

<b>Book</b>	<b>Policy Manual</b>
<b>Section</b>	<b>8000 Operations</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Face Coverings/Mask Policy</b>
<b>Code</b>	<b>8406</b>
<b>Staus</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Adopted</b>	<b>September 21, 2020</b>

### **8406: FACE COVERINGS/MASK POLICY**

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.

#### **Staff and Volunteers**

All school employees and volunteers (including contractors) shall wear a face covering while working or present in any school building, facility or other area of a school campus, or while operating or present in any school owned vehicle with more than one person in the vehicle (including, but not limited to, buses and vans).

#### **Exceptions include when:**

- (1) Face coverings in the school setting are prohibited by law or regulation;
- (2) Face coverings are in violation of documented industry standards;
- (3) Face coverings are not advisable for health reasons;
- (4) Face coverings are in violation of the school's documented safety policies;
- (5) Face coverings are not required when the staff works alone in an assigned work area;
- (6) There is a functional (practical) reason for a staff member or volunteer to not to wear a face covering in the workplace.
- (7) An established sincerely held religious requirement exists that does not permit a facial covering.
- (8) Students may be exempted from this policy due to an established religious requirement that prohibits your child from wearing a face covering. Requests for exemptions shall be in writing with supporting documentation from the students clergy.

Schools must provide written justification to local health officials, upon request, explaining why a staff member is not required to wear a face covering. Requests for accommodations must be directed to a building administrator and exemptions must be in writing.

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

### **Students**

All students in Kindergarten through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade must wear a face covering while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility or other area of a school campus unless an exception applies.

This policy applies to students waiting outside school buildings before and after school, and to students waiting at bus stops.

Students shall wear face coverings at all times except for the following:

- (1) Students may be exempted from this policy due to documented medical, developmental, behavioral or individualized needs. Requests for exemptions should be in writing and accompanied with physician documentation and directed to the Superintendent.
- (2) Students may remove face coverings when appropriate social distancing measures are in place as determined by a teacher, coach or school administrator.
- (3) Students participating in athletics shall be subject to the current Ohio Department of Health orders regarding use of face coverings.
- (4) Students may be exempted from this policy due to an established religious requirement that prohibits your child from wearing a face covering. Requests for exemptions shall be in writing with supporting documentation from the students clergy.

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.

### **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:

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

### **General Rules for Face Coverings**

- (1) 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 shield (if requested) and cloth face covering. Staff may wear their own face covering.
- (2) Individuals may remove their face covering when eating or drinking.

- (3) 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 and face shields). Face coverings must cover an individual's nose, mouth, and chin.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.
- (6) All face coverings must be appropriate for the school setting and comply with applicable dress codes. Face coverings that contain offensive words or images or 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 be professional and appropriate for the school setting and comply with any applicable dress code. Face coverings for students shall comply with Board Policy 5511 – Dress and Grooming.
- (7) Face shields that wrap around the face and extend below the chin may be considered as an alternative where cloth face coverings would hinder the learning process.

### **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 those changes, pending further Board action.

### **FAQ**

**Can dividers be used and mask breaks given if students are less than 6 ft apart?** The reality is that most of us will never be able to maintain full student capacity if we are spacing students 6 ft apart.

**Could the above be used if students are 3-5 ft social distanced?** Yes, the trifold will give them the protection they need, just reinforce the fact that they should not be leaning over or around the barrier to talk to friends and classmates. If they are needing to do something in a team or group they should be masked at that time.

Legal References:           Ohio Department of Health *COVID-19 Health and 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)

## APPENDIX A

# Mask/Facial Coverings

**Masks/Facial Covering:** A "snug-fitting mask (or face covering) that closely covers the nose and mouth" is required to be worn at all times during the pandemic if we are conducting in-person school. Masks must be free of obscene, profane, gang related, pro drug/alcohol, pro tobacco, racial, hate, sexual undertone/suggestive in nature, or themes of death/violence. Face shields are permitted, but they do not take the place of a mask and may only be worn in addition to, not in lieu of, a mask.

Students are expected to bring their own masks. If a student arrives at school without a mask, one will be provided. However, it is the expectation that students will come with a suitable mask or cloth face covering.

As with all aspects of the dress code, the wearing of a mask is a basic rule. However, unlike other dress code items, adherence to these rules impacts the wellbeing of others and is, therefore, more crucial. Students who do not wear a mask will not be able to remain in the classroom. Our goal is to work in a positive way with students and families to ensure strict adherence to these rules, with the priority being safety. If students are not in compliance with this policy, the following disciplinary actions shall be enforced:

**1st Offense:** The student will receive a verbal warning and asked to wear the mask properly.

**2nd Offense:** The student will receive a written warning and parent/guardian may be advised of the situation.

**3rd Offense:** The student will receive 1 day In-School Suspension.

**4th Offense:** The student will receive 3 days Out of School Suspension.

**5th Offense:** The student will receive 5 days Out of School Suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion.

**\*\*\*At any time the student violates the policy, the student shall be removed from the classroom and/or sent home. Additionally, students who violate this policy may be required to move from the Orange Option to Black Option plan.**

**ALL EXEMPTIONS FOR THIS POLICY MUST BE APPROVED BY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.**

**Note: Modification to Student Code of Conduct**