

August 17, 2020

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON USE OF FACE COVERINGS

Will face coverings be required in HCPS?

Yes, at this time, face coverings will be required when schools reopen and while on all Hillsborough County Public School property. This is a fluid process and the district will continue to monitor COVID-19 within our community for changes when necessary.

Why are face coverings required?

Face coverings are being required based upon best available data and input from local health authorities, the School Board, CDC guidelines, and stakeholder groups, including teachers and parents. According to the CDC, face coverings have been shown to be an effective tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19, along with social distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces. Nothing regarding this requirement is intended to violate the ADA or HIPAA protections for our students and staff. Each school site will have an assigned COVID Point Person to address all COVID-related issues.

Who will be required to wear face coverings?

All students, staff, visitors, and vendors will be required to wear face coverings unless an approved exemption applies or social distancing can be maintained.

Will people have to wear face coverings all day?

Face coverings will be required unless an approved exemption applies or social distancing per CDC guidelines is maintained (i.e., six feet apart).

Will there be exemptions?

Yes. The following approved exemptions apply: Persons eating or drinking; persons for whom a face covering would cause an impairment due to an existing health condition; persons observing social distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines; persons who need to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired and needs to see the person's mouth to communicate; teachers and students when a face covering would be an impediment to specific classroom instruction (i.e. when necessary for a specific lesson); and persons participating in recess and physical education classes while maintaining social distancing.

Will my child be required to wear a face covering when participating in athletics?

Students will be required to follow guidance issued by the Florida High School Athletic Association. This guidance document can be found at https://www.fhsaa.org/sites/default/files/orig_uploads/WeeklyUpdate/fhsaa_fall_sports_considerations_2020.pdf.

Will my child be required to wear a face covering when participating in co-curricular and extracurricular activities?

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Yes. Students will be required to wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained unless the function cannot be performed with a face covering.

What happens if a child forgets, loses, or damages their face covering?

If a student forgets, loses or damages their face covering, the District will provide a disposable face covering for that day while the requirement is in place.

What happens when a student refuses to wear a face covering?

Face coverings will be required for all students, staff, and visitors unless social distancing can be maintained or if an approved exemption applies. Every attempt will be made to ensure that the student and the student's parents understand the importance of wearing a face covering. The District will work with families to identify the more appropriate learning path if face coverings will not be worn.

What happens when a visitor or vendor refuses to wear a face covering?

Face coverings will be required to be worn by visitors and vendors unless an approved exemption applies.

Will face coverings be required everywhere on a school campus?

Face coverings will be required when CDC guidelines cannot be met unless an approved exemption applies.

Can students and staff bring their own face coverings?

Yes. Face coverings must comply with the dress code found in the Code of Student Conduct so that they do not disrupt school activities, are not obscene or otherwise inflammatory, and do not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others.

Will face coverings be required on buses?

Yes. It will be the student's responsibility to wear a face covering while on district transportation; disposable face coverings will be available for students who forget their reusable face covering.

Will SRO's be enforcing the face covering requirement?

No. The COVID Point Person at each school will work with students and staff to encourage and ensure compliance.

How will the face covering requirement apply to students with special needs?

Appropriate accommodations will be made based on the individualized needs of the students.

What is the correct method for wearing a face covering?

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Don't put the mask around your neck or up on your forehead

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- Don't touch the mask, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to disinfect
- **At the end of each day, please take off your mask carefully**
- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Reusable masks should be washed daily.
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing.