

Use of Face Coverings

Recognizing the importance of face coverings (masks) as one of the comprehensive measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Board will utilize the following guidance:

Students, staff, visitors, and contractors must wear a mask while indoors.

The Superintendent is authorized to transition to more restrictive means if there is evidence of significant disruption in the learning environment and/or there is concern for community health as conveyed by the local health department and area hospitals.

The Superintendent is authorized to transition to less restrictive measures if/when there is evidence of reduced concern for community health as conveyed by the local health department and area hospitals.

The Superintendent shall utilize district virus positivity rate, active quarantine census and student absence data when evaluating transitioning to more or less restrictive measures.

At minimum, face coverings should be cloth/fabric and be properly worn to cover an individual's nose, mouth, and chin. The Board directs the Superintendent to determine the need for face coverings to be provided in buildings where appropriate and necessary.

Exceptions: When masks are required, the following exceptions may apply:

- a. **Medical:** 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, and provides to the Superintendent proper medical documentation;
- b. **Hearing or Communication Disability:** The individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or has another disability, where an accommodation is appropriate or necessary;
- c. **Physical Activity:** 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;
- d. **Eating/Drinking:** The individual is seated and actively consuming food or beverage;
- e. **Certain Instruction:** The student and staff member can maintain distancing of at least six feet and removal of the facial covering is necessary for instructional purposes, including instruction in foreign language, English language for non-native speakers, and other subjects where wearing a facial covering would prohibit participation in normal classroom activities, and the student and staff member wear a facial shield; if a face shield is not possible, such as when playing an instrument, six feet distancing or more is needed;

- f. **Mask Break:** Students are able to maintain a distance of six feet or more and a mask break is deemed necessary by the educators supervising the educational setting;
- g. **Enclosed Space Alone:** The individual is alone in an enclosed space, such as an office; or

Proper Documentation: A staff member or student will be required to provide proper information or documentation if requesting not to wear a facial covering. In the case of a requested exemption for health or developmental reason, proper documentation must be provided from an appropriate medical professional (e.g., M.D., D.O., CPA, CNP).

Requests for exceptions shall be considered by the Superintendent/designee, who may request documentation justifying the exception. Exceptions may be denied or revoked when determined necessary to protect the health and safety of staff and students, as determined by the Superintendent. Decisions of the Superintendent are final.

General Provisions:

The District will not tolerate harassment of students who are wearing facial coverings, face shields, or those with recognized exemptions to the facial covering requirement and will appropriately discipline students or staff who harass or bully students with exemptions or engage in behavior that interferes with any student or staff member's ability to comply with this policy.

Failure or refusal to wear a required facial covering by a staff member or student, when required, may result in discipline in accordance with other District policies, handbooks, and/or codes of conduct, as applicable. If a student who is required to wear a facial covering does not have one, he or she will be provided an acceptable facial covering by a staff member.

This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in other District policies, handbooks or procedures. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to amend these requirements as necessary to meet federal and state guidelines. This policy may be modified by the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, who will consider all laws, regulations, guidance provided by the Ohio Department of Health and all the available science. The use of face coverings is one part of the comprehensive plan in place for student and staff health.

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