

Groton Public Schools (GPS) Full In-person or Full Remote Spring 2021 Learning Plan

“Progress over Perfection – watch us grow”!

Groton Public Schools (GPS) will move to more in-person learning PK-12 beginning this spring; see schedule below. All families are offered two options at this time; full remote learning or face-to-face in-person learning in the classroom. We are looking for families to commit to either plan. There will no longer be a hybrid model of 2 days per week. GPS will continue to follow the State Health Department’s guidelines on health and safety, as well as Connecticut State Department of Education recommendations. Whether students attend school in-person or are at home learning remotely, teachers will engage students in high quality instruction and accelerated learning, following GPS curriculum, instruction, and assessment plans.

The “Distance Learning” component of the GPS plan will change since most students will be attending in-person, but will still provide the opportunity for planned teaching and learning with assessment and feedback, and allows time for students (parents) and teachers to communicate. Some of the best practices and highest levels of engagement come when teachers and students can synchronize teaching and learning face-to-face, in live video conferencing settings, and when students and teachers connect with one another.

GPS Strategic phased-in Chart

Time Frame	Student/grade	Current Model	Design Changes
March 22	PK-2	Hybrid-Cohort A & B	4 Days In-person
March 23-25	9-11	PSAT and SAT Testing	3 Days In-person
March 29	3-5, 6	Hybrid-Cohort A & B	4 Days in-person
April 5	7-8	Hybrid-Cohort A & B	4 Days in-person
April 5	9-12	Hybrid-Cohort A & B	4 Days in-person
May 3 – June 17	PK-12	4 Day in-person	4.5 Days in-person Add Wednesday half day with home assignments.
Summer School and Summer Camp information TBD	PK-12		

Wednesdays half day schedule beginning May 5, 2021:

Pre-Kindergarten/Preschool	8:55 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
Elementary School (K-5)	8:55 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
Middle School (6-8)	8:05 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.
High School (9-12)	7:10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.

Highlights of the GPS Spring 2021 Learning Plan In-Person or Full Distance Learning Plan (Remote Learning):

The major shift in the GPS Spring 2021 Learning Plan is to teach the majority of our students in-person while continuing to teach the students who choose to be remote. Our goal is to have more real time engagement and less screen time for all students. In the GPS Spring 2021 Learning Plan, teachers instruct students face-to-face beginning with 4 days a week. Distance learners will work remotely in a blended synchronistic and asynchronistic way for 5 days a week. With our motto “progress over perfection,” we believe in growing relationships, taking care of social emotional learning, re-establishing routines at school and remotely, and reviewing health protocols, as well as engaging students in academic lessons in-person, livestream and videos. The use of GPS Learning Management Systems (LMS: Seesaw PK-2, Google Classroom grades 3-8, or Schoology grades 9-12) will be for the purpose of communicating and organizing assignments and homework, while monitoring student participation and work completion for remote learners.

Remote and In-Person

- Teachers will provide mini lessons that can be accessed by remote learners on Zoom (or other livestreaming technology). They will receive communications and assignments through the LMS, supported by their teacher, a tutor, an interventionist or a substitute teacher.
- Live video conferencing is available on Zoom (or other livestreaming technology), and can be recorded by the teacher. The expectation of teachers is to increase student engagement with the understanding that there should be a blend of asynchronistic and synchronistic learning. The use of exemplar lessons, like those from Teachers’ College Reading Writing Project, Khan Academy, Mystery Science, etc. can also be utilized for both in-person and remote learners.

Wednesdays

- Currently on Wednesdays, until the week of May 3rd, 2021, all students will continue to be provided with remote learning and teacher support during their established office hours and/or Zoom meetings.
- Beginning Wednesday May 5, 2021, Wednesdays will include a half day of in-person learning in the morning with independent assignments in the afternoon. Distance learners will Zoom in for their lessons in the morning and do the independent work assignments from home.

Attendance

- Students will commit to either full in-person or full remote learning for the rest of the school year.
- Attendance will be monitored daily and by period in accordance to the district attendance policy for in-person learners. If a student is not present at school, they will be marked as absent, according to the district policy. They will not be able to switch to remote learning for the day.
- Remote learner attendance will be monitored daily using attendance in Zoom mini lessons, check-ins, and or completion of required assignments.

- The District's policy for vacations will also be in effect, and students will be marked absent if they are on vacation.
- Quarantined students will be moved to remote learning for the period of quarantine only.

Communications

- For communication and organization purposes, teachers will continue to use learning management systems (LMS) such as Seesaw, Google Classroom, or Schoology
- Students will check the LMS system for work daily.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety, both physical and emotional, are a top priority for all Groton Public Schools educators and board members. School-based health and our school nurses serve as an excellent resource for both physical and mental health, along with our school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists. Social emotional learning is a key ingredient to schooling, whether students are in-person or remote. If parents have any concern, please reach out to the teacher or administrator or any of our health providers. While there will be more students in the classroom, the following protocols will be utilized:

Safe Practices for In-Person Learning Include:

- Consistent and correct wearing of masks unless the person cannot wear a mask safely
- Physical Distancing of 3 feet when feasible
- Students may work in groups and share materials with safety measures
- Cohorts are expanding
- Desk shields or Plexiglas will be used for meal times and mask breaks or when physical distancing is hard to maintain
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Practice good respiratory etiquette
- Frequent cleaning of high touch areas will be performed
- Monitor your symptoms and stay home when you or someone you live with is ill - has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, or new loss of taste or smell
- Contact tracing will occur if a case exists in a school.
- Follow quarantine guidance for students and staff who are identified as close contacts
- Follow self-isolation guidance for students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19
- If parents have any concern, please reach out to the teacher or administrator or any of our health providers.

U.S. Department of Health Services: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on PK-12 Education Health and Safety in Schools

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>