

MASK/FACE COVERINGS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF AND VISITORS

The Charlottesville City Schools administration is aware of the evolving need for mitigation measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in a manner that allows schools to open and operate as safely as possible. In consideration of the recommendations issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Department of Education, and the ~~Thomas Jefferson~~ **Blue Ridge** Health District Board, the CCS School Board is passing this policy for all students, staff, visitors, and vendors of Charlottesville City Schools. This policy also covers children and staff in child care programs offered by partners in Charlottesville City Schools buildings.

Students and employees shall wear a mask or face covering as described herein in all CCS buildings, in other CCS facilities, on school property/campus, or in a CCS vehicle or bus.

This policy will be in force ~~for the duration of the Governor's order regarding masks/face coverings~~ or until the pandemic is determined to be over and masks/face coverings are no longer recommended by the CDC.

Students

Until there is any revision in guidance from the CDC ~~or the Governor's order regarding masks/face coverings is removed~~, all students in pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade shall be required to wear a mask or face covering: (a) while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus, including at the time of school entry and exit; (b) on an approved trip at any location and, in the case of athletic events, at any home or away athletic site; and (c) when riding in school-provided transportation. All masks and face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the student and must not be open at the bottom. Face coverings may not contain holes, valves, sheer or mesh material. One should not be able to see through any cloth used as a face covering. Face shields without an enclosed bottom or an underlying mask or face covering are unacceptable unless there is an exception made due to medical or disability reasons such that a shield is the only face covering that can be worn. This policy applies to students waiting outside school buildings before and after school and to students waiting at bus stops. Students shall wear masks and face coverings at all times, except for the following:

- Students may remove masks and face coverings for eating or drinking;
- Students actively participating in physical education, active recess, sporting events, and practices do not need to wear a mask or face covering; however, masks or face coverings are required for participants not actively engaged in physical activity, a game, or practice, such as when standing on the sidelines, in a dugout, and off the field of play any time six (6') feet or other physical distancing measure as approved by the CCS is not possible;
- Students may remove masks and face coverings on a case-by-case basis for specific instructional needs or activities, or as otherwise determined by a teacher, including to provide

a brief respite from wearing a mask or face covering in which case the teacher will utilize six (6') feet or other physical distancing measure as approved by the CCS;

- Students may be exempted from this policy by the school principal due to a documented medical condition or developmental or other disability of the student, although it is recommended to wear a mask/face covering when possible; and
- Students may also be exempted from this policy due to special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the Superintendent/Designee or school administrators.

For students who refuse to or, otherwise do not wear a mask or face covering at school, on school transportation, or at a school function under this guidance, every attempt will be made to ensure that the students and the students' parents understand the importance of wearing a mask or face covering for their own safety and the safety of others. ~~The CCS administrator will, then, work with families to identify the more appropriate learning path, including virtual learning, if students fail to comply with the requirement to wear masks and face coverings as detailed above.~~

Expectation and enforcement of this policy shall be subject to the anti-discrimination provisions of Charlottesville City School Board Policy. Further, and to the extent practicable, staff should document compliance concerns regarding this policy by students' age, race, and gender and evaluate this information on a regular basis for bias enforcement disparities.

Staff

Until there is a revision in guidance from the CDC ~~or the Governor's order regarding masks/face coverings is removed regarding masks/face coverings~~, all employees of the CCS shall be required to wear a mask or face covering while working or attending a school function in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus and on school transportation. All masks and face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the employee and may not contain holes, valves, or mesh material. Employees shall wear masks and face coverings at all times, except for the following:

- Employees may remove masks and face coverings for eating and drinking;
- Employees may be exempted from this guidance by the school principal or the Superintendent/Designee due to a documented medical condition or disability of the employee although it is recommended to wear a mask/face covering when possible or
- Employees may remove masks and face coverings on a case-by-case basis for specific instructional needs and other activities, as determined by a teacher or school administrator, in which case the teacher or school administrator will utilize six (6') feet or other physical distancing measure as approved by the CCS.

Employees who refuse to wear a mask or face covering at school or at a school function under this guidance shall be subject to discipline under School Board Policy, Regulation, and applicable state law regarding the violation of School Board policies and regulations.

Visitors and Vendors

Until there is a revision of guidance regarding masks/face coverings, all visitors and vendors to CCS shall be required to wear a mask or face covering while present in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus.

Children and Staff in Child Care Programs

The requirement to wear a mask or face covering in accordance with the terms of this policy shall also apply to all children age two (2) and above and staff providing child care services in CCS schools, on a CCS school campus, or in other facilities in which the CCS is operating a child care program for the benefit of its employees.

Adopted: September 3, 2020

Revised:

Legal Reference: Virginia Code, Section 22.1-305, Section, 22.1-307

Cross References: GBCA Employee Discipline
 JFC Student Conduct
 JFCC Student Conduct on School Buses
 JHCC Communicable Diseases

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON USE OF MASKS/FACE COVERINGS

Will face coverings be required by CCS?

Yes, at this time, face coverings that cover the nose and mouth will be required when schools reopen and while on all CCS property or at CCS-sponsored events. This is an evolving process and CCS will continue to monitor COVID-19 within our community for changes as necessary.

Why are face coverings required?

Face coverings are being required based upon best available data and input from Virginia Department of health, VDOE, local health authorities, 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 physical 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.

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 physical distancing can be maintained.

Will students, staff, and visitors need to bring their own face-coverings or will they be provided by the CCS?

Although each school will have a limited supply of disposable face coverings for those who forget or lose their face-coverings, students, staff, and visitors should supply and wear their own face coverings.

Will people have to wear face coverings all day?

Face coverings will be required unless an approved exemption applies or for a case-specific instructional purpose or activity as long as physical distancing is maintained i.e. , six (6')

feet apart or other physical distancing measure approved by CCS. Mask breaks may be provided for teachers and students but masks should be worn at all other times.

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 a medically documented existing health condition or developmental or other disabilities; persons observing physical distancing measures determined by the CCS; students, on a case-by-case basis, for specific instructional needs determined by the teacher as long as appropriate physical distancing is maintained; and students actively participating in physical education, sporting events, and practices. However, face coverings are required for participants not actively engaged in a game or practice, such as when standing on the sidelines, in a dugout, and off the field of play any time six (6') feet or other physical distancing measure as approved by CCS is not possible.

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

If a student forgets, loses or damages their face covering, CCS will provide a disposable face covering for the student's use that day.

What happens when a student refuses to wear a face covering or continually fails or forgets to bring a face covering to school, including school transportation?

Face coverings will be required for all students, staff, and visitors unless physical 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. CCS will work with families to identify the more appropriate learning path, including virtual learning, if face coverings will not be worn.

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

Visitors and vendors who refuse, or otherwise, fail to wear a mask or face covering will not be permitted to enter the school building or will be directed to leave immediately if already within the school building.

Will face coverings be required everywhere on a school campus?

Face coverings will be required everywhere on a school campus and at class trip or function

venues and athletic sites when physical distancing measures approved by CCS cannot be met unless an exemption under the policy applies.

Are there any rules regarding the face coverings that students may wear?

Yes. Any face coverings that disrupt the education environment because they contain language or images that: (1) are vulgar, discriminatory or obscene; (2) promote illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, or drug paraphernalia; (3) threaten, intimidate, or harass, including Confederate images and other symbols of hatred, such as the swastika and gang symbols; or (4) endanger the health or safety of themselves or others are prohibited.

Will face coverings be required on school buses and at bus stops?

Yes. It will be the student's responsibility to wear a face covering while on any CCS transportation or at designated school bus stops. Disposable face coverings will be available on the bus for students who forget their reusable face covering.

How will this policy be enforced or monitored by CCS?

The School Nurse and Principal at each school will work with students and staff to encourage and ensure compliance. Students who continue to not comply with this guidance will be recommended for a virtual program in lieu of in-classroom learning. In addition, the measures specified for compliance with the code of student conduct while riding a bus may also be imposed.

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. Any accommodations will be documented in the student's file.

Will this policy apply to children and staff in any child care program that CCS may operate for its employees in a CCS school or other facility?

Yes, the policy will be applicable in those circumstances as well as students during the school day.

What is the recommendation for the care/hygiene of masks/face covering?

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It is recommended that students have a clean mask/face covering daily and that cloth mask/ face coverings be washed daily. Students and staff should have more than one mask in the event one is misplaced or is not usable. Students should not exchange masks/face coverings. If that occurs, the teacher should make certain a clean mask is provided for the students.