



2020 RETURN TO SCHOOL PARENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We have received a number of questions about the start of school and thought it would be helpful to compile the questions and answers into a document for easy reference.

When is the First Day of School?

Answer: The first day of school is Wednesday, August 19, 2020. We will be starting school in a Distance Learning program.

How long will GRCS be on distance learning?

*Answer: As of today, we don't know. Our current plan is to implement Distance Learning for all students in grades TK-12 for a **6-week timeframe**. By September 18, we will make a determination based on the status of the virus in the community and our ability to adhere to the mandates, recommendations, and guidelines set forth by the state of California and the Tuolumne County Public Health Office. We will continue to evaluate our school status every 6 weeks (roughly each grading period) from here. When we are able to bring students back to campus we will begin with our younger grades and have those options clearly communicated with you.*

Tuolumne County is not on the state watch list so why are we not starting school in person?

Answer: On July 30, 2020, our local public health office issued an order for all schools in Tuolumne County to start on Distance Learning. Even though Tuolumne County is not currently listed on the watch list (as of August 17, 2020), we are still required to follow this order. This order can only be modified and changed by the county public health office. Our Principal, Ron Hamilton, meets with the public health office on a weekly basis to stay up-to-date with the latest information and to help our school be prepared to return when we are able.

Is Gold Rush Charter looking into the waiver return options to request to open the school?

Answer: The state has provided a route to apply for a waiver to open school if our county is on the watch list. The waiver will require support from our school board, our teachers, school staff, and parents. The waiver will also require approval from public health. As of August 17, 2020, the waiver option is not currently available (we hope it will be soon), but we plan to organize all of the required pieces when the option is available. We expect to learn more about the waiver process over the next 3 to 4 weeks. Our waiver will be dependent on several factors, including our Education Plan, and our ability to adhere to all of the guidelines outlined by public health (including masks and social distancing).

Are masks still required even if the school has been given a waiver from the county to return to school?

Answer: All return to school options will require that students in grades 3-12 wear masks. All staff are required to wear masks. Social distancing of 6 feet, as much as practical, is required. These guidelines include while students and staff are in the classroom, outside, and coming and going from other locations on campus. Our goal is to be supportive and encouraging for all of our students, to help them feel comfortable at school while learning. Students are encouraged to wear their own masks to school. The school will supply masks for students who do not have one or for masks that become dirty during the day.

What time does school start each day during Distance Learning?

Answer: Though each class will check in at a different time during the day, each student still will be required to check in to be counted as present. Teachers will be communicating with their families via phone, email, and text before the first day of school. You will be provided a daily schedule from your student's teacher. If you missed orientation day, please contact your teacher for a recording.

What will my student's schedule be each day during Distance Learning?

Answer: Even though students will be learning from home, daily learning will still be a requirement of our Distance Learning program. Our teaching staff is creating daily learning schedules for each grade level to organize and segment each day for students. Students will not be on Zoom calls all day long. Students and families will be provided a daily schedule that will include all of the work to be completed. Learning will include Zoom calls, Google Classroom, interaction with educational programs online, book work, packet work, PE, activities outside, technology, art, and many other creative

enrichments that our students are familiar with. Though learning will look different, learning will be intentional and specific.

Each grade level is required to complete a number of minutes of instruction each day (TK/K - 180 min, grades 1st - 3rd - 230 min, grades 4th - 12th - 240 min). Daily schedules, and work assigned to students each day, will be equal to the daily required instructional minutes.

Is my student required to attend everyday even when learning from home?

Answer: Daily attendance will be taken by each teacher each school day. However, supports are in place for students who cannot make their scheduled zoom meetings (i.e. videos will be posted to Google Classroom and teachers are available for assistance as needed). For students to be counted as present, they must submit work by the deadline given, adhering to our 80/70 rule, otherwise, they will be considered absent (amount of days depend on the amount of work not received) and may face a potential warning letter. We are a work-based program, but encourage students to attend all zoom meetings/classroom engagement opportunities, in order to not fall behind and master the learning standards. Our teachers are ready and eager to continue delivering instruction. Students are required to check in with their assigned teacher at least once a week.

Will my student be given grades this year?

Answer: Yes. Though daily instruction will move at a different pace, daily learning will be intentional and purposeful. Grades and assessment marks will be given at each grading period. Teacher's assessments and learning expectations will match our learning location and school options throughout the year. Your student's teacher will provide you with more information.

My student needs a Chromebook, will we be able to get one from the school?

Answer: Yes. The school plans to check out Chromebooks to all students who need one. Chromebook requests can be made by emailing Shay Saunders @ ssaunders@goldrushcs.org.

We have poor internet at home, can the school help?

Answer: The school is currently testing out hotspot mobile devices for students and will let families know as more information becomes available. The school will be providing driveby wifi access that will be available from the school parking lot at the Country School site as well as our High School Site. If you need help connecting a Chromebook or a personal device to our school network, please contact the school office.

We are exploring some community resources for internet connections, as we get more information we will pass it along.

Will food service be available for my student?

Answer: Yes. We will have food pick-up (3-5 days of breakfast/snacks) every Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the Country School Campus and our High School Campus. Please contact the school office for more information.

Where will I pick up and drop off school work for my student?

Answer: During the Spring, families were able to pick up and drop off paper packet work during our foodservice time frame. We plan to do the same during the Fall. Each teacher will communicate drop off and pick up time frames. Work will be available for pick up and drop off during very broad windows. Look for more information from your students' teachers when school begins. Students may also utilize our drop boxes at each site location.

What happens during a snow day or when the power goes out? Will the school still be in session?"

Answer: Rules for conducting school or not conducting school will be the same whether we are in person or working from home. The school will reach out to each parent via phone, text, and email regarding the cancellation of school. In the event that power is out or too much snow is on the ground, the school day may be canceled.

Are there going to be field trips and events?

Answer: Current public health restrictions do not allow us to gather groups of people into confined areas. All regular school events, field trips, and other programs will be rescheduled for next year. Events that occur later in the year will be evaluated in the Spring. At this time, all fall sports are on hold.

If my student gets sick or is not feeling well at school, what will happen?"

Answer: In our Fall Education plan, we have thoroughly outlined how school will run each day when we are able to return to campus. If your student becomes ill at school, our office staff has been trained to care for your student and to look for signs and symptoms that may be COVID related. Students who are not feeling well will be sent from their classroom to an identified isolation and monitoring room. Students will enter this room from the outside door so they do not have to come in contact with office staff but can still be monitored. Students will be monitored for 10 min and then a determination will be made to send the student back to class or to call the parent to

have the student picked up. Students who are not feeling well should not be sent to school. If a student becomes ill while at school, it is very important that all parents pick up their sick students promptly.