



Reopening Plan

Geist Montessori Academy is targeted to commence the 2020-2021 school year on August 5, 2020. We are committed to the safety and well-being of our students, families, educators, staff, and community as we welcome everyone to the new school year. To that end, GMA administration and Board of Directors will be closely monitoring reentry requirements and recommendations from the CDC, WHO, IDOE, health advisors, and peer schools in the county. Our school will always be in compliance with the Indiana Governor's Office, the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana State Department of Health, and Hancock County Health Department. The GMA Reentry Playbook was developed with input from our Parent and Staff Safety Committees, and we are grateful for their insight, input, and collaboration.

Core features:

Masks



Masks in motion will be our policy, as recommended by the Hancock County Health Department. This means students are not required to wear a mask when sitting at a socially distanced work area. When moving, though, students will need to wear a mask or face shield. We will monitor any government or IDOE requirements for mask use, and all children should wear their own mask. Masks will be provided to students, if needed. Face coverings should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and children should use the ties or ear loops to take off their masks. Please ensure that your child can breathe comfortably while wearing the face covering. Face coverings should be washed and dried daily.

We will ask all families to self-monitor for symptoms. In an effort to minimize exposure to COVID-19, all students should complete a daily, short self-temperature and symptoms check prior to leaving for school. We may implement a daily, digital certification verifying that children do not have COVID-19 symptoms and are fever-free. Children should be kept home if they are sick with any illness. When reporting an illness to GMA, parents and staff will be asked if the symptoms are related to COVID-19, like a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher; cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; chills; muscle pain; congestion/runny nose; headache; rash; nausea; diarrhea; sore throat or new loss of taste or smell. Parents should be prepared, with short notice, if GMA is temporarily closed or if their child is sent home. Our school nurse will be there to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (or the flu, or any other contagious illness) should they develop during the school day. GMA will also reimburse families for the purchase of thermometers, if needed.

Daily Temperature Checks & Monitoring Systems



COVID Symptoms



Teachers or students sent home from school for symptoms will be required to stay out of school for 10 days unless they visit their own health care provider and have a doctor's note indicating a different diagnosis. There will be no mass communication that a student or employee has tested positive for COVID. Rather, the school will notify verified close contacts, after an investigation. Close contacts are identified as interactions with the sick person, for more than 15 minutes within 6 feet, within 72 hours of symptom onset. Classrooms will be closed if needed for a period of time after investigation. If students or teachers test positive for COVID 19 or they have symptoms, they must remain home in isolation for at least 10 days from the date symptoms began and 72 hours/3 days fever free without fever reducing medications and improvement of respiratory symptoms. Example, the student runs a fever for 10 days, they will still have to remain out of school for an additional 3 days. If student or staff members test positive but have no symptoms, they are to isolate at home for 10 days from the day the test was taken. If they develop symptoms, then the 10 day isolation begins on day one of the symptoms.

Cleaning and disinfectant work will be performed by janitorial service providers, and additional cleaning resources will be available to classrooms for use. The school will begin increased cleaning protocols two weeks prior to reentry. We will have day cleaning multiple times to disinfect high-impact areas, night cleaning of all school areas, and “works” cleaning protocols in classrooms for shared Montessori lesson materials. No fogging will be used in any cleaning methods, and EPA-registered products for COVID-19 response will be utilized. Electrostatic disinfectants for intense after-hours cleaning of materials will be used at GMA, as needed. In addition, we will be increasing outside air and ventilation practices.

Disinfectant



Guests

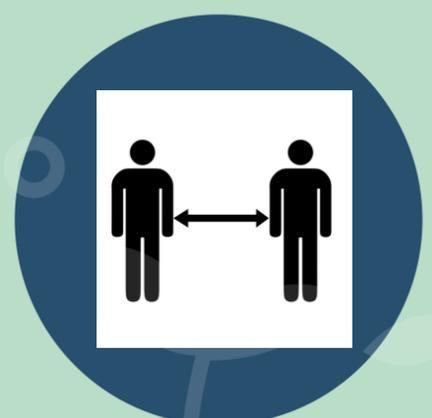


Only critical or essential vendors (janitorial, building service, mail delivery) will be permitted on campus. No guests or visitors will be permitted in the school until further notice. Appointments are required for parents who need to meet with a teacher or administrator and masks are mandatory.

Our classroom layouts, density, foot traffic patterns, and space use will be rerouted so that everyone at the school can maintain a minimum of 6 feet distance where possible.

Increased ventilation and use of outdoor learning and engagement opportunities will assist with this, as well. Recess will be conducted outside whenever possible with appropriate social distancing. If more than one class is outside at a time, they will use separate areas of playground. If neither of these are available students will wear facial coverings.

Social Distancing



Practice Good Hygiene



We will train educators, staff, and students in the practice of good personal hygiene, including frequent hand washing, not touching the face and covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue.

All students must have their immunizations current by Wednesday, August 5, 2020. Students who do not have current immunizations will be excluded from school until they have provided the school with proof of the updated immunizations, proof of an upcoming doctor's appointment to receive immunizations, or an exemption is filed with the school.

Immunizations



Potential Exposures/ Contact Tracing



GMA will immediately contact the Hancock County Health Department and follow all health agency guidance to conduct close contact tracing and associated self-quarantines in the event of a COVID-19 potential exposure at the school. The Indiana State Department of Health will lead contact tracing and case investigation in consultation with county associates.

School closure may be due to one or more positive cases of COVID-19. If this were to occur, a deep clean of the school would be necessary. If there is an outbreak, the Hancock County Health Department may shut part of or the entire school down for two to five days, but the case investigation will ultimately determine the most appropriate actions. Parents should also be prepared for the potential of statewide closures by Governor Holcomb in the event of a statewide outbreak, similar to the spring of the 2019-20 school year. GMA will move to the online learning platform for the duration of the closure.

School Closure



Virtual Learning During Closure



Teachers will instruct via ZOOM or Google Classroom. Core content will be taught and student assignments will be assigned and due per the traditional schedule. Student attendance will be taken each day as it would occur in the traditional school setting. Students with IEP's will have support and accommodations provided through their individual plans.

GMA will provide individual supplies, such as glue, pencils, and notebooks to every child. Students will be provided with hand sanitizer before leaving the classroom and upon reentering the classroom in order to safely put on and take off their face coverings. Families will be asked to provide a water bottle for students. Bottle filling stations will be provided, and all water fountains will be turned off.

School Supply Lists



Lunch



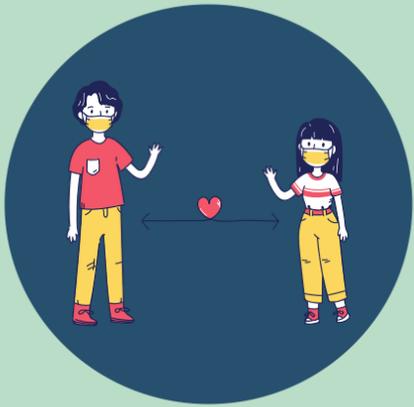
Families will continue to supply all food for lunch, and we ask that you have your child practice opening all items that will be sent into school. This will ensure your child's independence, while preventing extra handling of food items.

Large Gatherings



All large group gatherings involved with school events will be canceled or modified, such as a drive thru Ice Cream Social. More details about this event will be released soon.

Building Level Procedures

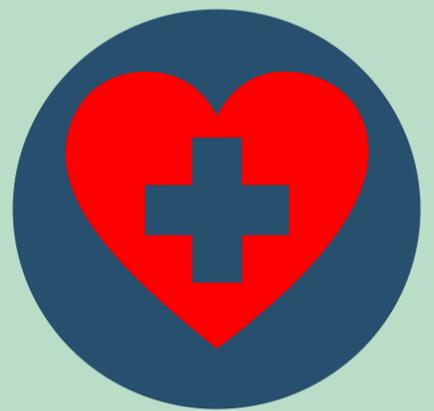


A plexiglas guard will be installed in the main office. Plexiglas barriers will also be used at small group instruction to provide another layer of protection for those working. Additional supplies, including hand sanitizer and disinfectant, will be provided to each classroom. Visitors will be permitted by appointment only and must remain in the lobby of the school. Visitors must maintain proper social distancing. Markers will be placed on the floor in the front office to ensure a distance of six feet. All visitors must wear a mask or face covering. Visitors will not be permitted in any classrooms. Parents/guardians must remain in their cars during student pickup or drop-off.

Parents/guardians will not be permitted to walk their students inside the building.

Clinic Procedures

A quarantine location for students who show symptoms of COVID-19 is available. Minor issues or injuries will be resolved with the student's teacher. The clinic will be reserved for major illnesses or injuries. Parents will be requested to administer student medications before arriving at school.



Related Arts



Students will attend related arts classes for in-person instruction, and the rooms will be sterilized between classes.

Social Emotional Learning

At GMA, we recognize the importance of educating the whole child and will be providing students and staff with extra social and emotional support as they return to school this year.



Student Orientation & Readiness



The Ice Cream Social will occur in shifts, in car line fashion, and more details will be released soon. We encourage parents to talk with, reassure and support their children about the importance of social distancing and wearing masks. Please have your child practice wearing the mask and explain the why behind wearing a mask. To transition back to school, help students get back into a normal schedule at least a week before school begins, such as re-instituting bedtime and wake-up routines.

Through our partnership with the YMCA, we aim to continue to provide safe, engaging, and educational childcare opportunities once school reopens and during any potential school closures due to COVID-19. Before and after-school care will resume on Wednesday, August 5, from 6:30 a.m. until the start of school and from the end of school until 6 p.m. YMCA staff members are expected to follow all previously discussed district procedures for employees and students while operating camp in one of our schools. In addition to those procedures, the YMCA has set the following guidelines: **Smaller Group Sizes:** Children will stay in small groups throughout the week to avoid unlimited contact. **Scheduled Hand Washing Breaks:** Children will wash hands throughout the day to keep germs away. **Sanitizing Spaces & Supplies:** All program spaces and equipment will be disinfected regularly. **Curbside Drop-Off & Pick-Up:** Contact will be at a minimum as children enter and leave the program. **Lowered Program Capacities:** To ensure social distancing, the number of children and staff in a space will be minimized.

Child Care Options



GMA will offer three options for instruction: full onsite learning, full-time virtual learning, and a hybrid of virtual and on-site learning.

A completely virtual instruction option is available to families who may feel more comfortable having their student remain at home. If a student chooses virtual instruction, s/he must commit to the learning platform for a minimum of nine weeks. After each quarter, students may continue with virtual instruction or choose to return to full-time, in-person instruction. Regardless of the mode of learning, every day will count as a 'student day' with the expectation that all students are accountable for instruction. Please note that students will be assigned a virtual teacher and students will be merged with other participating virtual learners from a variety of classes and learning levels. Core subject areas, as well as related arts classes will be taught: English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, Physical Fitness, Music, and Art. Students with IEP's will have support and accommodations provided through their individual plans. Students must attend video conferencing at the designated time to be marked "present" and receive instruction. Students can opt to return to in-person learning at the end of the nine week period.

Completely Virtual:



Hybrid Instruction



A hybrid virtual/in-person instruction option is available to families who may feel more comfortable having their student come on a reduced in-person schedule. Families choosing this option will have all children on the same learning schedule. Students will be divided into groups, such that some students will receive onsite instruction on Monday and Tuesday, while the other group will receive onsite instruction on Thursday and Friday. With this learning option, students will receive virtual learning three days of the week and on-site instruction two days of the week. If a student chooses hybrid instruction, s/he must commit to the learning platform for a minimum of nine weeks. After each quarter, students may continue with hybrid instruction or choose to return to full-time, in-person instruction. Regardless of the mode of learning, every day will count as a 'student day' with the expectation that all students are accountable for instruction. Please note that students will be assigned a virtual/hybrid teacher and students will be merged with other participating virtual/hybrid learners from a variety of classes and learning levels. Core subject areas, as well as related arts classes will be taught: English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, Physical Fitness, Music, and Art. Students must attend video conferencing at the designated time to be marked "present" and receive instruction. Students can opt to return to full-time in-person learning at the end of the nine week period.

As with any playbook, changes to this plan may need to occur before or during the school year. These changes will be communicated through our normal channels - email, the school newsletter, website, and Twitter. Please note that the preschool will follow similar plans but as they are a separate organization, they have published a separate playbook. On behalf of our GMA school family, we want to thank our community for its flexibility and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. We all feel incredibly grateful for such a collaborative, caring, and engaged community that is committed to exceptional education and the safety of everyone involved in our schools. We are so excited to start the 2020-2021 school year, and we look forward to seeing you at the Ice Cream Social!

Playbook

