



GERMAN
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
WASHINGTON D.C.

Independent. Bilingual. *Weltoffen.*

Information on the Second Phase of Reopening: Upper School

September 18, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The German International School Washington, D.C. (GISW) is finally ready to enter the next phase of its reopening. Now, more than ever, we have to focus on keeping our students, families and employees healthy and safe.

Our school will look and feel different at first glance. There is new signage everywhere to remind us to keep our distance from others, wash our hands on a regular basis and wear our face coverings/masks. We have to take these reminders (which will be around for a while) seriously, so that we protect each other from infection.

To ensure that we can provide a safe environment for everyone, we have to work together and adhere to the guidelines for cleaning/disinfecting, safety and health protection. We as Griffins have the power to keep our school open long-term, so that we can learn together again – finally! The wellbeing and the health of our students come first. Of course we are aware that health and safety are inseparable these days! If only one of us is unhealthy, then all of us are affected. So let's work together diligently to make sure that we can feel safe in our school. We will even declare this intent in written form, by signing a Health Pledge.

We have based our decision to reopen the school on two important factors:

1. Our student's social-emotional development
2. Teaching, practicing and adhering to important safety measures

After evaluating these factors thoroughly, we have decided to partially open in a hybrid approach. This means that we transition into reopening with only half of the students present on campus at any given time. This transitional model is at the foundation of an emotionally, socially and academically valuable school experience for everyone involved.

Of course it is difficult to plan for all possible scenarios that might be facing us in the coming weeks and months, but we are confident that we will be able to react quickly and can adapt with flexibility to the changing situation. This document is meant to provide useful tips during the reopening phase. Please be aware that due to the changes we face on an ongoing basis, we may have to make changes and adjustments as well. We will keep you up-to-date by sending school-wide information via e-mail.

We look forward to welcoming our students back to school!

Sincerely
Marc Aurel Löckmann, StD

Acting Head of School

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Metrics and Guidelines for Reopening

On our school website you will find important guidelines that apply for the GISW reopening period under the Quick Link “Phased GISW Reopening”:

<https://giswashington.org/reopening-gisw.html>



The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the school logo, a search bar, and language options (ENGLISH, DEUTSCH) and a LOGIN button. Below the navigation bar are menu items: ABOUT US, ADMISSIONS, ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS, CAMPUS LIFE, CLC, and QUICK LINKS. The 'QUICK LINKS' menu is expanded, showing a list of links including PHASED GISW REOPENING, DISTANCE LEARNING, COVID-19 Daily Health Tracker, Calendar of Events, Vacation Schedule 2020/21, Contact Faculty & Staff, Getting Involved at GISW, Supporting GISW, Job Opportunities, and Cafeteria Menu. The main content area features the heading 'PHASED GISW REOPENING 2020' and a paragraph explaining that the page provides information about the school's re-opening plan, which is updated frequently. Below this are three expandable sections: 'PRESCHOOL OPEN FOR IN-PERSON CLASSES', 'PHASED RE-OPENING PLAN: SCHOOL ENTRY LEVEL - GRADE 12', and 'RE-OPENING METRICS'. A 'Further Information' section follows, listing various policies and resources such as 'SCREENING & PREVENTION POLICY / HEALTH POLICY', 'SCREENING & TESTING', 'PREVENTIVE PRACTICES', 'CLEANING & DISINFECTION', 'IN CASE OF ILLNESS', 'BILINGUAL SUPPORT FROM OUR COUNSELORS', 'OFFICIAL RESOURCES', and 'GISW COMMUNITY EMAILS RELATED TO COVID-19'. A message from the school leadership states: 'Most importantly, let us resolve to work together in the best interest of our students, faculty, and staff. We're in this together,' followed by the names and titles of Marc Aurel Löckmann, StD (Acting Head of School), Dennis Fehr (Chair of the Board), and Ben Hebebrand (Business Director). At the bottom left of the screenshot is a 'News Archive' search bar.

Aside from these, we follow the CDC Guidelines for the reopening of schools in the state of Maryland:

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/newsroom/Documents/COVID/COVID-19-Guidance-Maryland-Schools.pdf>

Transitional Model: Hybrid

Hybrid Start at the GISW			
In-Person Instruction			
Sep 23, 2020 to Sep 25, 2020	Class 1A and 1B		11A, 11B, 12A and 12B
Sep 28, 2020 to Oct 2, 2020	Class 1A all students	Blue Group Half of all students per class in grades 2-9 and all of class 10A	11A, 11B
Oct 5, 2020 to Oct 9, 2020	Class 1B all students	Yellow Group Half of all students per class in grades 2-9 and all of class 10B	12A, 12B
Fall Break			
Will be specified at a later date, depending on the newest developments			

Before returning to campus all students and employees will have to get a COVID-19 test.

GISW offers three testing dates at the school:

Friday, Sep 18, 2020, Tuesday, September 22, 2020 and Friday, September 25, 2020.

You will be sent a separate e-mail with information which group (yellow or blue) your child/ren belong/s to. This information will also be posted in the member section of the school's website.

Daily Health Checks before class

It has been shown that Daily Health Checks lower the risk of infection. Please take your child's temperature when they get up in the morning and check, if your child is showing symptoms that may relate to a COVID-19 infection. We will provide you with an online form which will guide you through this morning routine. Please fill in all required fields and submit it to the school.

It is imperative that you keep your child home if they show any signs of illness at all!



When your child arrives at school, there will be another fever check at the tent at the main entrance before entering the building. Children that don't have a fever will get a sticker that they will have to wear on their person to be admitted to the school building. Should your child's temperature be higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, your child will go to the nurse's station for a more thorough health check. Potentially, they will have to be picked up.

If at any time during the school day any symptoms occur that may indicate a COVID-19 infection, the child will be accompanied to the nurse's station and will remain isolated from other students until they are picked up. With regards to the procedure for returning to school after exhibiting symptoms that may indicate a COVID-19 infection, please refer to the health policy on our school's website:

https://giswashington.org/files/dswashington/Dateien/2020-21/COVID19/20_09_04_HealthPolicy_D_E.pdf

School life

In order to be able to adhere to the health guidelines and social distancing requirements of the State of Maryland, we have set up clear rules as well as specific paths/directions to follow when walking around the school grounds. Regarding ventilation, we are lucky that our school buildings were recently renovated and offer a high standard of ventilation to begin with. We also installed new filters and purchased additional air purifiers to try and mitigate a potential aerosol transmission of the virus. Additionally, we have programmed the software of our air conditioning system in a way that fresh air is drawn in from the outside and circulated.

Weekly Schedule and Adjusted Time Grid

In-person class on campus will be taking place from Monday to Friday from 8:10 am to 12:30 pm. Afternoon classes will only take place online from 2 pm to 3:10 pm (7th and 8th period) and from 3:15 pm to 4:45 pm (9th and 10th period). Morning periods have been shortened to 40 minutes each. 7th and 8th period are 35 minutes long, 9th and 10th period each are 40 minutes long. During the school day the students will not be changing rooms. We also recommend to have as much teaching and recess time take place outside.

Period	Time	Hybrid – in-person / remote
1	8:10 to 8:50 am	Students who are present on campus according to the BLUE group or YELLOW group assignment will have in-person instruction from 1st through 6th period (8:10 am to 12:30 pm).
2	8:50 to 9:30 am	
	flexible 10 minutes	
3	9:40 to 10:20 am	
4	10:20 to 11:00 am	
	flexible 10 minutes	
5	11:10 to 11:50 am	The same grid applies to the group of students that follow class remotely .
6	11:50 am to 12:30 pm	
	Lunch Break	During this 90-minute lunch break all students will have enough time to get home and have lunch.
7	2:00 to 2:35 pm	All students will join these afternoon classes according to their weekly schedule ONLINE-ONLY.
8	2:35 to 3:10 pm	
	5-minute break	
9	3:15 to 3:55 pm	All students will join these afternoon classes according to their weekly schedule ONLINE-ONLY.
10	3:55 to 4:35 pm	

Recess

Recess times are flexible and take place as needed and as determined by the teachers per cohort. Individual cohorts should not mix during recess time. There will be mask-free recesses scheduled.

Free Periods

All students in 10th to 12th grade may spend their free periods outside on the school campus, so long as they adhere to all social distancing guidelines.

Leaving the Campus

The cohorting approach serves to protect the entire school community. It only works if everyone strictly adheres to it. That's why no student may leave the campus during free periods for the time being.

Online-Only Learning

Students who attend Online-Only Learning will receive all necessary information and materials from the department head as well as their subject teachers. Communication will continue to take place on MS Teams.

Restroom Breaks

The restrooms in the school building have been assigned to specific cohorts and may only be used by one student at a time. Signs at the doors will indicate if a restroom is free or occupied.




Exams

During our Hybrid phase we have to be flexible when it comes to giving exams, since grades 5 through 9 won't be able to take exams simultaneously in the school building for the time being. However, our teachers are pedagogically and didactically well trained and are encouraged to give alternative performance tests, e.g. simultaneous exams taken on the laptop (one half of the class in school and one half at home), creating two exams that will be given one week apart when the students are present in school, as well as alternative performance evaluations, if possible.

Lunch Service

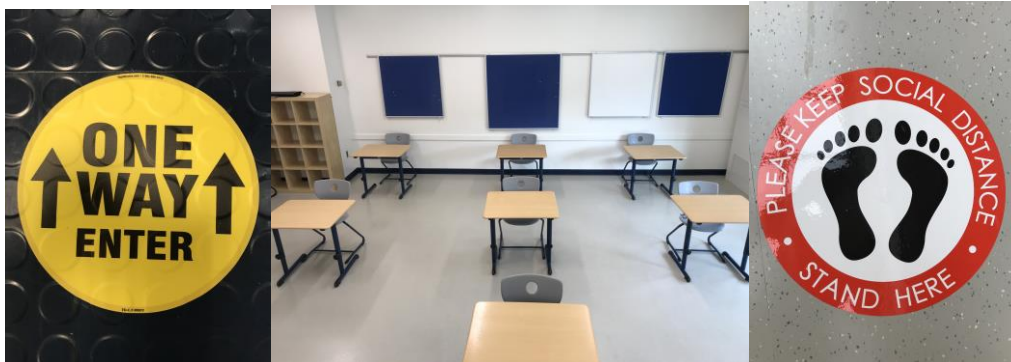
Separately from the usual lunch pass program, families can order lunch bags that will be delivered to the class rooms at around 11 am on school days. Further information on registering for this service will be sent separately via e-mail and in the Wednesday Mail. The cafeteria will remain closed until further notice.

School Building Guidelines

	<p>Fighting Corona together!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash hands several times daily 2. When coughing or sneezing, cover your face 3. Keep your distance (6 feet, where possible) 4. Don't assemble in groups 5. Air out rooms regularly 6. Masks are mandatory!
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Every student will have to bring two clean masks to school every day. Please remember to put the student's name on their masks. Everyone who is in the school building will have to wear a mask. There will be mask-free times scheduled (e.g. lunch breaks).

We are sticking to the **GISW** rule of Social Distancing: **G**ive space – **S**crub your hands – **W**ear your mask!



Communication

If you have to call your child in sick, please let us know as early in the day as possible. You can send an e-mail to our nurse Ms. Horning at rhorning@giswashington.org or call her at +1.301.767.3814. Please also send an E-Mail to your child's homeroom teacher and their coordinator.

5th grade	Rebecca Kehlenbrink	rkehlenbrink@giswashington.org
6th through 9th grade	Antje Linnenbrink	alinnenbrink@giswashington.org

10th through 12th grade	Rainer Tack	rtack@giswashington.org
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If the current health situation in Montgomery changes and further guidelines and metrics are being published, we may have to adjust our school-specific guidelines as well. The health of our entire school community is our top priority. We are monitoring the health situation carefully via the information published by the *Maryland State Department of Education* and the state of Maryland. We will keep you posted on the developments and whether any schedules or processes will have to be adjusted. Thank you in advance for your trust and cooperation.

