

EBCFA - FACE COVERINGS

The District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice. A new or freshly laundered face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed. Masks must be either multiple-layer fabric face masks, including N-95 and/or KN-95 masks, with a tight weave, or paper surgical masks. Masks must fully cover both the nose and mouth. The following are not acceptable masks: bandanas, neck gaiters and buffs, and masks with exhalation valves. Masks will be required for all ages. Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

In the event the individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will **not** be required in the following circumstances:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- for students: when outdoors (including recess, outdoor classes/sports, and outdoor athletic events); *note that school buses and district transportation are **not** considered “outdoors” and face coverings are still required in those contexts;*
- for adults: fully vaccinated adults are not required to wear masks outdoors; unvaccinated adults are encouraged to wear masks outdoors if appropriate distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Only visitors approved by Administration who are in compliance with this policy will be permitted to enter the school building during school hours.

The Superintendent has the authority to amend this policy following MA state guidance, guidance from the Department of Health, DESE, or other governing authorities. The Superintendent shall notify the School Committee of such amendments that are made under such authority.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 -

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Considerations for Wearing Masks -

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Reopening Guidelines - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Mask Up MA! -

<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

http://miaa.net/gen/miaa_generated_bin/documents/basic_module/phaseivsteply_outhandadultamateursports51821.pdf

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements#effective-may-29:-updated-mask-requirements->

CROSS REF.: [JICA](#)- Student Dress Code

SOURCE: MASC - August 2020

Amended/Voted June 10, 2021