Building Knowledge and Character

“Aim High, Work Hard, Be Great!”

Address: 5101 South 1050 West, Riverdale, UT, 84405 • Phone: 801-393-2950
Website: www.gfautah.org
Dear GFA Families,

We hope that you’ve been enjoying the warm summer weather, getting lots of rest and relishing fun family time. We are all excited to have students back in our classrooms and hallways this fall, filling them with energy and enthusiasm for learning. It is our mission to help every child feel welcomed, connected, and part of GFA’s family.

The circumstances and challenges our community, state and nation have faced over the past six months have been like nothing we have seen before. There are no aspects of our lives that have not be impacted by this pandemic. Among the most challenging are our children and education. Our goal this fall is to safely bring back as many students as possible to an in-person school setting. At this time, we are planning a “regular” school opening on August 17. While remote learning techniques have improved over the course of the school closure, there is no substitute for in-person instruction when it comes to the quality of students’ academic learning.

Part of our responsibility as educators, administrators and parents is to do all that we can to help our children through this difficult time. Most of us are now very familiar with the critical health and safety practices that reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. These include rigorous hygiene and handwashing, use of face masks, physical distancing, reducing large group gatherings and staying home when sick.

In consultation with the Weber-Morgan Health Department, we have developed guidelines for the opening of school with all students having the opportunity to attend on a regular schedule.

The following guidelines are intended to provide protection for our faculty, staff, students, and community:

- Prevent spread by wearing masks, encouraging physical distancing, rigorous handwashing, sanitization, assigned seating, lunch adjustments, hallway flow and congestion, recess modifications, and staggering release times.
- Be aware of symptoms in the student body and immediately contact a student’s family if a student exhibits symptoms.
- Monitor positive COVID 19 cases and its spread in our school and follow the recommendations of the Weber-Morgan Health Department regarding school closures, modified school schedules or in-school adjustments.
- Work with Weber-Morgan Health Department to deploy proper sanitation processes to keep high touch surfaces clean and sanitized.
- Continue to improve our digital learning strategies to optimize student learning at home.

There are also some simple steps that we can take together to mitigate risk and provide protection at school:
• Students with a cough, cold, fever or flu like symptoms should not attend school until symptoms have diminished. Families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in the school community by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms.
• Send your student to school with a mask.
• Talk to your student about the changes they may notice at school and discuss with them the importance of following the guidelines put in place by the school so as to ensure the safety and health of the GFA community.
• Immediately contact the school if your child tests positive for COVID-19.
• Recognize that change in scheduling and school closures could occur at a moment’s notice. We ask for patience and understanding as these events may be unavoidable.
• You as the parent or guardian have the right to keep your child home at any time as you assess risk as it relates to your family.

As we move forward, we are also taking into consideration that we have medically compromised students. Parents of students with a higher risk of severe illness or those families that do not want their child to attend a traditional in-school setting will have the option to sign up for a full distance learning plan at GFA. Students will receive pre-recorded lessons, assignments, readings and class activities through Canvas. All students on this plan would participate in the learning of new grade level material, continued standard pacing, graded assignments, and assessments.

While we are in the business of educating, our first priority is to keep both students and employees safe, while not making life more difficult for parents. Each family situation is uniquely different. We fully understand your varied concerns about health and safety, distance learning, the importance of face-to-face instruction, parents needing to work, the economy, and all the other unexpected consequences of not being in school or being in school in a traditional setting. Our goal is to find the best way to have our students safely in our building as frequently as possible while ensuring the health and well-being of all.

As we continue with the reopening of Good Foundations Academy, we will keep you updated. Thank you for your continued support and positivity as we strive to do what is best for all of our students and employees during these challenging times. Let’s make it a great year at Good Foundations Academy!

Sincerely,

Lisa Erwin
Executive Director
Good Foundations Academy

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According to the CDC, cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in public settings when other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings are recommended as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth mask coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Masks are to be worn by students, faculty, and staff in the building at all times. Face shields may be an option for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. The CDC does not recommend the use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings except in special circumstances. If face shields are used without a mask, they should wrap around the sides of the wearer’s face and extend to below the chin. Transparent masks may be the best option for both teachers and younger students who rely on visual and facial cues.

Mask breaks will occur throughout the day. Breaks will occur when students can be six feet apart and outside or with the window open. Students will be given instruction on how to properly remove and put on masks. Students will be reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

Until further notice, visitors and volunteers will not be permitted in the building. In the event of an emergency in which a parent needs to enter the building, a temperature check and a mask will be required before entry into the school.

**Students should plan to have a cloth mask as part of their back-to-school supplies.** Kid friendly designs and solid colored masks are preferred to limit distractions. Cloth masks should be taken home and washed regularly.
PHYSICAL DISTANCING

One of the best ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 is to maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from yourself and anyone else. Physical distancing should be practiced in combination with other preventive actions to limit the spread of COVID-19, including wearing cloth face coverings, avoiding touching your face with unwashed hands, and frequently washing hands with soap and water.

Students will remain at least 6 feet apart in the classroom when feasible. Teachers will arrange desks in a layout that separates students as much as possible. Students will have assigned seating for contact tracing.

GATHERINGS

To slow the spread of COVID-19, any large indoor gatherings such as school assemblies, morning meet & greet, and school performances will be postponed. Field trips are suspended until further notice. Parent-Teacher conferences may be in a virtual format.

PLAYGROUNDS/RECESS

Recess and playgrounds will be managed with health and safety principles in mind. Playground zones will be established, and students will have a rotating playground zone schedule. Classes will be assigned specific areas of the playground to play on with physical distancing maintained. Groups of students will stay together throughout the day and groups will not mix. Students will be reminded to practice physical distancing when it comes to contact on the playground, such as hugging, tackling, etc.

Playground equipment and gym equipment will be disinfected each day. Students will be required to wash hands before recess and immediately following recess.

SAFETY AT LUNCH

Lunch will be offered daily. A staggered lunch schedule has been developed in order
to maintain physical distancing. Students will wash/sanitize their hands both before and after lunch. Touchless hand sanitizing stations will be utilized by students and staff. Students will maintain a distance of 6 feet while waiting in the lunch line. No self-service of items such as milk, juice, and condiments will be permitted to be handled by students. A share basket will no longer be available for use. Students will be seated at tables using the same assigned seating as used in the classroom. No more than 6 students will be at one table. Tables will be sanitized between each seating. While the weather is warm, students will be eating lunch outside offering fresh air and a chance to remove masks safely while eating. During inclement weather, classes will rotate between lunch in the cafeteria and their classroom in order to maintain appropriate physical distancing.

Water bottle filling stations will be available in lieu of drinking fountains. Students should bring a full bottle of water each day to school. Any high contact, frequent use items will be removed from the cafeteria such as a microwave. Single use utensils and trays will be used and disposed of properly.

All staff will complete a short health assessment and temperature check daily prior to entering the food service area. Masks will be worn by Lunch Program Staff at all times during food preparation, lunch service, and clean up. Physical distancing will be practiced as workspace permits. All employees will be trained in proper hygiene routines, both personal and professional. A cleaning and disinfecting schedule/chart will be completed daily by staff. The Lunch Program Manager will remain in contact and consult with Weber-Morgan Health Department on a regular basis.
Hand Hygiene

Students will be instructed on proper hand washing techniques which include scrubbing between the fingers, washing the back side of each hand, and washing underneath the fingernails with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).

No-touch hand sanitizer stations will be provided to the students throughout the school and will be used as they transition from one setting to another.

Handwashing breaks will occur during the day and hand sanitizer will be provided in each classroom. Students will not congregate in bathrooms.

Reference signs and posters will be posted to remind students of effective strategies for handwashing, personal hygiene and wellness practices.
Stay Home When Sick

Flu season is another critical factor that could pose some challenges for faculty and students. Not only do flu symptoms closely mimic COVID-19 symptoms but managing both a bad flu season and the ongoing presence of COVID-19 could be very disruptive. For this reason, we are asking faculty and students to stay home when feeling sick. The CDC has identified the following as COVID-19 symptoms:

- Temperature higher than 100.4 degrees
- Cough, bronchitis, sore throat or strep
- Body rash with itching
- Shortness of breath
- Congestion or runny nose
- Loss of smell or taste
- Vomiting or diarrhea

Faculty and staff will be trained to recognize signs of COVID-19 and will follow school protocol in dealing with a sick student. GFA faculty and staff will observe all applicable privacy laws and regulations when dealing with students. Students who appear to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while at school will immediately be separated from other students and sent home as quickly as possible. GFA has identified a health room where symptomatic individuals can stay until they are able to go home. The health room will be dedicated to use for students who feel ill once at school. This room will not be used for any other purpose.

Families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in the school community by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms. Parents will be responsible for monitoring and ensuring the daily health of their child when they are sent to school. **Students who exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home. Students must be fever free for more than 72 hours before returning to school.** Faculty, staff and students should immediately contact the school if they have tested positive for COVID-19.
Cleaning

Good Foundations Academy will deep clean regularly to combat specific illnesses by using specialized chemicals. Increased frequency of EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants will be used in high touch areas such as restrooms, doorknobs, counter tops, and computer keyboards.

Lunchroom tables will be disinfected by lunch monitors and the custodian between each lunch group. Playground equipment will be disinfected once a day. Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.

Food preparation areas and contact surfaces, countertops and kitchen equipment will be cleaned and sanitized frequently throughout the day.

Shared Objects

Students will have assigned classroom seating and will sanitize their own space upon arrival with alcohol-based cleaner. Students will clean all shared hard surfaces such as desks, computers or other equipment when entering and exiting the classroom. Students will have adult supervision while cleaning.
Families will ultimately make the decision as to whether their children attend in-person instruction, or whether their children will participate in our online distance learning plan.

If a family selects the distance learning option, students will receive instruction through pre-recorded lessons, video conferencing, class assignments, readings, and class activities through Canvas. All students on this plan would participate in the learning of new grade level material, completion of graded assignments and assessments, and required attendance.

Students on the distance learning plan are discouraged from switching back and forth between options. An application will be sent out prior to the beginning of each quarter for those families interested in signing up for the distance learning option. Students can move in and out of either option upon the completion of the quarter.

The school calendar remains unchanged at this time with regards to scheduled holiday breaks, start and finish dates.

Afterschool programs will continue at GFA but will be modified. Our after-school program will accept a minimum number of students in order to follow physical distancing guidelines and to keep students safe. Masks will be required to participate in any after school program. Enhanced safety guidelines will be practiced.