



Book Policy Manual

Section Special Update - July 2020

Title New Policy - Special Update - July 2020 - PROTECTIVE FACIAL COVERINGS DURING PANDEMIC/EPIDEMIC EVENTS

Code po8450.01

Status

8450.01 - PROTECTIVE FACIAL COVERINGS DURING PANDEMIC/EPIDEMIC EVENTS

During times of elevated communicable disease community spread (pandemic or epidemic), the Superintendent will issue periodic guidance through School Board plans/resolution(s) in alignment with Federal, State, and local public health officials and/or in accordance with governmental edicts or guidelines. In the case of health and safety emergencies, when there is a pandemic or epidemic, the School Corporation will follow the Pandemic and Epidemic Plan as established in Policy 8420.01 allowing for continuity of operations and establish necessary procedures and plans for re-opening to provide for a safe and healthy school environment.

School settings can be a source of community spread. Pursuant to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), wearing face masks/coverings is important during these times and can help mitigate the risk of exposure from person to person.

These re-opening plans will address matters of dress related to health, such as the wearing of face masks or face coverings. As such, during times of elevated communicable disease community spread, all Corporation staff, students, volunteers, and visitors (including vendors) must wear appropriate face masks/coverings on school grounds unless:

- A. not mandated by governmental guidelines or ~~() of this policy~~ **(X)** the Corporation-approved re-opening plan **[END OF OPTION];**
- B. It is unsafe to do so;
- C. doing so would significantly interfere with the Corporation's educational or operational processes; or
- D. an employee's Section 504 plan or a student's individualized education program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan provides otherwise.

☐ Face masks/shields will be provided by the Corporation to employees. Alternatively, employees may elect to wear their own face coverings if they meet the requirements ~~() of this policy~~ **(X)** the Corporation-approved re-opening plan, **[END OF OPTIONS]** as well as any requirements issued by State or local health departments.

All face masks/coverings shall meet the requirements of the appropriate dress/staff grooming policies.

When face masks/coverings are required by the Board, and no exception included ~~() in this policy~~ **(X)** in the Corporation-approved re-opening plan **[END OF OPTION]** has been applied, staff members who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with policies of the Board.

[NOTE: Optional language as this content can be included in the Corporation Approved re-opening plan]

☒ Face masks/coverings should:

- A. Fully cover the mouth, nose, and chin;
- B. Fit snugly against the side of the face so there are no gaps;
- C. Not create difficulty breathing while worn;
- D. Be held securely through either a tie, elastic, earloops, etc. to prevent slipping.

~~(-) Be a solid color and not include any logos or print other than the school logo (-) except that in the case of students with IEPs, the use of face masks/coverings with certain cartoon characters may be permitted if necessary to encourage the student to wear a face mask/covering.~~

Exceptions include:

- A. Face masks/coverings in the school setting are prohibited by law or regulation;
- B. Face masks/coverings are in violation of documented industry standards;
- C. Face masks/coverings are not advisable for health reasons;
- D. Face masks/coverings are in violation of the school's documented safety policies;
- E. Face masks/coverings are not required when the staff works alone in an assigned work area; or
- F. There is a functional (practical) reason for a staff member or volunteer not to wear a face mask/covering in the workplace.

The Board may be required to provide written justification to local health officials upon request explaining why a staff member is not required to wear a face mask/covering in the school. Therefore, if any exceptions are made to the requirement for face masks/coverings, the request for such exception must be submitted in writing to the individual's supervisor, and a decision on the request will be provided in writing.

Face Shields

Face shields that wrap around the face and extend below the chin can be considered as an alternative to face masks/coverings. Some situations where face shields would be useful include:

- A. When interacting with students, such as those with disabilities, where communication could be impacted;
- B. When interacting with English-language learners or when teaching a foreign language;
- C. Settings where face masks/coverings might present a safety hazard (i.e. science labs); or
- D. For individuals who have difficulty wearing a face mask / covering.

If individuals receive approval from the Corporation administration after discussing their request not to wear a face mask/covering/shield due to a physical, mental or developmental health condition, and/or if wearing a face mask/covering/shield would lead to a medical emergency or would introduce significant safety concerns, Corporation administration also may discuss other possible accommodations for the staff member. Such discussion shall follow Board policies and guidelines under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") and the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA").

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

[END OF OPTIONAL LANGUAGE]

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