



**Gary Community School Corporation**  
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## **Return to Learn and COVID 19 Protocols 2022-2023 School Year**

The Gary Community School Corporation (GCSC) COVID-19 protocols for the 2022–23 school year were created based on updated guidance from the Indiana State Department Health (ISDH) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

*These protocols are subject to change based on new guidance from the health departments/organizations listed above.*

All schools are open and offer in-person learning. On a very limited and case by case basis, students have the option of attending the fully virtual Gary Virtual Academy. However, in-person learning is best for the strong majority of students.

### **Face Masks**

GCSC no longer requires masks, at school or on the bus. Individuals may continue to wear a mask if they choose.

### **Contract Tracing/Quarantine**

Gary schools no longer will need to quarantine students who are exposed to a positive COVID-19 case and asymptomatic, regardless of vaccination status or whether the school requires masks.

- Gary schools no longer will be required to conduct contact tracing or report positive cases to IDOH.
- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate for five days and may return on Day 6 if they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication so long as symptoms are improving, according to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Individuals should wear a mask through Day 10 any time they are around others inside their homes or in public.



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## **Return to School After Isolation/Quarantine**

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate for five days and may return on Day 6 if they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication so long as symptoms are improving, according to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Individuals should wear a mask through Day 10 any time they are around others inside their homes or in public.

## **COVID-19 Symptoms Checklist**

The following are the COVID-19 symptoms parents and staff should check each morning before attending school or work. Those who have these symptoms should stay home.

- Fever above 100.4
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle/Body Aches
- Headache
- Loss of Taste/Smell
- Sore Throat
- Sinus Congestion

## **Isolation Room**

- The isolation room will occur as needed in the nurse's office and/or a designated area in the school when the need arises



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## **Cleaning Procedures**

An aerosol disinfectant and hard surface cleaner / disinfectants are to be used immediately after patient discharge by nursing personnel to clean and sanitize areas. In addition, the room is to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily by maintenance staff.

Anyone coming in direct, extended contact with the student must have gloves, disposable facial mask, and gown. If just opening the door to instruct that parent has arrived, then a facial mask is adequate.

After touching, and/or prolonged contact in the area with the isolated patient, nursing staff members should discard gown, dispose of mask and gloves in a designated trash can and wash hands with soap and water, and sanitize hard and frequently touched surfaces. Maintenance must be notified and requested by nursing to clean and disinfect any wet or grossly contaminated surfaces in the isolation room, and the affected student/staff space in the general education classrooms at least daily (e.g. the specific student's desk in their general education room)

## **Cleaning/Sanitizing/Hygiene & PPE**

- All high-touch surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized frequently in school and office buildings and on buses.
- Handwashing as much as possible
  - Start of school day
  - Before eating
  - After using washroom
  - After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
  - After using shared equipment



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- o Before and after recess
- Hand sanitizer will continue to be available.
- Proper hand washing, cough and sneeze protocols are required.
- Water fountain will be open. GCSC will provide water bottles or alternate water methods and have them available in all schools.

## **Reporting Requirements**

Gary schools are expected to continue assisting local health departments with notification in the event of an outbreak or cluster and are encouraged to continue to share information with families when a case is identified so parents can monitor their children for symptoms.

Gary schools will still use other strategies to keep our students and staff as safe as possible, including but not limited to:

- Isolate children who have tested positive and/or symptomatic
- Regular cleaning of all learning spaces
- Hand sanitizer in various locations and regular hand washing
- Upgraded air filtration systems and/or assessment of HVAC

## **Communication Process**

School nurses, and in their absence an administrator, will utilize the current form of “Notice of Suspected Contagious or Infectious Disease” and complete the form regarding the suspected COVID-19 symptoms and close contacts. The form shall be sent home with the student with a follow up email or phone call to the parent or guardian. The form shall include the “Return to School after Exclusion” which is a copy of the following information:

- Return to School After Exclusion



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- o Once a student is excluded from the school environment and had a positive test for COVID -19, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:
  - They have not had a fever for at least 24 hours (that is a full day of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); **and**
  - Other symptoms have improved (for example, no longer has shortness of breath and coughing or other symptoms have improved); **and**
  - At least 5 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared: **or**
  - The individual has tested negative and has no fever for at least 24 hours without use of fever reducing medication; **or**
  - Have been released by a healthcare provider.
- o **Parents: Please call your child's school nurse prior to sending your child back after the exclusion process.**

## **Student Quarantines & Learning**

- Students who must quarantine due to COVID-19 will receive classwork from their individual teachers.
- While in quarantine, students are expected to complete classwork via their school-issued device.

## **Visitors & Volunteers**

- Visitors/Volunteers will be asked to conduct a symptom check before entering a school building.



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## **Testing/Vaccination**

- Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others from the virus.
- COVID-vaccine sites are conveniently located throughout the community.
- GCSC will continue to host vaccination clinics throughout the school year. Dates, times, and locations will be provided on the district website and via district communication to families and staff.