

FACE COVERINGS

The Concord and Concord-Carlisle School Districts are 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 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.

The importance of community cooperation for all safety measures, including wearing a mask cannot be understated. Anyone unwilling to follow these standards and protocols will leave the facility immediately. Students not adhering to our standards and protocols will complete the semester remotely.

All face coverings (whether disposable or reusable) must:

- Be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material, or has pre approval from the school nurse
- Fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- At this time, based on guidance from health authorities, neck gaiters, open-chin triangles bandanas and face coverings containing valves, mesh material or holes of any kind are not acceptable face coverings.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

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

A limited number of students with very specific and previously identified needs may be exempt from wearing face coverings. A written letter to the superintendent supported by a physician's statement and agreement from the Concord Board of Health is required for consideration.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;

- during outdoor physical education classes with prior submission of safety plan by teacher to administration;
- while outside.

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/guardian to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building and 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.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

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>