

Facemasks and Shields Protocol

For Reopening 2020



Schools are to follow these guidelines for facemasks and shields for students, staff and visitors:

Health and Safety

- Students in Grades 4 to 8 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes
- Cloth masks will be provided to students if a mask is not brought from home
- Outdoor times like recess will be used as opportunities to provide students with breaks from wearing masks within their cohorts
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged, but not required to wear masks in indoor spaces
- All students in Grade 3/4 split classes will be required to wear masks
- Students may be granted an exemption from wearing a non-medical mask for reasons related to a medical condition, mental health, sensory, breathing difficulties or other reasons deemed reasonable by the Principal (principals will follow Board guidance on exemptions). Medical confirmation is not required
- School-aged children and youth who are not able to remove their non-medical mask without assistance should not wear a non-medical mask due to safety concerns
- A non-medical mask is not a replacement for proven infection control methods such as hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, physical distancing
- Parents are asked to encourage their child(ren) to practice wearing masks and learn what type of mask is most comfortable for them
- Students are responsible for the safe use, cleanliness and disposal of their non-medical mask/cloth mask/face covering – schools will provide direction to families for washing and care of masks
- All staff will wear medical masks provided to them by the Board anytime they are indoors with students. They are not required to wear them when they are alone in their classroom or workspace
- Staff are not required to wear masks when supervising children outside, but should maintain proper spacing and distancing from students
- All staff will be provided face shields that are optional to wear – they may NOT take the place of a medical mask, but rather may only be worn in addition to a mask
- A face shield must be worn in conjunction with a mask when working closely with someone without a mask.

Communication and Instruction

- Students will be instructed in the importance of wearing a mask/face covering for the safety of self, students, staff and ultimately, community members.
- Proper mask wearing will be taught and reinforced through signage and verbal reminders will be provided to students. This will occur in an ongoing manner by both school staff and parents.
- Stigma, discrimination, or bullying may arise due to wearing or not wearing a mask/face covering. Schools will provide ongoing instruction and support about health, safety and respect for all.

- Communications with appropriate staff about mask/face covering accommodations and exemptions will be a priority.

Student Refusal

- It is the expectation that all students, where and when required, will wear their mask/face covering to protect themselves and others.
- Mask/face covering non-compliance includes not wearing a mask/face covering when required and not wearing a mask/face covering correctly (always covering nose and mouth).
- Students not wearing mask/face coverings where and when required will not be permitted in classrooms or in areas with other students.
- Progressive discipline measures will be adhered to when supporting students in mask/face covering wearing. Staff will:
 - Immediately move the student to a safe and isolated location.
 - Speak with the student, using a calm and supportive approach, to determine the reason for the non-compliance.
 - If non-compliance continues, parents will be contacted to pick the student up immediately. A meeting will occur between school administration and the parent.
- After three occurrences of non-compliance, in discussion with the appropriate Superintendent to consider the circumstances around the occurrences of non-compliance, the student may be required to engage in 100% At-Home Remote Learning.

Masks and Outdoor Transitions

- Schools should adopt procedures that ensure masks are not mixed up, soiled or lost.
- These routines may look different depending on the layout of the school, nearest exits and populations. Some examples include:
 - Students remove their masks (properly) and put into a labeled container which is left on their desk. Students leave the school for recess/nearest exit, while supervisors ensure students maintain physical distancing.
 - Teachers implement an outdoor mask bin (labeled for their class) which also contains hand sanitizer. Students bring their labeled container and wear mask outdoors – once outside they remove their mask properly, put in labeled container and into class bin. Students sanitize hands, remove mask from their container, and properly don the mask before re-entering school.
 - Students wear masks while transitioning and once outside, properly remove their mask and place it into a washable container or paper/plastic bag that can be kept in a pocket. Upon re-entering the school, they don their mask.