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2021 summer programs COVID-19 plan

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SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR
SCIENCE+
MATHEMATICS

2021 Summer Programs COVID-19 Plan

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Introduction

Welcome to the South Carolina Governor's School for Science + Mathematics (GSSM)! After assessing our school's return to residency during the spring semester and consulting with GSSM leadership and members of our board, we decided to resume offering our in-person summer programs on our campus and at a limited number of partner school district sites across the state. These programs include iTEAMS Xtreme, CREATEng, GoSciTech, the Virtual Programs Base Camp experience, and the GSSM Launch Pad. We will continue offering our live, online Summer STEM program for a second summer as an option for those families who do not want an in-person summer experience. Our summer programs faculty and staff are excited to offer these programs and we are ready to interact with the young scholars who will participate in them.

Because the health and safety of everyone involved in our summer programs are a priority, the Outreach Center team has developed the *2021 Summer Programs COVID-19 Plan*. The plan is a collaborative effort that has included input from GSSM leadership, faculty, and staff. In developing the plan, the team reviewed state and national COVID-19 guidelines and policies.

The *2021 Summer Programs COVID-19 Plan* builds upon the GSSM [Return to Residency Plan Spring 2021](#) and the [COVID-19 Framework & Operating Plan](#), both of which can be found on our website. It reflects the most recent guidance from federal and state agencies and incorporates what we have learned by having our students in residence this spring.

This plan supports the following:

1. providing families with the option for their students to participate in residential camps, in-person day camps, or the Summer STEM synchronous virtual camp;
2. implementing CDC and DHEC compliant protocols for prevention, identification, and containment of COVID-19 infection; and
3. continuing the assessment of circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and adaptation as needed.

The safety and well-being of the GSSM community, which includes our school district partners and program participants, remains our highest priority. Our goal is to provide the best academic and student experiences while creating an environment that is safe for all members of the GSSM community. The successful implementation of our plan requires the cooperation of everyone.

Our team understands the pandemic is constantly changing and these changes may affect state and national guidelines and policies. We will monitor these changes and update our summer COVID-19 plan accordingly.

We are looking forward to a summer where students are actively learning in a fun and safe environment!

Sincerely,

The GSSM Summer Programs Team

Community Health and Safety

GSSM is a learning community that values the health and safety of the students who participate in our summer programs and the staff who are involved in offering the programs. Delivering our summer programs in a healthy and safe learning environment requires understanding and cooperation. We expect this summer's learning community to follow the GSSM COVID-19 safety protocols and guidelines outlined in this plan. These include:

Practicing Physical Distancing

Participants and staff should maintain at least the recommended 6 feet of distance between individuals whenever possible, including in classrooms, offices, and common areas. Avoid gathering in large groups, crowded spaces, or being closer than 6 feet to others.

Personal Hygiene

Everyone must practice regular hand hygiene and wash their hands frequently. Always avoid touching your face after touching highly-touched surfaces such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, faucets, toilets, etc. and wash your hands afterwards. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, as hand sanitizers are also effective at preventing the spread of germs. Cleanse your hands before and after handling your face mask.

Temperature Screening

Summer program students will be scanned when arriving on site for their program. Students in residential programs will participate in a temperature scan each day before leaving the residence halls for the first time.

Use of Face Masks

The Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) continue to recommend the wearing of face coverings to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. GSSM will follow this recommendation by requiring GSSM summer programs staff and students to wear a facial covering in all public areas and group settings. Masks will not be required outdoors when physical distancing is possible. Masks should be laundered regularly with detergent. We recommend all participants and staff members have additional masks on hand in case one becomes dirty and needs to be replaced during the instructional day. Disposable face masks should be discarded daily.

The term face mask is used to include any cloth face covering or disposable face mask that meets the following criteria:

- Fits snugly but comfortably against the sides of the face and covers the nose, mouth, and chin.
- Fastens securely with ties or ear loops.
- Includes multiple layers of fabric.
- Does not have exhalation valves or vents.
- Allows for breathing without restriction.
- Cloth face masks can be laundered without damage or change to shape.

The parents and guardians of students enrolled in GSSM summer programs, on behalf of their student, have the option of opting-out of the GSSM face mask requirement. Any parent or guardian who chooses this option must complete and submit the "opt-out" form D-4286 developed by DHEC. The form can be downloaded from the DHEC website at

<https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/D-4286.pdf>. Students who do not submit the signed opt-out form, staff, and visitors will continue to wear masks according to the GSSM policy.

Maintain Shared Spaces

Participants and staff should regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces with CDC-approved disinfectants. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be provided in each workplace, classroom, residence hall, dining facility, and other campus facilities.

- Hand sanitizer will be made available in shared areas. Disinfecting wipes and other cleaning supplies will be available in instructional spaces.
- Water fountains will not be available for use. Where available, program participants will be able to use bottle filling stations.
- Classrooms that have equipment used daily by program participants such as computer and science labs will be cleaned regularly by staff.
- Program participants will be required to wear face masks while in instructional spaces.
- Program staff will use disinfectant products to sanitize desks, chairs, and any other items at the end of the instructional day or at any time when a new group of participants will enter the classroom or other shared space.

Symptom Monitoring

If a program participant feels sick or experiences flu-like symptoms at any time, or is concerned they may have COVID-19 or another illness, they should contact an appropriate staff member immediately. Participants on GSSM's campus will be directed to the GSSM nurse's office. Off-campus participants should contact their site coordinator.

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever above 100 °F and/or chills or feeling hot (if no thermometer is available)
- Sore throat
- New cough not related to chronic condition
- Runny/stuffy nose/nasal congestion (not related to allergies or relieved by antihistamines)
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Diarrhea with or without respiratory symptoms
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Headache unrelated to chronic condition
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- New foot sores (COVID-19 toes)
- New rash

Contact Tracing

In the event that a GSSM summer program participant or employee tests positive for COVID-19, contact tracing will be used to identify individuals who have been in close contact with the

person, as defined by the CDC. GSSM will be using the contact tracing form provided by DHEC. Any positive cases will be reported to DHEC and other SC agencies as required.

Commitment to Safety

Our expectation is that all program participants and staff will follow our COVID-19 plan. Those who repeatedly ignore our safety and community guidelines will be asked to withdraw from their program.

GSSM Campus Policies

Based on recommendations from the CDC, DHEC, and in collaboration with the Medical University of South Carolina's Back to Business initiative, GSSM has taken steps to reduce opportunities for transmission via shared surfaces, through the air, and through person-to-person interaction. These have included increasing awareness and symptom screening.

For more information on our COVID-19 campus policies and facility upgrades, please refer to our [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#). We will continue to maintain these modified procedures in accordance with expert advice.

Testing Requirements

All students who are participating in a summer program held on the GSSM campus must present proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 5 days prior to the first date of the program the student is attending, or provide proof of a completed course of a COVID-19 vaccination. We encourage participants to limit their social interactions and/or self-quarantine one week prior to attending their summer program.

Entering Campus Residential Summer Programs

An entry protocol was established for staff and students returning to campus in the spring. This protocol will also be observed when summer program participants arrive for their experiences.

Keeping Each Other Safe

Students who do not submit the signed DHEC opt-out form D-4286, staff, and visitors will continue to wear masks according to the GSSM policy, which includes wearing masks while indoors on campus. The places where students may remove their masks are as follows:

1. with their roommate in their own residence hall room;
2. while seated and eating in the dining hall;
3. with permission from supervising staff during athletic activities; and
4. while outdoors when physical distancing is possible.

Physical distancing will be practiced in hallways, classrooms, and other campus areas. Summer programs staff will follow the same guidelines for masking and physical distancing.

Move-In/Out Procedures

More details will be communicated to residential summer program participants in a separate document. Please contact your program coordinator with any questions or concerns.

Life on Campus

For more information regarding life on campus, please refer to the [2021 Summer Programs Student Handbook](#) and/or information provided to you by your program coordinator.

1. Masks will be worn in all common areas and public spaces at all times by students who do not submit the signed DHEC opt-out form D-4286 and all staff. Physical distancing must also be observed and practiced. Masks will not be required outside where physical distancing is possible.
2. Visitors will not be allowed on campus without prior approval from a GSSM staff member. All visitors to our campus will be expected to follow our COVID-19 policies.
3. Only two students may use the laundry room at a time and students should not leave their clothes unattended for long periods of time. Storing personal laundry in the shared laundry room is not permitted and students must wear masks at all times. Cleaning supplies will be available so students can clean and disinfect the room after each use.
4. Students may not leave any chairs, pillows, or other items outside of their room. This includes the hallway, tv/study lounge, and laundry area.
5. If a summer program participant leaves campus without permission or is gone for overnight, they may not return to the residence hall. The student will have to withdraw from the program and return home.

Evening Activities

Various areas around campus will be open after classes for program participants to enjoy supervised, physically distanced activities.

Entering Campus Day Camp Summer Programs

Our day camp summer programs include our iTEAMS Xtreme and CREATEng experiences for rising sixth through ninth grade students. While these students will not be residing on the GSSM campus, we ask that participating families follow CDC guidelines in maintaining physical distancing and wearing masks while away from campus to reduce the potential for bringing COVID-19 to campus during their program.

Provide Evidence of Health

Prior to or upon arrival, each summer program participant must present proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 5 days prior to the first date of the program the student is attending, or provide proof of a completed course of a COVID-19 vaccination.

Keeping Each Other Safe

Students who do not submit the signed DHEC opt-out form D-4286, staff, and visitors will continue to wear masks according to the GSSM policy, which includes wearing masks while indoors on campus. The places where students may remove their masks are as follows:

1. while seated and eating in the dining hall or other designated meal area;
2. with permission from supervising staff during athletic activities; and
3. while outdoors when physical distancing is possible.

Physical distancing will be practiced in hallways, classrooms, and other campus areas. Summer programs staff will follow the same guidelines for masking and physical distancing.

In Case of Illness

If a program participant exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19 while on campus, a parent or guardian will be called. Residential program participants must be picked up by a parent or guardian within five hours of receiving the call from one of our nursing staff. Day program participants must be picked up by a parent or guardian within two hours of receiving the call from one of our nursing staff.

Returning After Illness

In accordance with CDC guidance, any program participant or staff member sent home due to illness should seek a COVID-19 test and remain away from campus until the test result is returned.

If the test result is negative, the participant or staff member may not return until the symptoms have improved and GSSM nurses have approved a request to return.

If the test result is positive, participants and staff should remain away from campus for at least 10 days after symptom onset and not return before 24 hours have passed without symptoms or use of any fever-reducing medication. GSSM nurses must approve all requests to return.

Electronic Contact Tracing

GSSM's COVID-19 contact tracing protocol protects members of the community by quickly alerting those who may have had close contact with persons testing positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. All students, campers, and staff are required to participate in contact tracing efforts. An important component of this protocol is the use of electronic contact tracing devices, called *tags*, which are worn visibly by each summer program participant and GSSM employee. These tags keep track of close encounters with other tags and do not collect location or personal information. Information collected by contact tracing tags is considered confidential.

Please contact our Chief Information Officer, Mr. Jon Shannon, with any questions regarding these devices and protocols.

Leaving Campus

Participants leaving and returning to campus increase the risks to the campus community. As such, we have modified our off-campus leave and travel policies, which include the following:

1. field trips must be approved and include appropriate provisions for compliance with GSSM COVID-19 protocols;
2. program participants will be required to wear masks when riding in GSSM vehicles; and
3. all program participants will remain on campus for the length of their program.

Launch Pad

For more information regarding signing out from campus, Launch Pad participants should speak with Ms. Kyle Barnett.

Classes

Classes and labs will meet according to the daily schedule prepared for the program. Course instruction delivered from a classroom or lab will follow GSSM guidelines with respect to physical distancing and other safety measures.

Keeping Classrooms Healthy

1. Housekeeping staff will clean and disinfect all classrooms and labs prior to the start of each day.
2. Classrooms that have equipment used daily by program students, such as computer labs, science labs, and the engineering labs, will be cleaned regularly by staff and sharing will be limited.
3. Program staff will sanitize participant desks and workstations at the end of class using disinfectant supplies provided in each classroom.
4. Staff will wear masks and practice physical distancing while in classrooms and labs.

Dining Hall Modifications

Dining Services has created a set of protocols including, but not limited to the following:

1. adding cleaning processes and sanitation stations;
2. adding Plexiglass sneeze guards at all service points between staff and guests;
3. requiring all associates to wear masks and gloves while serving food;
4. eliminating all of the self-service areas except beverages;
5. adjusting seating capacity and marking traffic flow to reduce transmission; and
6. providing separate meals for vegetarians, vegans, and other medically-necessary specialty diets.

Entering Partner School District Off-Site Day Camps

The GSSM policies and guidelines outlined in this document will be followed at all of our iTEAMS Xtreme and CREATEng day camp locations; however, local school district policies and guidelines may require modifications and adaptations. Any changes will be made in agreement with our partner districts and the schools who are hosting our off-site day camps.

In Case of Illness

If a program participant exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19, a parent or guardian will be contacted by the site coordinator or the partner school district's nursing staff, if provided, and asked to pick up their student within two hours of receiving the call from a staff member or the partner school district's nursing staff.

Returning After Illness

In accordance with CDC guidance, any program participant or staff member sent home due to illness should seek a COVID-19 test and remain away from campus until the test result is returned.

If the test result is negative, the participant or staff member may not return until the symptoms have improved and a partner school district official has approved a request to return.

If the test result is positive, participants and staff should remain away from campus for at least 10 days after symptom onset and not return before 24 hours have passed without symptoms or use of any fever-reducing medication. Partner school district officials must approve all requests to return.

Keeping Each Other Safe

Students who do not submit the signed DHEC opt-out form D-4286, staff, and visitors will continue to wear masks according to the GSSM policy, which includes wearing masks while indoors on campus.

The places where students may remove their masks are as follows:

1. while seated and eating in the dining hall or other designated meal area;
2. with permission from supervising staff during athletic activities; and
3. while outdoors when physical distancing is possible.

Physical distancing will be practiced in hallways, classrooms, and other campus areas. Summer programs staff will follow the same guidelines for masking and physical distancing.

Communication and Reporting Requirements

GSSM will continue to follow its current practice to communicate plans, schedules, and items of interest to program participants, staff, families, and others using email, social media, and its website. In compliance with DHEC reporting rules, information regarding campus COVID-19 infections and exposures will be provided promptly to the appropriate agencies.

The health information of all program participants and staff will be protected according to HIPAA and FERPA requirements.

Monitoring, Assessment, Adjustment

GSSM will continue to monitor infection rates published by DHEC and monitor infection activity within Darlington County. Other relevant indicators besides the DHEC published rates may also be consulted. As data and additional guidance from federal and state agencies become available, adjustments and modifications to the campus community and our summer programs may be necessary.

In the event that community spread of COVID-19 is observed on campus, GSSM will consult with DHEC and local healthcare providers to contain the spread and prevent further community-acquired infections.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is my student required to get a COVID-19 test prior to their program?

Students who are participating in a summer program held on the GSSM campus in Hartsville, SC must present proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 5 days prior to arrival on campus, or provide proof of a completed course of a COVID-19 vaccination.

Where can my student get a COVID-19 test?

Visit [DHEC's website](#) for information on finding a testing site and scheduling a testing appointment. Free testing is available at several sites across the state.

Is a COVID-19 vaccination required for my student to participate in a GSSM summer program?

No, COVID-19 vaccination is not required.

Does my student have to wear a mask while participating in a GSSM summer program?

The parents and guardians of students enrolled in GSSM summer programs, on behalf of their student, have the option of opting-out of the GSSM face mask requirement. Any parent or guardian who chooses this option must complete and submit the “opt-out” form D-4286 developed by DHEC. Students who do not submit the signed opt-out form, staff, and visitors will continue to wear masks according to the GSSM policy.

Where can I find the DHEC opt-out form D-4286?

The form can be downloaded at <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/D-4286.pdf> .

Is my student required to quarantine before participating in a GSSM summer program?

No, but we encourage all program participants to quarantine and/or limit their social interactions for one week prior to attending their program.

What will happen if my student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during their program?

If a participant exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19 while participating in a GSSM summer program, a parent or guardian will be called. If the student is in a residential program, the parent or guardian will be asked to pick up their student within five hours of receiving the call from one of our nurses. If the student is in a day program, the parent or guardian will be asked to pick up their student within two hours of receiving the call from a site coordinator, or the partner school district’s nursing staff, if provided.

In accordance with CDC guidance, any program participant or staff member sent home due to illness should seek a COVID-19 test and remain away from campus until the test result is returned.

If the test result is negative, the participant or staff member may not return until the symptoms have improved. All requests to return to the GSSM campus must be approved by GSSM nursing staff. Requests to re-enter a partner school district host site must be approved by an official from the partner school district.

If the test result is positive, participants and staff should remain away from campus for at least 10 days after symptom onset and not return before 24 hours have passed without symptoms or use of any fever-reducing medication. Partner school district officials must approve all requests to return. All requests to return to the GSSM campus must be approved by GSSM nursing staff.

What will happen if my student is a close contact of someone who is sent home for showing COVID-19 symptoms?

In the event that a GSSM summer program participant or staff tests positive for COVID-19, contact tracing will be used to identify individuals who have been in close contact with the person, as defined by the CDC. GSSM will be using the contact tracing form provided by DHEC. Any positive cases will be reported to DHEC and other SC agencies as required. Program participants at our partner school district host sites will follow the district’s contact tracing guidelines.

Will camp fees be refunded if my student is sent home from their summer program for showing symptoms of COVID-19 or proven exposure resulting from contact tracing?

Refunds will be administered in keeping with our existing summer programs refund policies.

What specific safety measures are being taken at the partner school where my student will be participating in a GSSM day camp?

Each of our day camp locations will follow the policies outlined in this document, except where local guidance or procedures may result in modifications. Any modifications to our COVID-19 safety policies will be based upon mutual agreements between GSSM and our partner school districts.

Contact Information

CREATEng and iTEAMS Xtreme participants should contact Mrs. Irene Middleton.

Email: middleton@gssm.k12.sc.us

Phone: 843-383-3901 ext. 3309

Cell: 843-992-3241

GoSciTech and Summer STEM participants should contact Mrs. Susan Engelhardt.

Email: engelhardt@gssm.k12.sc.us

Phone: 843-307-9775

Launch Pad participants should contact Ms. Kyle Barnett.

Email: kbarnett@gssm.k12.sc.us

Phone: 843-383-3901 ext. 1127

Virtual Programs Base Camp participants should contact Ms. Rana O'Bryant.

Email: robryant@gssm.k12.sc.us

Phone: 843-616-2600

For general information, please contact Ms. Melissa Hoffman.

Email: camps@scgssm.org

Phone: 843-383-3958