

PROCEDURE 4316/5020/7340-P-1

ADOPTED: August 17, 2021
REVISED: September 8, 2021

RULES REGARDING FACE COVERINGS FOLLOWING THE 16 AUGUST 2021 SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE PITT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Following action taken by the Board of Education during the 16 August 2021 Special Called Meeting, the Superintendent is adopting this procedure for all students, employees, visitors, and contractors. Except for extramural athletics, which is addressed in Procedure 4316/5020/7340-P-2, this procedure governs all school activities and functions, including school sponsored activities and events, including off campus events.

I. Students

A. Requirement to Wear Face Coverings

Until further notice, all kindergarten through 12th grade students must wear face coverings (a) while attending school or a school function while inside a school building or facility, (b) while participating in an indoor off-campus school sponsored event, and / or (c) when riding on school buses or other school transportation vehicles. All face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the student. Students must wear face coverings at all times except for the following:

1. The student is actively eating or drinking;
2. The student is participating in a designated mask break;
3. The student is participating in recess outdoors;
4. The student is engaged in strenuous physical activity in gym class outdoors and able to maintain 6 feet of distance from other people;
5. The student has difficulty breathing or otherwise cannot tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health need as evidenced by documentation from a healthcare provider;
6. The student is unconscious; or
7. The student is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Documentation from a healthcare provider necessary to establish an exemption under Section (I)(A)(5) must specifically state that the student is not able to wear a face covering and further opine that the healthcare provider has discussed the ramifications of not wearing a face covering with the student's parent and that both believe that it will be safe for the student to attend school without wearing a face covering.

B. Consequences for Violating the Requirement

Students who do not meet the requirements of section (I)(A)(5) of this procedure and who refuse to wear or frequently remove their face coverings (i.e. full removal from the face, uncovering their nose, or uncovering their mouths) in violation of this policy shall receive consequences as follows:

1. For a first time offense, the student shall receive counseling on the importance of wearing a face covering.
2. For a second offense, the teacher or principal shall conduct a parent-teacher conference.
3. For a third offense and subsequent offenses, the student will receive a disciplinary consequence in accordance with the Code of Conduct and/or policy 4316.

Principals have discretion to impose a higher level consequence for an earlier offense based on the severity of the incident and the age of the student. A disciplinary consequence will not be imposed on students who forget to bring a face covering to school or cannot afford a face covering provided that the student complies with the policy after being supplied with an appropriate face covering by school staff.

II. Visitors

A. Requirement to Wear Face Coverings

Until further notice, all visitors, except for children under the age of 2, must wear face coverings (a) while present indoors in any school building or facility and / or (b) while participating in an indoor off-campus school sponsored event. All face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the visitor.

B. Consequences for Violating the Requirement

Visitors who violate this requirement shall not be permitted to be on the premises of the school building or facility.

III. Employees

A. Requirement to Wear Face Coverings

Until further notice, all employees, must wear face coverings (a) while working or attending a school function inside a school building or facility, (b) while participating in an indoor off-campus school sponsored event, and / or (c) when operating a school bus or other school transportation vehicle. All face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the employee.

Employees must wear face coverings at all times except for the following:

1. The employee is working in a classroom, office, or other enclosed space and

- no other person is present;
- 2. The employee is actively eating or drinking;
- 3. The employee is participating in a designated mask break;
- 4. The employee is supervising recess outdoors or another outdoor activity;
- 5. The employee is engaged in strenuous physical activity and able to maintain 6 feet of distance from other people;
- 6. The employee has a documented medical condition, has submitted a request for an exemption from this policy to the human resources department, and the human resources department has approved the request;
- 7. The employee is unconscious; or
- 8. The employee is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Employees who were approved for an exemption pursuant to Section III(A)(6) in the 2020-2021 school year must submit updated documentation from a healthcare provider supporting their continued need for an exemption no later than September 30, 2021.

B. Consequences for Violating the Requirement

Employees who violate this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

IV. Contractors

A. Requirement to Wear Face Coverings

Until further notice, all contractors, including Pre-K contractors, must wear a face coverings (a) while working or attending a school function inside a school building or facility and / or (b) when operating a school bus or other school transportation vehicle. All face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the contractor.

Contractors must wear face coverings at all times except for the following:

- 1. The contractor is working in a classroom, office, or other enclosed space and no other person is present;
- 2. The contractor is actively eating or drinking;
- 3. The contractor is engaged in strenuous physical activity and able to maintain 6 feet of distance from other people;
- 4. The contractor is unconscious; or
- 5. The contractor is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

B. Consequences for Violating the Requirement

Contractors who violate this policy will be subject to termination of contracts/ agreements, restricted from school property, and/or subject to other consequences as appropriate.

V. Permitted Face Coverings

A face covering covers the nose and mouth and can be secured to the head with ties or straps or wrapped around the lower face. Ideally, a face covering has a minimum of two or more layers, and at a minimum, a face covering must meet the CDC's guidelines governing face coverings. In accordance with the CDC's guidelines, this procedure requires all face coverings to be made of a solid material which blocks light when held up to a light source. Face coverings made of mesh or lace do not meet the requirements of this procedure. If necessary, the district is able to supply students with face coverings.

To meet the requirements of this policy, students, employees, visitors, and contractors may wear district supplied face coverings, disposable face coverings, clear plastic face coverings, or cloth face coverings that are solid colored, spirit wear, or have a small repeating pattern. Face coverings should not have lewd or obscene images and should not display any insignias or words. Photographic examples of permitted face coverings are depicted below.

Tie/ Strap Face Covering Example



Gaiter Style Face Covering Example



Disposable Face Covering Example



Spirit Wear Face Covering Example



VI. Face Shields

Plastic face shields that wrap around the wearer's face and extend below the chin may protect a wearer from respiratory droplets spread by others. Unlike with face coverings, it is not known if face shields provide any benefit in controlling the spread of respiratory droplets to others.

The CDC does not currently recommend a face shield as a replacement for a face covering. However, employees and students who qualify for an exception under section (I)(A)(5) or III(A)(6) of this procedure may wear a plastic face shield as a substitute for a face coverings.

VII. Scheduled Breaks From Wearing Face Coverings

Consistent with the 2020-2021 school year, school administrators and teachers will have the discretion to designate short mask break periods throughout the school day.