

FACE COVERINGS

The Mansfield Public Schools 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 corona virus 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 students in grades K – 12+ and by all other individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed, with the exception of meals, mask breaks, and when alone in a work space. Students at Roland Green Pre-School are encouraged to wear a face covering at the discretion of their parents.

If a student, staff, or visitor does not have appropriate face covering, they will be provided with one by the school district.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to support the implementation of this policy, including types of face-coverings, alternatives to masks, and “mask-breaks” in accordance with CDC and MA DPH guidance.

Until further notice, all individuals shall be required to wear a face covering:

- while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus
- when riding in school-provided transportation
- while waiting outside school buildings, before and after school

Students shall wear masks at all times except for the following:

- Students may remove masks for eating or drinking when appropriate social distancing measures are in place as determined by a teacher or school administrator
- Students may remove masks when appropriate social distancing measures are in place as determined by a teacher or school administrator as in determined mask breaks
- Students may remove masks on a case-by-case basis for specific instructional needs and other activities, as determined by a teacher, coach, or administrator, in which case they will utilize appropriate social distancing measures

FACE COVERINGS

Exemptions

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.

Further exemptions may occur:

- With a written note from a physician for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face covering requirement by signing a waiver.
- By the school administrator in consultation with the school nurse due to a documented medical condition.
- Special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the school administrator.

If students are in violation of this policy or accompanying administrative procedures, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardian to determine whether an exception is appropriate. Failure to wear a mask or comply with mask procedures may result in loss of privilege to visit school grounds and buildings and may be subject to additional disciplinary action. Refusal to wear a mask will be considered insubordination and will be subject to the Code of Conduct outlined in the student handbook.

Violations of this policy or accompanying administrative procedures by employees will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy or accompanying administrative procedures 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](#)

REFS.: [How to Select, Wear, and Clean Your Mask, CDC, updated August 27, 2020](#)
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Considerations for Wearing Masks](#)
[Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Reopening Guidelines](#)

FACE COVERINGS

[Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Mask Up MA!](#)

SOURCE: MASC August 2020

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