



## Pine Grove School Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Does my child need to wear a mask during the school day?**

**Will mask breaks be given? What if a child forgets his or her mask? What if my child has a medical condition?**

**A:** Masks will be required at PGS during the school day. Students will wear their masks in hallways, bathrooms, and their classrooms throughout the day. Teachers will incorporate mask breaks into the day so that students can remove their masks temporarily. The school will have additional, disposable masks for students and staff to wear if needed. Generally speaking, most children can wear a mask. If your child has a medical condition and you are concerned about his or her use of a mask, please contact our school nurse Pat DeRossi at:

[pderossi@avon.k12.ct.us](mailto:pderossi@avon.k12.ct.us).

**Q: Is there anyone who can help my child with a mask? What about opening a container at lunch or snack time?**

**A:** As teachers it is in our nature to help our students. To help keep our students safe we would like to provide them with as much distance and as little “contact” as possible. Families can help us achieve this by ensuring their children can open snacks that they bring, tie shoes or wear shoes that can be velcroed, zip zippers/button buttons, and generally be independent as much as possible. This is always a goal for us but has a new found importance this year.

**Q: What is a cohort? How does that work?**

**A:** For our purposes, a cohort is a smaller group of students and teachers who primarily interact with one another to limit interactions with larger groups. At PGS this will mean 2-3 classes that will eat lunch and have recess together. Staffing is being organized to limit the total number staff each cohort works with during the day.

**Q: If I start my child in school, can I change my mind later and have them work remotely? What is a trimester?**

**A:** Yes. Should the school based experience not work out for any reason, families can opt to move their child(ren) to a remote setting. A trimester is a grading term used to represent when a report card cycle begins and ends. Typically, PGS has three per year. September - November, November - March, and March - June. Currently, we are asking parents to plan to have their child in school fully or work remotely for an entire trimester.

**Q: Can parents 'opt out' of certain parts of the day like lunch or specials? Can I bring my child for half a day?**

**A:** We strongly encourage families to decide to fully participate in remote learning or fully participate in attending a full school day. Our teachers will be developing their lessons and plans to accommodate the changes in schedules and settings. Children thrive in settings where there is consistency and routine. In addition to this, we are utilizing every space throughout the day so there are limited places to accommodate students not participating in the overall schedule for their class.

**Q: Will children share supplies in school?**

**A:** No and yes. Students will still receive a supply list for the coming school year. We will require students to have their own supplies and refrain from sharing with others. Of course, there may be times when a specific supply (a basketball in gym class) would be shared. Our staff will clean and/or quarantine these items between use to help mitigate exposure.

**Q: Will all desks have plastic shield partitions? How will they know how to use them?**

**A:** Yes, the district has purchased clear, plastic shields for each individual student. These shields can be folded and carried to various locations in the school as needed. See picture to the right. During the opening days of school, staff will assist students and provide directions on proper use.



**Q: What about eating in school? Why eat in the cafeteria?**

**A:** A typical school day involves lunch and snacks. Students will eat in their classrooms and the cafeteria. We are making every effort to allow students to use the cafeteria so that our days feel as close to a typical day as possible. We also want to provide opportunities for children to get up and move. While eating, children will be reminded to remain within their desk shield and stay seated. They can of course remove their masks for this time. Students will be asked to clean (wash or use hand sanitizer) before and after each meal. The cafeteria will be cleaned between lunch waves.

**Q: How will the school be cleaned?**

**A:** The school will be cleaned throughout the day and in the evening. Our custodians will be following standard procedures and have daily checklists to ensure high traffic and high touch surfaces are cleaned. Bathrooms will be cleaned twice per day. The cafeteria tables will be cleaned between each use and staff will have access to cleaning supplies in classrooms.

**Q: What should I do if my child was exposed to someone with COVID-19 including a sibling?**

**A:** The advice at the time is for all individuals who have been in contact with another person who has tested positive for COVID-19 is to stay home and avoid close contact with others. Again, the best way to keep our schools safe and each other healthy is to stay home if you are not well. Also, if your child has traveled to a state or country that is considered high risk, we ask that you let us know and quarantine for the recommended 14 days. Your child will be able to participate remotely in class during that time. Our school nurse is available each school day to help families with questions regarding symptoms and exposure. [pderossi@avon.k12.ct.us](mailto:pderossi@avon.k12.ct.us).

**Q: Can classes get outside more?**

**A:** Yes. Staff will be encouraged to use outdoor spaces whenever feasible. The weather will be a determining factor but PGS is surrounded by large fields that can be used throughout the school day. We also have access to a large tent purchased by the PTO.

**Q: Will children be allowed to use the playground?**

**A:** Yes. We plan to use the playground daily. Children will use either the equipment (slides, swings, etc.) or the fields to provide space between cohorts and one another while playing. Generally speaking, students will rotate back and forth between equipment and the fields. Staff will be working with students to practice games and activities that encourage social distancing.

**Q: Can I visit PGS or volunteer in my child's classroom?**

**A:** Currently we are holding off on allowing visitors to enter the school building. We do understand that there may be certain circumstances including school meetings where in-person meetings may be necessary. It is important to note that this is a temporary practice and we hope to have our volunteers and visitors back again soon.

**Q: Can I see a classroom?**

**A:** Yes. A sample classroom is featured in the video that we shared. It is important to note that Kindergarten classrooms will feature more desks than the sample classroom to assist with social distancing with our newest, youngest learners.