as quickly as possible to ensure students are up and running, and ready to learn!

While we pride ourselves on addressing technology concerns as quickly as possible, it is always a good idea to have a backup plan so that students can stay connected and current in the event that technology trouble is discovered while your child should be connected to class. Platforms like Schoology, the Google Suite, and Zoom are easily accessible through other technology devices like personal laptops and smartphones.

### **Schoology Support**

Should you or your student have problems accessing and/or using Schoology, or other district supported platforms, please first work directly with the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher can generally troubleshoot the most common issues, and can escalate as needed to the Technology office or the Curriculum and Instruction Office.

### **Transition into Remote Learning, What to Expect**

As a reminder, remote learning this year will look much different than last spring. All assignments, quizzes, and scores count and students are required to attend live sessions and participate fully in remote learning. Setting expectations with your child now is a proactive step that will make for a successful remote learning experience.

#### **Grades K-5**

- Tuesday, 11/17 - Students will have asynchronous work, you should expect 1 or 2 live Zoom check-ins to give students directions.
- Wednesday, 11/18 - Students will have the traditional synchronous (live) learning via Zoom that they experience each Wednesday.
- Thursday, 11/19, and Friday, 11/20 - Students and teachers will transition to synchronous (live) learning via Zoom. Expect at least 2 live Zoom meetings on these two days.

- Starting Monday, 11/23 through Friday 12/4 - synchronous (live) Zoom meetings will begin following a full daily schedule. Expect 3-4 live Zoom meetings on these days, with the exception of Wednesdays. Wednesdays will run as split synchronous/asynchronous learning in each student's class.
- We will be observing our scheduled Thanksgiving break on Thursday, 11/25, and Friday, 11/26, and no school will be held these days.
- You will receive a weekly schedule from your child's teacher, which includes times for specials classes as well.
- As we move into the temporary remote setting, we may find the need to reflect and adjust the times and schedule. In this case, our teachers will communicate with families and will support students as needed.

### **Grades 6-8**

- Tuesday, 11/17 - Students will have asynchronous work, no live meetings.
- Wednesday, 11/18 - Students will have the traditional synchronous (live) learning via Zoom that they experience each Wednesday.
- Starting Thursday, 11/19 through Friday 12/4 - synchronous (live) Zoom meetings will begin following the current **Carlson High School schedule** that includes a change to the SEL period; SEL will take place on Monday and Thursday only. Wednesday will run as asynchronous learning in each student's class. Mr. Cassie will be sending the current Carlson High School remote learning schedule following this letter.
- We will be observing our scheduled Thanksgiving break on Thursday, 11/25, and Friday, 11/26, and no school will be held these days.
- As we move into the temporary remote setting, we may find the need to reflect and adjust the times and schedule. In this case, our teachers will communicate with families and will support students as needed.

### **Grades 9-12**

- We will continue with the current remote schedule with the exception of Monday, 11/16, which will be asynchronous learning for all students.
- We will be observing our scheduled Thanksgiving break on Thursday, 11/25, and Friday, 11/26, and no school will be held these days.
- Students who are participating in DCTC classes in other districts may continue to attend if they have been allowed in the most recent period of remote instruction. DCTC instructors will continue updating with the most current information regarding programming directly to students.
- As we move into this extended period of remote learning, we may find the need to reflect and adjust the times and schedule. In this case, our teachers will communicate with families and will support students as needed.

In closing, I'm disappointed that we have to make this move as I have watched firsthand how well our students have done back in school this year. It has been a collective, sometimes exhausting effort, for our community to do the work that needed to be done to make this a reality. There is no doubt about the fact that this pandemic has required so much more from all of us, and despite all of this, I have watched our community come together to support our students and work cooperatively to adjust our practices so that we minimize our risk in our schools. What we have realized is that because of our safety practices in school, we have reduced our transmission in school to nearly zero. We will continue to remain vigilant in these practices when we return to face-to-face instruction, and we know that this, combined with less spread within our community, will allow us the greatest opportunity to remain face-to-face. I'm appreciative of the sacrifices our

staff, students, and community have made this year and want to thank you for your continued partnership and patience during this time.

Your Partner in Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Conway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Conway  
Superintendent