



Parent Communication

Middle and High School Covid-19 Response



Updated August 17, 2021



Dear Parents,

Last summer we wrote the first GISB Covid-Guidelines and we are pleased and relieved to see that our system worked well and we were able to continuously teach all Middle and High school classes without interruption.

In the upcoming school year 2021/22 we will return to full-time in person teaching for all classes. Many precautions we took last school year will remain in place, but we were also able to make adjustments. Our goal is to bring as much normality back to GISB students as possible while at the same time taking all the precautions necessary to protect the health and safety of our community.

According to GISB's general health and safety guidelines you will find in this paper more detailed information about the structure of the school day and the setting for Middle and High school classes. Please read the guidelines very carefully and talk them through with your children. We will guide the students through these relevant changes during our Student Orientation Week at the beginning of the school year.

As in the last year, GISB will continue to monitor possible covid-related updates and the situation here in Massachusetts. And we will adjust and adapt our system accordingly if necessary.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

We wish you and your children a successful start into the school year 2021/22!

Sincerely,

Andrea Zahrte

Andreas Weber

Head of Middle School - Contact grades 5-8: Andreas Weber (andreas.weber@gisbos.org)

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abbreviations and explanations

GISB - German International School Boston

UC - Upper Campus (i.e., the GISB building at 57 Holton Street)

ASP - After school Program

Pod - A group of students who have no interaction with other students in order to limit transmission and hence avoid the complete closure of our school in case of a positive COVID case.

MS - Middle School (classes 5-8)

HS - High School (classes 9-12)

This English-language document will use the English nomenclature in referring to these levels.

A. Learning in MS/HS starting August 30, 2021

1. In-Person Lessons at School

Starting August 30th, all students (classes 1-12) will return to full-time classroom learning at the Upper Campus five days a week.

In total, all MS/HS students are divided into three pods.

Pods in MS:

Class 5a + 5b + 6

Class 7a + 7b + 8

Pod in HS:

Class 9 + 10 + 11 + 12

Mingling between pods will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Students are only allowed to be in the same room and the same recess area with students from the same pod.

In order to provide safety for all our students and teachers, social distancing continues to be a crucial part of the in-person lessons. The following rules, therefore, apply to every lesson at school:

- All students must social distance during lessons where the desks are placed at least 3ft apart. Students are not allowed to move their seats or desks. In specific learning phases in the Middle School and High Schools, exceptions to distancing may be briefly necessary in order to guarantee learning efficiency in the science rooms and the art room.
- All forms of physical contact (shaking hands, hugging, etc.) are forbidden.
- Students must wear masks inside and outside the school building, except for explicit mask breaks and during lunch and snack times. During mask breaks inside the building, the students will not be allowed to talk.
- In classes 5 through 12, GISB will provide a locker or a storage box for each student. Students can store some of the materials (school books, composition books) they only need while they are in the school.



2. Physical Education

An Update of the Guidelines for PE classes will be shared at the beginning of the school year.

3. Class tests and grading

All students in MS and HS take exams and class tests on campus. If absent, students have the opportunity to take a make-up test.

We aim to have the class test plans for the first semester online in September. In the next few weeks you will receive an email with the link to your child's respective class test plan. Please keep in mind that these plans are open for change, and please check them regularly.

As usual, grading in classes 5-12 consists of 50% class test grade and 50% other grades.

4. Outdoor Lessons

Teachers are encouraged to teach their classes outdoors when possible. Being outside has proven to greatly lower the risk of infection. GISB will provide tent-areas for MS and HS which allow the classes to leave the building.

Sitting on picnic benches is restricted to 4 students while following the guidelines for social distancing, therefore all students must have an outdoor cushion or small blanket with them, on which they can sit during outdoor classroom activities.

5. Use of Bathrooms

Students in class 5 will use the bathroom on the first floor. All other students of MS and HS are only allowed to use the bathrooms in the basement. Each bathroom has a maximum capacity of 2 students at a time. The students are not allowed to remove their masks inside the bathroom and must wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds after using the bathroom.

B. Structure of the School Day:

1. Entering and Exiting the Building

1.1 In the Morning

As in the last school year, students of grades 5 and 6 will continue to gather every morning in our school garden facing Holton Street. Students of grade 7 and 8 will meet in the Churchyard facing the main entrance.

As of 8.15 am, a teacher/staff member will be present to supervise the students. At 8.30 am the individual classes will be greeted outside by the teacher they have for class in the first period. This teacher will lead them into their classroom through the Holton Street Entrance.

Students of grades 9-12 are allowed to enter the building at 8.15am through the main entrance while socially distanced.

It is required to wear a mask and to socially distance at all times when inside the school building.

1.2 During Recess

The individual pods will re-enter the building at the end of recess accompanied by their respective subject teacher through their assigned exits. Only students grade 9-12 are allowed to do so on their own behalf.

1.3 In the Afternoon

Students grades 5-12: They will be released directly from the classroom and leave the school building using the same exit they entered through in the morning. From there they are free to go to their parent's cars in the pick-up area or to leave the school premises.

2. Recess

2.1 Regular Recess

During the summer recess schedule students of all grade levels will be outside for the entire recess period (10.00-10.30am / 12.00-12.40pm). All pods are only allowed to gather in certain assigned areas. Once the teacher has ended the lesson, all students will leave the room and the building through designated exits.

As in the last school year they go to the areas assigned to their pod. Within these areas, students are only allowed to remove the mask while eating snacks or lunch.

Outdoor time will include recess, physical education, sports, and outdoor learning environments. Each class will receive toys to play with during recess. Ballgames are not allowed in the Churchyard!

During COVID times, outside recess is even more important than ever. Therefore, we will try to get the students outside as much as we can, during cooler temperatures and also in light rain. It is therefore very important that all students are equipped with adequate clothing (sweaters, jackets, warm shoes, rain gear, etc.) regardless of the temperature. Students will not be allowed to stay inside their classroom even if they do not have the appropriate gear.

As in previous years we will start the winter recess schedule in October when students stay inside the classroom for the first part of the break to eat snacks and lunch. Further communication will be shared in the Weekly Update in October.

2.2 Rain Recess

In the summer and fall months we aim to have less rain recess. However, there will be cases in which all students will have to have their lunch inside the school building. Rain recess is announced about 15 minutes before the end of period 2 or 4.

All students in class 5-12 will stay in their classrooms and eat snacks or lunch at their designated desks during rain recess. Once the students have taken their seats and are sitting at their desks, they can remove their masks and eat their lunch. Students are not allowed to speak and talk during that time of recess.



2.3 Lunch

Students eat in their classrooms or outside, and masks can be removed as long as the students are following the guidelines for social distancing. Therefore all students must have an outdoor cushion or small blanket with them, on which they can sit during recess. Sitting on picnic benches is restricted to 4 students.

Students are required to follow hand hygiene before and after eating.

Students in class 5-12 are allowed again to use microwave ovens to warm up their lunches at school. There will be one microwave oven in each classroom.

C. Miscellaneous

1. *Field trips and extra-curricular activities*

Day trips and further extracurricular activities outside GISB are allowed by following the safety regulation and avoiding public transportation. All planning for overnight field trips is still on hold.

2. *After School Program (ASP):*

We will offer our After School Program (ASP) daily for grades 5 and 6 from 3:00 - 6:00 pm. Parents have the flexible pick-up time option of 4:00, 5:00, or 6:00 pm. During ASP students will have homework and snack time, as well as projects and activities in the classroom and designated outside time. We will offer a designated homework supervision from 3:00 - 4:00 Monday - Thursday. We will not mix the cohorts during ASP.

For pick up, parents will call the ASP cell phone and the students will be sent downstairs for pick up (the ASP teachers communicate via walkie-talkie).

D. Communication

In an effort to minimize in-person contacts, all parent teacher conferences and parent nights will stay remotely.

Face-to-face communication between parents and teachers is possible in the school building after 3:30 pm. Please contact the teachers of your child by email to arrange a meeting or phone call if needed.

If your child is sick or can not attend school for other reasons, please inform the school as soon as possible by either sending an email to attendance@gisbos.org or call +1 (617) 783-2600 x 10 and leave a message on our voicemail.

+1 (617) 783-2600 x 10 (Front Desk)	attendance@gisbos.org
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Last but not least

Thank you for your ongoing support during these uncertain times. We do not take for granted any of the efforts you are willing to make in order for our students and staff to stay safe and are looking forward to welcoming your children (back) soon!

Stay safe!

Andrea Zahrte and Andreas Weber