



The Link Letter

School newsletter for the GRCDC community

Special REOPENING Edition 7.31.2020

Communication from the Executive Director

Hi Families!

THANK YOU to all of the families who have worked with us to make your child's instructional delivery choice for the fall! We are nearing a 100% completion rate and Mr. Trevor will begin home visits for families we have not heard from today.

What does that mean? That means once we know each student's preferred instructional delivery model, we can begin making staffing assignments and class lists.

As it stands right now, we have :

- **57%** of students enrolled for **hybrid** (155 students)
- **36%** of students enrolled for **virtual** (97 students)
- **7%** of students **unknown** preference (20 students)

Given how our enrollment numbers and staff preferences are begin to take shape there are a few things all families should be aware of:

- **No staffing decisions have been made yet.** Unlike many surrounding districts, our fully virtual option will be designed with GRCDC's curriculum, vision, and teaching and support staff. We will not outsource the education and growth of our students. Because of that, we have a puzzle to put together to make sure all classes get what they need. Given these numbers, hybrid groupings may be a little larger than 12, but still much smaller than a full class size in order to adhere to physical distancing.

- **We are still in Phase 4 and still planning to open with both a hybrid and virtual option.** If the Governor downgrades us to Phase 3 or if we, at any time, feel that we can not offer a hybrid option while following CDC and local health department protocols, we would be all virtual. The chance that we could also have to "go all virtual" as a school at some point in this year is also there. The key to this is for all families and staff to know that this is an ever-changing situation and we will continue to respond to it the best that we are able.
- **Everything we are sharing right now is in DRAFT format, as our plans are still coming together.** In the next week or two, we will have much clearer plans and you will have your child's schedule, teacher assignment, supply list, etc. We are working around the clock to create these plans in response to our families' and our staff's feedback.
- **The "school day" timing might look different both for hybrid and fully virtual students.** This is based on staffing needs as well as attendance requirements from MDE. In the spring, attendance was not required during virtual learning- however, now it will be and schools will need to be able to account for it.
- **Most things WILL look different. This is a year of unexpected surprises.** We will learn many lessons together and if we keep working together with grace, flexibility, and love, our children will benefit.

A question I have been receiving quite a bit is: why are we offering hybrid if GRPS is full virtual for the first 9 weeks? It's a great question! We based our decision to be able to offer hybrid on our plans to follow the Required and Strongly Recommended Protocols in the Michigan Return to School Roadmap, the CDC recommendations to schools, and the Kent County Health Department Recommendations. We can follow these with a small number of students and staff in the building each day and with tweaking our practices and schedules a bit. GRPS has 15,000 students and 1500 staff members- we have 275 students and 30 staff members. We are simply able to do things because we are smaller that GRPS cannot do given their size. It is also important to note that GRPS is the ONLY local district right now that is fully virtual in Phase 4. It is also the largest. Other local districts (Lowell, Zeeland, Rockford, EGR, Forest Hills, Godfrey-Lee etc.) are offering fully in person or hybrid with a virtual option. We are proud to share that we are the only local district (of which I am aware so far) that is fully designing and staffing our own virtual program so we can continue the connections and relationships to our students and families that are central to the work we do.

However, if at any point while we are still in Phase 4, my team and I feel like we cannot safely follow protocols, appropriately staff our program, cases in our county are spiking or we have an outbreak in our school community or a community that intersects with ours, we will switch to the whole school being in a virtual format. We will design both delivery options with this in mind.

We continue to learn. We continue to listen. We are in this together.

Sincerely yours,

Lisa Heyne

Do you have questions that you need answered about the Reopening Plan?

- Make sure you read the FAQ ([link here](#))
- Listen to the Q and A ZOOM call from last week ([link here](#))
- Email Ms. Heyne at heynel@childdiscoverycenter.org I am happy to talk you through what I know, what I don't yet know, or even weigh in on a struggle you are facing

HYBRID FAMILIES: BEGIN PREPARING FOR IN PERSON SCHOOLING NOW

- **Determine what fit and type of mask works for your child.** Make sure your child will be able to bring at least 2 masks each day they are in school (they can be the same ones if they are washed in between)
 - **Normalize mask use.** Practice with your child how to put on and take off a mask and how to keep it on.
 - **Prepare to purchase school supplies.** Unlike other years, students will need individual sets of some school supplies. We will share a list as August 31 grows closer, but just a head's up that may be an added expense in your monthly budget. For families who will need help in purchasing school supplies, help will be available!
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Interested in Before and After School Care?

Please read this message from Executive Director Starr Morgan and take the survey:

Hi Families!

We are trying to gauge the amount of interest in wrap-around care for the Fall in order to best support the families of the Child Discovery Center. If you think you'll need care for your school-age child either before/after on the days your child is onsite or full day on the days your child does not attend please fill out the survey. This is not registration and does not hold you to your selection. This will simply allow us to determine if there is interest and whether we have numbers that safely allows us to provide this service.

<https://forms.gle/NzfuBbgUyvBUTQm98>

Thank you so much for your time!

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