

BP 0470.1

COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

Face Covering Requirements and Exclusions from Attendance

The following policy establishes actions that will be taken by the district to provide a safe learning and working environment during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and shall supersede any conflicting language in existing district policies or administrative regulations until the Governing Board determines that the need for this policy no longer exists. The Board acknowledges that, due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, federal, state, and local orders impacting district operations are subject to change without notice. In the event that any federal, state, or local order may conflict with this policy, the order shall govern.

Face Covering Requirements

COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs¹

Face coverings must be used in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines, particularly in indoor environments, on school buses, and areas where physical distancing alone is not sufficient to prevent disease transmission.

- Teach and reinforce use of face coverings, or in limited instances, face shields.
- Students and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- Information should be provided to all staff and families in the school community on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be addressed.

STUDENTS

| Age | Face Covering Requirement |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Under 2 years old | No |
| 2 years old – 2nd grade | Strongly encouraged** |
| 3rd grade – High School | Yes, unless exempt |

**Face coverings are strongly encouraged for young children between two years old and second grade, if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.

¹ COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School Based Programs, last updated August 3, 2020 (<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools--en.pdf>)

- Persons younger than two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, anyone who is unconscious or incapacitated, and anyone who is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance are exempt from wearing a face covering.
- A cloth face covering or face shield should be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or outdoor recreation, or when it needs to be replaced. When a cloth face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the student's name and date) until it needs to be put on again.
- In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. Schools should develop protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus.

STAFF

- All staff must use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.
- In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.
- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings. Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.

California Department of Public Health Guidance²

The requirement to wear face coverings in school settings is set forth in the provisions from the COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School Based Programs set forth above. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings which also includes certain exemptions from wearing face coverings. Under the COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School Based Programs, schools are required to implement a policy for handling exemptions.

² Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings, release June 18, 2020, revised on June 29, 2020 (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf)

Under the CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings and as applicable for the school environment, **the following individuals are exempt from wearing a face covering:**

- Persons younger than two years old. These very young children must not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.
- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Persons for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

Note: Staff exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others should wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

Exclusions from Attendance

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each child entering a district school at any grade level adheres to district admission requirements and enrollment procedures including the face covering requirements under this policy. Failure to follow the face covering requirements without a documented exemption would constitute a clear and present danger to the safety or health of other students or school personnel.

The Superintendent or designee may exclude a student without prior notice to the parent/guardian if the Superintendent or designee determines that the presence of the student would constitute a clear and present danger to the safety or health of other students or school personnel.

However, in such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall send a notice as soon as reasonably possible after the exclusion.

Appeals from Exclusion

Upon exclusion of his/her child, a parent/guardian may meet with the Superintendent or designee to discuss the exclusion. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of

the Superintendent or designee to exclude his/her child, he/she may appeal the decision to the Governing Board.

The parent/guardian shall have an opportunity to inspect all documents upon which the district is basing its decision, to challenge any evidence and question any witness presented by the district, to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf, and to have one or more representatives present at the meeting.

(cf. AR 5112.2 – Exclusions from Attendance)