



Back to School Safely with the Gators!
2020-2021

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This handbook was developed with guidance from the Aiken County Public School District, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



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Welcome Back

Graniteville Gator Families!

Welcome back to the 2020-2021 school year!

On behalf of the faculty and staff at Graniteville Elementary, I want to assure you that we understand that this school year will be unlike any school year in history. We also understand that our parents and guardians will have many questions about what Graniteville Elementary will be doing to ensure that our students will have a healthy learning environment.

My goal with this handbook is to address as many of your questions and concerns about what procedures we will follow at Graniteville as we navigate these new times together.

Please remember that though we have established these baseline procedures, these may change with very short notice depending on what is communicated from district, state and federal guidelines.

Thank you in advance for your patience and your trust as we navigate this school year together.

Sincerely,
Michelle Padgett
Principal

Student Cohorts

To review the options available to students this year:

OPTION ONE: Transition to Traditional Education: A more traditional educational model that will begin with a hybrid of some in-classroom days mixed with remote learning and independent practice with teacher support, with a goal to reach and sustain five-days a week of in-person learning (as soon as it is safe to do so).

OPTION TWO: Full-Time Virtual Learning A full-time virtual option called AIKEN iNNOVATE. The application process for AIKEN iNNOVATE opened on July 9th and closed at midnight on July 22nd. By choosing option two, parents understand that there is a one semester minimum commitment.

The following information pertains to students returning to school in our hybrid model:

- Students in our hybrid model are divided into two groups – red and blue.

- Students that live in the same household will attend school in the same days.
- Students will receive a red or a blue lanyard on the first day of school.
- Parents will receive communication pertaining to their child's cohort color group through Power School and from their child's teacher during their LEAP Day appointment.
- Students in the BLUE cohort will attend Mondays and Tuesday and then have THREE days of remote learning.
- Students in the RED cohort will attend Wednesdays and Thursdays and then have THREE days of remote learning.
- Students cannot attend on a day that they are not scheduled for during the hybrid model.

Communication to Parents

Parents will receive communication from the school through the usual platforms of:

Blackboard Robo Calls
School Website
School Facebook Page
Twitter
Wednesday Folders
Emails

Parents can also expect to hear from their child's teachers through **Class Dojo** and through **Schoology**. **Schoology will be the online learning platform that all teachers will use during remote learning days.** During remote learning days some work will be paper and pencil and some will be submitted electronically. For students that do not have a computer, information can be sent in paper form.

Due to the procedures resulting from COVID-19 and our new procedures to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff there will be multiple changes in our procedures. Please assist us by being patient as we follow all guidelines.

Conferences with Teachers:

If a parent wishes to communicate with their child's teacher there will be multiple ways of doing that this year. Parents may contact teachers to set up a time for a phone conference. Teachers will hold virtual office hours on Fridays and will be glad to meet with parents via scheduled face to face conference or via a zoom call.

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Following CDC, SCDHEC and our district guidelines, Graniteville Elementary will be implementing the following procedures to create a healthy learning environment:

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I. Creating and Maintaining a Healthy Environment

1. Masks - #GatorsWearMasks!

Inside School Buildings:

To support the national and state efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 and to best protect the health and safety of South Carolina public school students and staff, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is requiring face coverings to be worn on school buses and within public school facilities.

Students and staff in South Carolina public schools **must** wear a face covering upon entering a school building, moving through hallways, during carpool/bus drop off or pickup, and when social distancing is not possible or optimal. Student face coverings may be removed upon teacher or administrator direction while in the classroom or during special activities outside the classroom.

Clear face coverings are not face shields. The CDC does **NOT** recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings because of a lack of evidence of their effectiveness for source control

On Buses:

Students and staff who ride the state's pupil transportation system to and from school are required to wear face coverings while boarding, riding, and exiting school buses. Staff members, including bus drivers, are required to wear face coverings while boarding, riding, driving, and exiting school buses. Bus drivers and support staff should ask any student who boards a bus without a covering to put one on and offer them a disposable or cloth face covering provided by the SCDE.

Please contact the principal if there are accommodations needed as noted by a medical doctor.

2. Arrivals and Dismissals

Arrivals:

- Students must remain in their vehicles until the 7:00 AM – when school opens each morning
- Walkers must not arrive prior to 7:00 AM
- Doors will be opened and monitored by staff to minimize touching of door handles and congregation of large groups of students

- Social distancing protocols and masks are to be used while waiting to enter the school – students can find a Gators mark to stand on to help with remembering their social distancing

Walkers:

Walkers may begin arriving at school at 7:00 AM. They will enter school grounds on Rennie St at the first gate. Students will report to the sidewalk area beside the cafeteria and enter the building at the entrance closest to the nurse's office.

Car Riders:

Car Riders will enter the building through the front lobby doors

Bus Riders:

All Bus Riders will enter through the gates at the cafeteria at the back of the school - Social distancing protocols and masks are to be used while waiting to enter the school – students can find a Gator mark to stand on to help with remembering their social distancing!

Dismissals:

- Staff will monitor students during arrival, transitions and during dismissal to ensure that students do not congregate in hallways or common areas.
- At dismissal, students will be staggered in groups and bus/car riders/walkers assigned to locations to decrease the risk of potential crowding outside at dismissal times.
- Walkers must leave campus immediately after school dismissal. Parents should be waiting to meet their child.
- Bus riders must wear masks while traveling to the bus in the building and when social distancing is not possible and must wear masks while riding the bus.

Early Sign Outs:

- Students may not be signed out after 2:15 PM due to safety concerns.
- Parents who wish to pick up their child before 2:15 PM will need to call ahead so that the student will be in the office area. Students will be signed out by the office and escorted to parents in a designated location.

- Be reminded that a driver's license or ID is needed to sign any student out of school. The individual signing the student out must be listed on the students Power school emergency contact list.

3. Social Distancing

- Directional signage has been placed on all hallways traveled by our students.
- Social distancing stickers (Gator marks) are also in place as reminders for students in commons areas and in the front lobby to maintain social distance (6 ft. apart).
- Staff will monitor students during arrival, any transitions and during dismissal to ensure that students do not congregate in hallways or common areas.
- When traveling in hallways students are required to wear their masks.

4. Student Cohorts and "Classroom Family Groups" Protocols

- All students will attend either on a Red cohort (Wednesday/Thursday) or Blue cohort (Monday/Tuesday) day.
- Students will remain with their classroom family group – students will not co-mingle with other classroom family groups.
- Teachers will establish seating charts in all classrooms.
- Social distancing protocols will be implemented in all classrooms to the extent possible.
- All classroom desks will be six-feet apart.
- Furniture that cannot be sanitized will be removed or blocked from use.
- Students will not share instructional materials or manipulatives. Teachers will have systems to store student supplies and dedicated locations in the classroom.
- Students must wear masks in the classroom when working in small groups, in guided reading groups, or anytime they are less than 6 feet from another person.
- All classrooms will have hand sanitizer and appropriate cleaning supplies for teachers and students to sanitize desks daily.
- All restrooms and class rooms with sinks will have soap and water for hand washing.

- Classroom doors will remain closed and locked during instructional periods. Teachers will be responsible for opening and closing doors when students must enter or leave class to minimize multiple hands touching the door handles. This is also in alignment with our district policy of Ignore the Door.
- Specials Teachers (Art, Music, PE and Library) will push in to the classrooms (or PE may hold classes outside weather permitting) rather than students traveling to each of these classrooms during the week.

5. Breakfast and Lunch

- Breakfast and lunch will be served in students' homeroom classroom each day.
- Students are allowed to bring individual water bottles; a water refilling station will be available in the classroom.
- Students will wash their hands before and after breakfast and lunch.
- Teachers / students will sanitize students' desks before and after breakfast and lunch.
- Students will maintain social distancing while eating breakfast and lunch.

6. Recess

- During the Hybrid Model, students will not use the playground structures on the playground or share playground equipment. When restrictions are lifted equipment will be open for use by one family group at a time.
- Students will have physical activity breaks in addition to recess during the Hybrid Model.
- 4K and 5K will have two recess times daily.

7. Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing/Coughing/Sneezing

- Students will wash and / or sanitize their hands:
 - 1) Upon arrival in their class
 - 2) Before and after breakfast breakfast and lunch
 - 3) After any bathroom trips

- 4) After coughing/sneezing/blowing their nose
 - 5) Before dismissal
 - 6) Adhere to teacher's classroom schedule for handwashing
- Students will be taught the importance of covering their cough or sneeze with their elbow or a tissue, avoiding touching their face and washing or sanitizing their hands.

8. Restrooms

- Teachers will establish a restroom schedule
- Classes will go to hallway bathrooms as a class at assigned times.
- Students will use designated stalls
- Signs will be posted indicating the use of alternating stalls and the maximum number of students that are allowed in each restroom.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned according to the schedule
- Students in 4K-5K will use classroom bathrooms.
- During class, restrooms will be designated in order to maximize contact tracing.

9. Events

- Until further notice, large group gatherings of people or activities that do not allow for social distancing, including assemblies and in-person field trips will not take place.
- We will use virtual options for as many events as possible will be scheduled.
- PTO and SIC meetings will occur via scheduled Zoom meetings. Face to face meetings will occur with groups of 10 or less when possible.

10. Visitors and Volunteers

- During the first nine weeks, **only** ACPSD employees, substitutes, and teaching/nursing interns will be allowed access to school facilities (classroom, gym, cafeteria, etc.). This will be reevaluated at the end of the first nine weeks.
 - This means that our tradition of eating lunch with students and open door classroom policy will not possible during this time.
- Parent conferences can be scheduled with teachers or administrators. Conferences can be held via phone, Zoom, or face to face. This also applies to IEP and 504 meetings.
- Essential volunteers as designated by the school principal will be allowed in the front office or meeting area designated by the schools.

- During the first nine weeks, schools should consider fundraising activities that allow for social distancing and limited physical contact (i.e. use online payment platform in lieu of exchanging currency).

11. After School Care: Quest Zone (QZ)

During the Hybrid Model, Quest Zone (QZ) will provide after school care Monday-Thursday until 6:00 PM in the school cafeteria. Once traditional school resumes QZ can resume Monday-Friday operations.

- If Graniteville has enough enrollment, they will have the afterschool program on site; if we do not have enough enrollment, students may be transported to the Byrd QZ site on Weldon Way.
- Students may attend QZ on the days their cohort attends face-to-face school. No drop-ins while in Hybrid model. QZ staff and students will follow the health and safety protocols that are followed during the regular school day. Students will be in cohorts of no more than 15 students.
- To register your child for QuestZone or to find out more information go to QZ224@thequestzone.com or call 803-335-9791.

II. Keeping Our Environment Clean and Healthy

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Custodians will clean (sweep, vacuum, mop, etc.) as they always have. This will occur primarily during those times when students are not present. Disinfection of touchable surfaces (doorknobs, panic bars, and communal restrooms) will take place during the school day hourly in elementary schools and after each class change in middle and high schools. Student desks will be disinfected each day after lunch. Teachers and students should wipe these desks with plain water each morning prior to breakfast.
- School personnel are encouraged to disinfect inside their classrooms during the instructional day as they deem appropriate.
- Faculty and staff should remove as many items as possible from all flat surfaces to help speed up the sanitizing procedures.

Disinfecting and Hand Sanitizing

- Daily, staff should sanitize surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, chairs, tables, handrails, doorknobs, light switches, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and any shared resources.
- Hands will be washed and sanitized throughout the school day.

Restrooms

- Restrooms will be sanitized according to a schedule following restroom breaks.
- Restrooms will be disinfected at the end of each school day.

Water Fountain – Water Bottles

- Water fountains are closed.
- Students will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle each day.
- Three water filling stations will be located around campus – 1 outside, 1 – main intersection, 1- kindergarten area.
- Cafeteria will sanitize and refill the water filling stations each day.

Staying Home When Sick

- ACPD strongly recommends that parents take their child's temperature before the child leaves for school in the morning, and children with a temperature of 100.0 or higher must remain at home.
- While attendance is essential, students should only attend school when they are healthy. Children showing any symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home until they are well. To keep all staff and classmates healthy, parents must monitor the symptoms and temperatures of their children before sending them to school.

III. Covid 19 Notification and Contact Tracing

Covid 19 Notification

These requirements are as of August 4th DHEC guidelines and are subject to change as updates are made.

- Parents will be asked to notify the school if any student has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. The school will follow current DHEC guidelines for determining whether other students were exposed to the individual who tested positive and implement notifications as indicated specific to the circumstance in consultation with DHEC and the nursing supervisor.
- Direct contacts will be excluded from school until 14 days following the exposure, and parents will be notified by phone and letter.
- Classroom or other school contacts who were not in direct contact yet possibly exposed will be notified by phone and letter, but not excluded from school.
- If a student shows the following signs of Covid 19:
 - Shortness of breathe or difficulty breathing – or -
 - Loss of taste or smell - or -
 - New or worsening cough
 Parents will be notified and will need to pick their child up within the hour.
- In order for the student to return to school they must meet one of the following criteria:
 - Negative Covid PCR test – or –
 - Medical evaluation that determines symptoms are more likely from another cause (and meet the return criteria for that illness). – or-
 - Complete the current isolation criteria for Covid 19 – if not tested.

Contact Tracing

- Seating charts will be used in all classrooms and on all school buses.
- Movement of students throughout the building will be limited and will be logged by teachers.



IV. How Can I Help Keep My Child(ren) Safe at School?

1. Please avoid early drop-offs in the morning. If arriving early, students should remain in the car until the school doors are open.
2. Please make an appointment if you need to meet with administrators or staff to avoid trying to meet with them during morning arrival.
3. Social distancing protocols will be in place and face coverings should be worn while waiting to enter the building and transitioning to the classroom for meetings.
4. Ensure that registration information includes multiple emergency contacts. Due to COVID-19, parents must have a reliable back up plan to pick up a child who becomes ill at school. **The expectation is that once called for COVID-19 related symptoms, parents will pick their child up within one hour.**
5. School dismissal will follow social distancing guidelines and protocols as students exit the building.
6. Please inform the principal or school nurse if a student has been in contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19.
7. ACPSD strongly recommends that parents take their child's temperature before the child leaves for school in the morning, and children with a temperature of 100.0 or higher must remain at home.
8. While attendance is essential, students should only attend school when they are healthy. Children showing any symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home until they are well. To keep all staff and classmates healthy, parents must monitor the symptoms and temperatures of their children before sending them to school.
9. Please note that all information will remain confidential between the school and family. No other families will be given the health information of their child.
10. Parents are encouraged to review the guidelines for bus riders and consider the possibility of driving their child to and from school, if possible. Bus guidelines are as follows:
 - Loading the Bus
 - a. The process for students to load the school bus will require students to use social distancing protocols at the bus stop as much as possible and then load the bus by walking one by one to the back of the bus and sitting in their assigned seat.
 - b. Both students and bus drivers are required to wear a face covering while riding the bus.
 - c. Seat assignments will maximize the distance between students to the extent practicable.
 - Unloading the Bus
 - a. Students will unload the bus from front to back (students sitting in the front of the bus will exit first) and proceed to the school.
 - b. Students will continue to wear their face covering, and every attempt will be made to maintain social distancing.
11. Parents should be asked to please have the conversation with their child about:
 - a. Social distancing protocols
 - b. Proper hand hygiene- washing hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for 20 seconds. When hand washing is unavailable, students should use hand sanitizer.
 - c. Importance of not touching their face as this can transmit the virus from a surface to their mouth, nose, or eyes.
 - d. Resisting the touching of personal belongings of others.