

General Brown Central School District Reopening Plan 2021-2022

COVID-19 Updates

This plan was developed using the CDC's [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools and ECE Programs](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics' COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools](#), [NYSED's Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year](#), and with input from Jefferson County Public Health, the district's physician, and district stakeholders. As public health circumstances change, the General Brown Central School District will follow directives and guidance from the CDC, NYSDOH, NYSED, Jefferson County Public Health, and any other federal, state, and local agencies with legal governing powers over New York State public school districts.

The overall goal for the 2021-2022 school year is to maximize in-person teaching and learning (5 days/week), be responsive to student needs, and to keep students and employees healthy and safe. The General Brown Central School District will use multi-layered prevention strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19, and any related variants, in order to maintain the safe operations of our school district.

Underlying Principles

The Mission of the General Brown Central School District is to prepare and inspire each student to meet future challenges. Additionally, the district is guided by the focus areas of the Strategic Plan 2019-2022: Academic Achievement, Intentional Investment in Learning, and School Culture & Community for all decision-making, setting expectations, and developing annual goals. Despite the many COVID-related challenges we face, the General Brown CSD will encourage and foster the development of positive behaviors within our school community while providing a culturally responsive, equitable, respectful, safe, and orderly school setting with engaging in-person instruction. It is essential that every person affiliated with our school community act responsibly in order to achieve this goal.

We recognize that some elements of our Reopening Plan may be temporarily modified as a result of potential forthcoming changes in public health conditions and related guidance from the CDC, NYSDOH, and Jefferson County Public Health. However, our goal will be to keep students attending in-person instruction as much as possible. We also recognize the physical, social, and emotional value of extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletics, and we will seek to preserve extracurricular activities and athletic seasons to the greatest extent possible without jeopardizing in-person instruction. Our first priority beyond maintaining the health and safety of our students and employees will be to maintain 5 days of engaging in-person teaching and learning

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in our school buildings. We ask that all students, families, employees and the community remain flexible and supportive of the district and our community.

Prevention Strategies

- **Promoting Vaccination**--the district will continue to encourage all eligible students and employees to consider getting vaccinated for COVID-19. In addition, the district will sponsor an Influenza Vaccination Clinic for all employees.
- **Consistent and Correct Mask Use**--the district will follow the most recent CDC recommendations for mask use for both indoors and outdoors.
- **Physical Distancing**--the district will maintain to the greatest extent possible 3 feet of physical distance between students in classrooms and on school buses, 6 feet between students and employees, and 6 feet between employees who are not fully vaccinated. In order to open at full-capacity, students may need to sit next to another student at distances less than those recommended by the CDC. Such distances will be combined with indoor mask wearing, maintaining consistent grouping of students to the greatest extent possible, siblings sitting together on buses, as well as other measures, to reduce transmission risks.
- **Screen Testing**--the district will consider screening testing to help identify those with or without symptoms who may be contagious and in school. Please see Appendix A, "Table 1. Screening Testing Recommendations for K-12 Schools by level of Community Transmission."
- **Ventilation**--classroom doors and windows will remain open to the greatest extent possible. During transportation, windows on buses and other forms of transportation will be cracked open to the greatest extent possible. The district plans to make improvements to the HVAC system in several buildings using federal stimulus funds.
- **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**--the district will teach and reinforce frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If handwashing is not possible, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be used. Use of hand sanitizers of young children under 6 years of age will be supervised, and hand sanitizers will be stored away from young children when not in use.
- **Staying Home When Sick and Getting Tested**--students and employees who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) and COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care, regardless of their vaccination status. Please see [What to do if a Student Becomes Sick at School or Reports a New COVID-19 Diagnosis Flowchart](#).

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- **Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine**--the district will continue to work directly with NYSDOH and Jefferson County Public Health regarding close contacts and quarantines. Parents will only be directly contacted if their child is considered a close contact. Notification of positive cases will be posted on the district website [COVID-19 / COVID-19 Updates and Information](#).
- **Cleaning and Disinfecting**--general cleaning will be conducted once a day. High touch surfaces may be cleaned or disinfected more frequently. A space that was occupied by a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours will be cleaned and disinfected when the space is no longer occupied.

Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine

The General Brown Central School District will continue to work with NYSDOH and Jefferson County Public Health to identify school-related close contacts. A close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3-6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to any adults in the indoor class setting.

According to the CDC, people who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have symptoms. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if asymptomatic, and wear a mask indoors in public and school for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

Additional Considerations

- **Disabilities or Other Needs**--the district will provide accommodations, modifications, services, and assistance for students and employees with disabilities and needs. Direct Service Providers will provide support services in classrooms.
- **Visitors**--nonessential visitors, volunteers, and indoor activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited as much as possible. Drop boxes for important papers or items to be left for the school are located outside the District Office and main entrances of all three school buildings. Please call or email the

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main office of your child's building (315) 779-2300 if you need to drop off an item to school, so that each office can be on the lookout for the item.

- **Food Service and School Meals**--breakfast and lunch meals are available to all students free of charge. The district will use alternative seating locations to maintain, to the greatest extent possible, 6 feet of distance between unmasked students and employees as they eat meals.
- **Recess and Physical Education**--masks are not necessary outdoors for recess and physical education. Currently, universal masking is recommended during indoor physical education or recess. Should the CDC modify mask-use recommendations, the district would follow the most up-to-date CDC recommendations.
- **Athletic and Other Extracurricular Activities**--School-sponsored athletics and extracurricular activities provide students with important enrichment opportunities that help them feel welcomed into the General Brown school community and learn team-building and personal skills that will help them achieve and grow into well-rounded adults. Some activities put participants at greater risk for transmission of COVID-19. High risk extracurricular activities and athletics are close-contact sports, singing, playing of band instruments, anything involving shouting, and exercise that could lead to increased exhalation, especially those held indoors, and include football, cheer, basketball, wrestling, volleyball, ice hockey, and lacrosse. The aforementioned prevention strategies should be in place, and coaches and school leaders should also consider other factors, such as: the setting of the event (indoors vs. outdoors), physical closeness of participants, number of participants, coaches, and spectators, level of intensity of activity, duration of time, and presence of people who are more likely to develop severe illness. Please see Appendix A, "Table 1. Screening Testing Recommendations for K-12 Schools by level of Community Transmission." Depending on public health circumstances and the CDC designation of Jefferson County Community Transmission Rates on the [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#), the district may consider canceling or adopting other measures (such as masking participants, limiting spectators, and screening testing of all athletic and extracurricular participants) in order to preserve in-person learning and the athletic seasons and/or extracurricular activities. Consistent with our prior practices, if the district is closed or has transitioned to remote-only instruction, no extracurricular activities or athletics will be held until school reopens for live instruction. It should be noted that both the CDC and NYSED acknowledge that high risk sports and activities do not need to be canceled in areas of high community transmission if all participants are vaccinated.

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Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

The district is collaborating with PIVOT, a non-profit agency dedicated to reducing the negative impacts of alcohol and other drug abuse and addictions in the community through prevention, education, and advocacy, to host three Student-Assistance Prevention Educators at each of the district's school buildings. They will work with our School Social Worker and School Counselors to provide learning opportunities, as well as social and emotional support to our students and staff, which will also assist in recognizing behavioral health needs of children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Remote Instruction

Remote instruction will not be available as an alternative to in-person instruction. The district will closely monitor student and staff attendance based on COVID-19 and/or influenza transmission. Every effort will be made to maximize in-person teaching and learning, but should transmission rates be considered unsafe, the district does not have adequate supervision, or the district cannot fulfill its responsibilities due to increased staff absences, it may be necessary to switch to remote learning in any school building or district-wide. Such instances would be minimal and would be only until services could be restored with adequate staffing. If such circumstances arise, the district would communicate using ParentSquare and the district website, detailing how electronic devices and meals would be distributed to students and families at the respective school buildings.

Chromebooks and Wi-Fi Accessibility

The district has ordered more Chromebooks for student use. Once the Chromebooks are received, the Junior/Senior High School will shift to one-to-one electronic devices for all students to take home and bring back to school daily for instruction. In addition, at the elementary schools, we will be working towards classrooms having one-to-one electronic devices available for student use within the school day. Should the need arise to shift to short-term remote instruction, the district would distribute electronic devices to elementary students. The district does have devices available to assist families with internet access. Any family needing Wi-Fi support should complete the [Urgents Needs Form](#).

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School Employees

The district regularly collaborates with leadership of the General Brown Teachers' Association, General Brown School Related Professionals Union, and the General Brown Administrators' Association to proactively discuss employee-related topics and to address employee-related concerns. The district will train employees on physical and mental health awareness and considerations in an effort to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19 and any workplace risk, as well as promote physical, social, and emotional healthy living among employees in their personal and professional lives.

Vaccination Verification

The district may consider collecting proof of the COVID-19 vaccination status of students and/or employees in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Protocols used to collect, secure, and use such information would comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and any other applicable laws and regulations related to students and employees.

Summary

The General Brown Central School District is committed to using multi-layered prevention strategies in order to manage risks for students and employees from COVID-19 while supporting engaging, in person teaching and learning. This plan is designed to allow for shifts and modifications of the district's daily practices in order to preserve in-person teaching and learning to the greatest extent possible. We recognize such efforts will require flexibility and open communication with students, families, employees, and the community. The district will continue to work with federal, state, and local agencies to remain informed, compliant of all regulations and recommendations, and supportive of our students and employees while making this school year a rewarding educational experience for all students. Should you have any questions or need additional information on specific topics, please contact your child's principal or contact the member of leadership identified on the [Chain of Command](#) for a specific topic or department within the school district.

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Attachment A:

Table 1. Screening Testing Recommendations for K-12 Schools by Level of Community Transmission

	Low Transmission ¹ Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Students	Do not need to screen students.	Offer screening testing for students who are not fully vaccinated at least once per week.		
Teachers and staff	Offer screening testing for teachers and staff who are not fully vaccinated at least once per week.			
High risk sports and activities	Recommend screening testing for high-risk sports ² and extracurricular activities ³ at least once per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.		Recommend screening testing for high-risk sports and extracurricular activities twice per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.	Cancel or hold high-risk sports and extracurricular activities virtually to protect in-person learning, unless all participants are fully vaccinated.
Low- and intermediate-risk sports	Do not need to screen students participating in low- and intermediate-risk sports. ²	Recommend screening testing for low- and intermediate-risk sports at least once per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.		

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¹ [Levels of community transmission](#) defined as total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate 10-49; substantial, 50-99, high, ≥ 100) and percentage of positive tests in the past 7 days (low, $< 5\%$; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high, $\geq 10\%$.)

² Examples of low-risk sports are diving and golf; intermediate-risk sport examples are baseball and cross country; high-risk sport examples are football and wrestling.

³ High-risk extracurricular activities are those in which increased exhalation occurs, such as activities that involve singing, shouting, band, or exercise, especially when conducted indoors.

Source: [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools and ECE Programs](#)

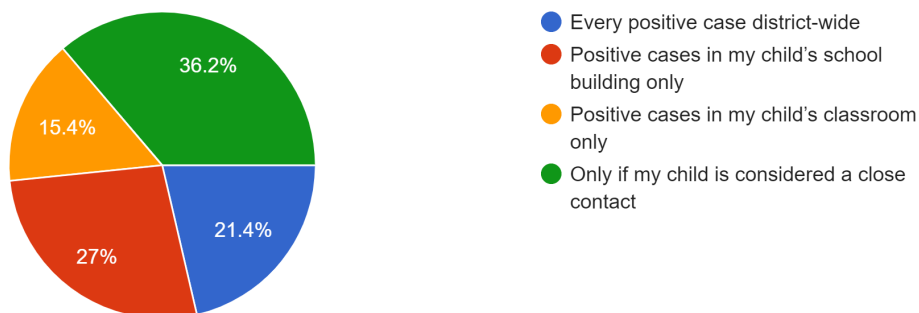
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Attachment B:

Parent/Guardian Feedback on Reopening 2021-2022. This google survey collected feedback from 585 individuals from August 11, 2021 until 12:00 pm on August 16, 2021. It was available on the district website for access by parents/guardians. Parent/guardian feedback helped develop specific sections of this plan. The results of the survey include:

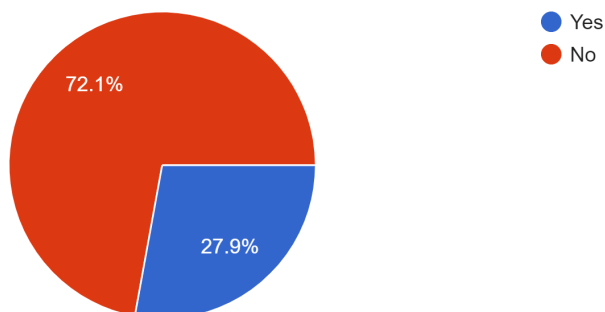
In the event of a positive case of COVID-19 among our students and/or staff, would you prefer the district to communicate:

585 responses



Are you interested in getting vaccinated or having your 12+ year-old child get vaccinated for COVID-19 if the district were to host a COVID-19 vaccination clinic?

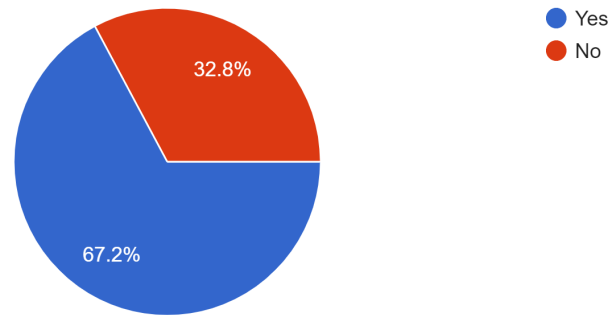
585 responses



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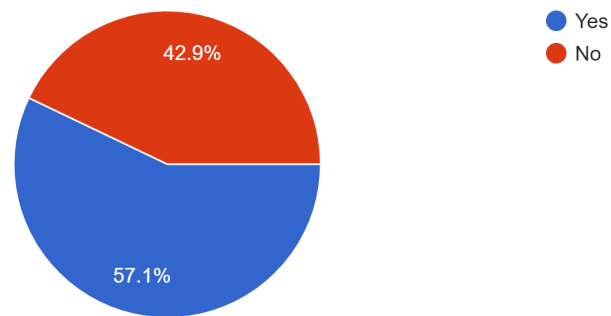
If your child is vaccinated, are you willing to share the vaccination status with the school nurse?

585 responses



The CDC recommends utilizing screening testing to help identify those with or without symptoms who may be contagious and in school. Would you ...ith or without symptoms who may be contagious?

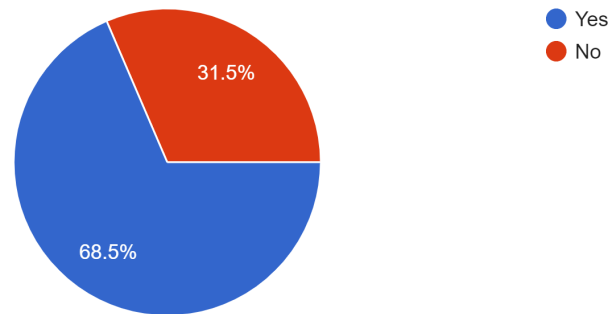
585 responses



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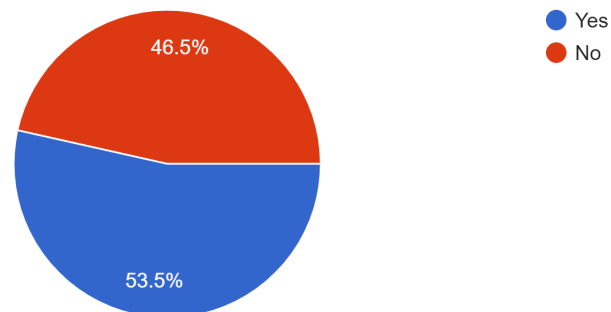
The CDC recommends maximizing physical distance between students to reduce transmission risks, but in order to open at full-capacity, studen... to have your child ride the bus to and from school?

585 responses



Are you able to transport your child?

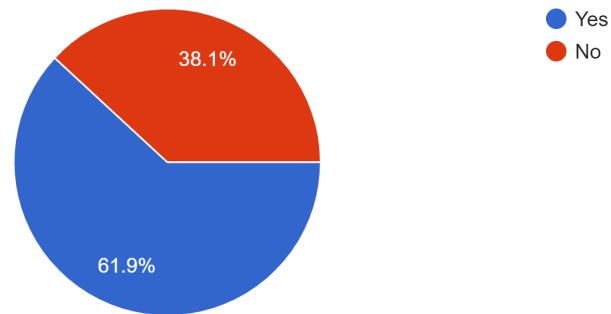
585 responses



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Should the Level of Community Transmission in Jefferson County be designated as High (red) by CDC standards (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-t...ated with a high level of community transmission?>)

585 responses



Would you support the masking of all athletes and/or participants of extracurricular activities in order to preserve the seasons or activities should...ated with a high level of community transmission?

585 responses

