

FACE COVERINGS

The Board adopts this policy requiring face coverings to comply with state requirements and recommendations to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19. The current consensus among public health experts is that face coverings are a preventative measure that can reduce the spread of COVID-19, when used along with other preventative measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

Facial Coverings (Masks)

Except as provided below, all students, faculty, and staff in any child care setting, school building, or other location that provides care of education to any child in kindergarten through grade twelve in the district shall wear facial coverings at all times when:

- In any indoor location, but not limited to, classrooms, gymnasiums, offices, locker rooms, hallways, cafeteria, and/or locker bays;
- Outdoors on school property and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household;
- Waiting for a school bus outdoors and unable to maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household; or
- Riding a school bus;

School nurses or staff who care for individuals with symptoms must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), provided by the school.

Exemptions

The requirement to wear a facial covering does not apply when:

- The individual has a medical condition including respiratory conditions that restricts breathing, mental health conditions, or a disability that contraindicates the wearing of a facial covering;
- The individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or has another disability, when an accommodation is appropriate or necessary;
- The individual is actively participating in outdoor recess and/or physical activity where students are able to maintain a distance of six feet or more or athletic practice, scrimmage, or competition that is permitted under a separate Department of Health Order;
- The individual is seated and actively consuming food or beverages;
- Where students and staff can maintain distancing of at least six feet and removal of the facial covering is necessary for instructional purposes, including instruction in a foreign language,

English language for non-native speakers, and other subjects where wearing a facial covering would prohibit participation in normal classroom activities, such as playing an instrument;

- Students are able to maintain a distance of six feet or more and a mask break is deemed necessary by the educator supervising the educational setting;
- The individual is alone in an enclosed space, such as an office; or
- When an established sincerely held religious requirement exists that does not permit a facial covering.

Students required to wear a face covering who refuse to follow this policy may be required to leave the school campus and are subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the student code of conduct. Students who refuse to wear a face covering on a school bus shall be subject to policies and guidelines concerning student conduct on district managed transportation.

School Visitors

School visitors must wear a face covering in any school building or facility, including waiting outside school buildings before and after school. Face coverings are not required for:

- Children younger than 2 years old;
- Anyone with a documented medical condition that prevents them from wearing a face covering (such as a documented medical breathing issue);
- Anyone who otherwise has trouble breathing; or
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

General Rules for Face Coverings

- Staff and students are required to have a face covering with them at all times. Students should wear their own face covering or one will be provided for them. Staff will be provided with a face covering upon request.
- Face coverings should be cloth/fabric and cannot be made of mesh or cloth/fabric that is transparent (with the exception of plastic components of a cloth/fabric face covering that allow for viewing a person's mouth). Face coverings must cover an individual's nose, mouth, and chin.
- Face coverings are not required outside when individuals are able to maintain a social distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household.
- Individuals should wash their hands before putting on a face covering. The face covering should fit snugly against the side of an individual's face. Face coverings should not create any difficulty breathing while worn and should be secured by a tie or elastic to prevent movement.
- All face coverings must be appropriate for the school setting and comply with applicable dress

code. Face coverings that contain offensive words or images that may substantially disrupt the educational process are prohibited. Face coverings that are part of costumes or cover the entire face are not appropriate, with the exception of face shields. Face coverings for staff shall comply with policies and guidelines on staff dress and grooming. Face coverings for students shall comply with policies and handbook provisions concerning student dress code. Currently, surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders. Employees who have an operational need to use respirators will be provided that equipment and training on how to use it.

- Face shields that wrap around the face and extend below the chin may be considered as an alternative where exemption applies. If a face shield is used in those instances, it should be worn against the forehead with no gap, wrap around the sides of the face, and extend below the chin. If unable to use a mask, increased attention shall be placed on social distancing, frequent hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer and increased cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Training

The district will provide training to staff and students on this policy and the use and care of face coverings along with other preventative measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

Duration of Policy

This policy is adopted on an interim and temporary basis consistent with current legal requirements and recommendations. In the event legal requirements and/or recommendations change, the Superintendent is authorized to align the requirements in this policy to current legal requirements for a period of 30 days, pending further Board action.

Legal References:

Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 FAQs-Face Shields (August, 2020)

Director's Order Requiring the Use of Facial Coverings in Child Education Settings (August 13, 2020)

Ohio Department of Health *COVID-19 Health Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 schools* (July 7, 2020)

Centers for Disease Control *Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19* (June 28, 2020)

Adopted: 8/31/2020