



GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURE: DISTANCE
LEARNING PLAN
MARCH 20, 2020

In an effort to keep the students of Gorham and our community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gorham Schools is moving to distance learning from March 18 until April 27, 2020 and potentially beyond. While we expect to continually evolve our approach to remote learning as we learn more about what works best for our students and families, we have established a foundational plan that will serve as the basis for a quality experience for ALL students in the district.

The goals of this plan are:

1. To reduce the spread of infectious disease through social distancing and facilities cleaning
2. To provide for continuity of instruction via “distance learning” for ALL students
3. To ensure continued health and well-being of all staff and students, including addressing issues that may be associated with food insecurity for our families.

What is distance learning?

- Distance learning is when students continue their learning from home with direct support from teachers and educational technicians using EITHER asynchronous or synchronous methods.

We recognize that distance learning does not replace the classroom experiences in which students engage each day, and the challenges to meet the needs of all students will be many. Still, we are of the firm belief that it is vital to keep students and families connected to schools, to continue their learning, and to engage them with one another and with the adults in our schools as best we can on a daily basis. To that end, the following plan has been developed as a starting point, with an understanding that flexibility and problem-solving will be the order of the day as this situation continues to unfold.

Student Learning

While schools are closed for an extended period of time, our goal will be to provide ongoing instruction in such a manner as to allow for a normal end date to the school year through distance learning days. These days would look different at each grade level.

- **Grades K-3**

- Teachers will develop weekly learning materials for each student and deliver them EITHER via email to each parent OR arrangements will be made for parents to pick up photocopied materials at each school.
- Teachers will use other online learning platforms to supplement these packets as is practicable such as See-Saw or Google Meets, Zoom, or other online learning programs.
- Teachers will communicate directly with parents to ensure each parent has the materials they need to support learning while at home.
- Teachers will arrange with each family a methodology to return work to teachers for their review and feedback. This may involve taking pictures of completed work and emailing them to the teacher, uploading images to See-Saw, arranging for individual conference times via Zoom or Google Meets, or coordinating times for parents to drop off completed packets at each school site and to pick up additional packets on a weekly basis.
- Students will access lessons through family devices and/or directly through packet materials sent home to families.
- Teachers will establish home “office hours” at least weekly, during which time they may be contacted “live” electronically (either via zoom, google meets, or via phone) by students/parents for assistance/clarification and support.

- **Grades 4-12**

- Each student in grades 4 & 5 has been issued a chromebook device to take home.

- Each student in grades 6-12 has 1:1 devices.
- Teachers will develop weekly learning plans for each student and deliver them utilizing Google Classroom. Teachers in grades 4-12 will communicate directly with students. All teachers will provide for daily communication with parents/students to ensure students have the materials and support they need while learning at home.
- Teachers will use other online learning platforms to enhance Google Classroom experiences, but Google Classroom will be the consistent “launching point” for all instructional materials for grades 4 through 12.
- Teachers will minimally establish “office hours” at least weekly, during which time they may be contacted “live” electronically (via zoom, google meets, or via phone) by students/parents for assistance/clarification and support.

Overall Instruction

During the first two to three weeks of distance learning, the focus will be placed on developing strong communication tools with students and families between “home” and “school” as well as attending to the social/emotional needs of our staff and students. Additionally, teaching and support staff will be focused on developing clear expectations and rules for their new “online classrooms”. This will become the strong foundation upon which further, more in depth instruction, will be built as distance learning may need to continue after the first two weeks and beyond.

Grades

For the first two to three weeks of distance learning, no formal grades will be given/issued by teachers. Teachers may issue grades for the purpose of providing feedback to students, but these grades will not be entered into JumpRope or Infinite Campus.

After the first two to three weeks, once distance learning has become more calibrated and focused on more than just maintaining instruction for students, formative and summative assessments may be given in a similar manner as occurs in a regular classroom setting. When this begins, teachers will be clear with students and families regarding any additional expectations.

Differentiation for Families With Limited Online Access

- Families who may have limited online access are asked to communicate directly to each building principal. In the event that students in grades 4-12 cannot access distance learning, principals will work with each student's teacher to develop alternatives.

Technology Support for Families In Need

- Parents/guardians needing technology support should first reach out to their child's classroom teacher. If the classroom teacher can't assist, parents/guardians should then reach out for more specific technical assistance from our technology staff.

There are a few methods for parents to choose from:

- High School students/parents should email Mr. Parvanta (adam.parvanta@gorhamschools.org) or Mr. Daggett (chris.daggett@gorhamschools.org).
 - Middle School students/parents should email Mrs. Dawson (terri.dawson@gorhamschools.org) or Mr. Nash (help@gorhamschools.org)
 - Elementary students/parents: email Mrs. Gauley (joanne.gauley@gorhamschools.org)
- Parents/guardians may also email support@gorhamschooldepartment.freshdesk.com. This goes directly to a helpdesk ticket system monitored by several people. Tickets will be reviewed and then assigned to the appropriate person to address within 24 hours.
 - Finally, parents/guardians may also call 222-1188. Calls made between 11:00 – 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday will be answered “live”. However, parents may call anytime and leave a voicemail with your phone number, a brief description of the problem, and the appropriate time to call back. Voicemails will go to a mailbox being monitored by several people and will be returned within 24 hours.

Special Education

- While we are making every effort to provide learning materials that address each student's IEP needs, we acknowledge that plans are highly unique to each individual student and some plans require more complex planning. Under Federal and State Guidelines, we are using allowable flexibility for up to 10 school days to figure out how to serve students for whom the common remote learning strategies will not suffice.
- During the first two to three weeks of closure, special education case managers and resource room teachers are not providing direct instruction to students, instead we are sending work that would exercise student's learned skills to help reduce regression of skills. These are delivered by Google Classroom for grades 4-12, or by email or pickup for students in grades K-3.
- During the 2nd week and into the remaining weeks, each case manager will be in touch with each special education family to share plans for direct service provision via distance. Direct instruction for special education students aligned to IEP's will begin during the week of March 30th via Zoom or Google Classroom with their teacher and/or with educational technicians. This direct instruction may be delivered 1:1 or in small groups.
- The time offered on these services will not match the IEP as we will not have the same resources and capabilities to provide the usual direct instruction. Case managers will reach out to each family to describe planned programming for students with IEP's. If parents are in agreement with these revised plans being offered, case managers will send a written notice that notes the services being offered via distance learning. If parents are not in agreement, the case manager will work to schedule an IEP meeting via Zoom or phone within the next week to discuss concerns and to brainstorm ideas together.
- IEP meetings will continue to be held during this time as scheduled via Zoom or via phone.
- Evaluations/Re-evaluations, following the lead of the federal government in their recent decision to suspend required accountability testing for all schools, we too will not be able to continue evaluations until we return as we cannot follow COVID-19 safety protocols and still have reliable data.

- Upon return to school, special education staff will collect data to determine where each student is in their learning as compared to when schools were closed. We will address additional needs at this time.

RTI/ESEA Interventions

- Learning lab teachers and support staff who deliver interventions will continue to support students via distance. Supports may be offered via 1:1 or small group Zoom or Google Meets meetings, via phone, or additional methods.

ELL Interventions/Support

- EL teachers are responsible for working with school staff on the implementation of Individual Language Plans (ILPs). Generally, EL teachers will work with general educators in their school to provide scaffold/supports and electronic resources for ELL students in order to maximize language learning and access to academic content.
- EL teachers will also reach out to each ELL student/family to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

Gifted and Talented Support

- Gifted and Talented Teachers and support staff are responsible for working with school staff on the implementation of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).
- Generally, G&T teachers and support staff will work with general educators to provide scaffold/supports and electronic resources for G&T students in order to maximize access to academic content.
- G&T teachers and support staff will also reach out to each G&T student/family to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):

- Many schools provide instruction around social emotional learning (SEL), in addition to the responsive SEL supports that students receive throughout the day while at school. The Behavioral Health Team within each school will provide

resources and lessons that can be integrated into the weekly plans for students by classroom teachers.

- At the early elementary level, we will continue to provide resources from our district-wide curriculum, Second Step.
- Additionally, school counselors and social workers will reach out to families of students with whom they work regularly, but will be available to all families.

Attendance:

The goal of student attendance during distance learning is to have assurance that students are learning and engaged, as well as to identify gaps in student needs.

During distance learning, attendance will be determined by student participation, as opposed to a roll call. Below are options of how students can show they are present and participating:

- Join a virtual class on Google Meets during designated class periods.
- Reply to updates or discussion board posts on Google Classroom.
- Participate in a chat on a Google Docs.
- Submit assignments
- Respond to emails
- Phone call check-ins with teachers.

Frequency Expectations:

- Teachers will conduct weekly check ins with each student/family
- Every MONDAY all teachers in grades K-12 will enter an attendance code into Infinite Campus based on the rubric below for the previous week’s work.

Remote Learning Attendance Codes:

Attendance will be recorded by classroom teachers, utilizing Infinite Campus (same place as usual) by 4:00 p.m. using the frequency expectations listed above. The following rubric will be utilized to determine whether each student is “present” or “absent”

Present/Absent	Definition/Guidance
----------------	---------------------

Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students participate in 80-100% of activities or assignments provided. ● Counts as fully present.
Present but referred to RTI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students participate in 40-80% of activities or assignments provided. ● Counts as fully present, but will be referred to RTI for additional support/intervention.
Not Present/Absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students participate in 0-40% of activities or assignments provided. ● Counts as absent. ● Will be referred to RTI and SEL teams for additional support/intervention.

School Nutrition Program

The Gorham Schools will continue to offer daily lunches to any student K-12 who wishes to participate free of charge through “Operation Feed Gorham”. Lunches will be provided from 11:00 – 1:00 p.m. daily Monday through Friday at four satellite locations:

1. Little Falls Recreation Center, 40 Acorn Street (change from the initial site of Gray Road).
2. Moody's Collision Center, 200 Narragansett Street
3. Phinney Lumber, 519 Fort Hill Road (Route 114)
4. Friendly Village Community Center

During the first week of this program we will focus on feeding K-12 students lunches only. In the second week we will look to expand to providing breakfast and lunch and for any time beyond, we will look to provide breakfast and lunches to K-12 students, their families, and to other community residents who may be in need.

School Facilities

Each building facility and all school buses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected during this closure. Summer cleaning protocols have already begun at each school. All

buildings are closed to the public. Staff may enter buildings by coordinating with each building principal to ensure COVID-19 safety protocols are in place. Staff entering each school will sanitize surfaces used both before and after entrance.

A reminder that as our community needs change, our schools may be needed for uses other than education. The Superintendent will coordinate with the Town Manager in these circumstances.

Staff Work Expectations During School Closure

- Central Office Staff – the Central Office is closed to the public, however, at least one person will remain on site each day from 8:30 – 4:30 p.m. to answer phones. All other CO staff will work from home unless requested to come into the office for specific tasks as designated by their Supervisor.
- School Office Staff – each school’s office is closed to the public, however each principal will create and publish “regular office hours” which may occur either on site or virtually whereby parents and others know office personnel will be available to answer questions and provide supports. Each principal will also establish a regular rotation of office staff who will be asked to enter the building, sort mail, or address any other “on site” needs that may arise. With the exception of these specific tasks assigned by each principal, school office staff will be expected to work primarily from home.
- School and District Administration – Each building principal will publish “regular office hours” which may occur either on site or virtually whereby parents and other individuals will know when they will be available to answer questions and provide supports. Otherwise, each administrator is asked to work primarily from home.
- Teachers:
 - Teachers will be asked, as much as possible, to match the regular school day in length of work schedule. Teachers are expected to check and respond to email at least twice each day (suggested once before noon and once after 2:00 p.m.).
 - Teachers will provide time as outlined above for virtual office hours, instruction, assessments, provision of feedback to students (or through parent/guardian as needed), parent/guardian communication, team meetings, and professional development. Teachers who are specialists (RTI,

Integrators, etc.) will interact with students and colleagues electronically, holding office hours as well.

- Special education teachers and support staff will provide support for students and may be expected to meet with students 1:1 or in small groups virtually via Zoom or Google Meets to attend to each student's IEP needs.
 - Librarians will hold virtual office hours and provide support for students/staff and will complete projects beneficial to the school as defined by the building principal.
 - Counselors/Social Workers – will hold virtual office hours and communicate directly with students, parents and staff. These staff will be virtually present to meet with existing clients and will be prepared to take on additional services as needed and determined by each building principal.
 - Nurses – will hold virtual office hours and communicate directly with students, parents, and staff as needed. Nurses will conduct daily “health checks” with students and families identified to need this communication. Nurses will be virtually present to take on additional services as needed and determined by each building principal.
-
- Educational Technicians – Will perform duties defined by their supervising teachers and/or their immediate supervisors in support of students. This may include virtual instruction, delivery/pick-up of materials, transportation support, school nutrition support, intervention support and participation in professional development activities.

 - Bus Drivers – Will report to schools as assigned by the Transportation/Facilities director to assist in the deep cleaning process for each school. Other drivers may be utilized to assist in transporting supplies and materials necessary for the operation of our school lunch program.

 - Maintenance – Will report to schools as assigned by the Transportation/Facilities director to assist in the deep cleaning process for each school.

 - School Nutrition - Will report to each school's kitchen to conduct deep cleaning protocols. Others may be assigned to staff and operate our school lunch program.

If individual staff members become sick and unable to perform the duties assigned to them, they should report that they are sick using AESOP. Each day, Principals and Program Directors will run a report and follow up with each staff member who reports sick.

Generally speaking, if staff have contracted COVID-19 or are awaiting testing for COVID-19 they are asked to self-quarantine at home for 14 days. Time spent in approved self-quarantine will be paid time. Other staff who have underlying health conditions or who are unable to work because they are primary care providers for children or parents who are at high risk of contracting COVID-19 may also be asked to stay home. If approved, this time is also paid time. Only the Superintendent of Schools and/or designee may approve paid time at home. All requests should come to supervisors first, and then to the Superintendent for final approval.

Staff who have questions as to whether or not they should report to work should call their supervisor who will in turn contact the Superintendent of Schools for final decision making.

Staff who have not been approved to stay home and who choose not to work must either use vacation time, personal time, or other earned time or they will not be paid. This time will also count towards FMLA.

Generally – ALL STAFF will work under the auspices of the “Other Duties As Assigned” provision of each job description and will be assigned necessary work to ensure the overall success of our distance learning programs.