

FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

Code **ADD** Issued **08/20**

To reduce the spread of the pandemic (COVID-19), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that a face covering/mask be worn in public settings when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. In consideration of this guidance and in pursuance of the ultimate goal of returning to and maintaining full five-day face to face instruction, Rock Hill Schools will require all persons to wear a face covering/mask at all times while inside district buildings or on district transportation.

Definition

A *face covering/mask* is a piece of fabric, cloth, or other material that covers the wearer's nose, mouth, and chin simultaneously and is secured to the wearer's face by elastic, ties, or other means. Acceptable face coverings/masks may be homemade, and they may be reusable or disposable.

Mask with one-way valves or vents will not be allowed based on CDC recommendations.

Staff Members

Staff members will wear a face covering/mask while on district property or conducting business on behalf of the district (e.g. driving a bus, conducting a home visit, supervising athletic events, etc.). Staff members include, but are not limited to, salaried and hourly employees, school volunteers, student teachers, and interns. The district will provide masks to staff members and expects that reusable masks will be washed regularly to ensure maximum protection.

Students

All students, *Pre-K through 12th grade*, will wear face coverings/masks while on district property, on district transportation, or attending a school related activity (e.g. athletic events, etc.). The district will provide masks to students who are not able to provide their own and expects that reusable masks will be washed regularly to ensure maximum protection.

By adopting this policy, the Rock Hill Schools Board of Trustees expresses its intent that all persons wear a face covering/mask at all times, while inside district buildings or on district transportation. However, for practical purposes face coverings/masks may be removed on a limited basis for the following activities:

- Mealtimes
- Outdoor recess where students can maintain a physical distance of at least six (6) feet
- Administration of medication
- Children younger than 2 years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing due to a medical emergency
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance

Visitors

Visitors to district buildings will be limited in accordance with administrative rule KI-R, *Visitors* and recommendations provided by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Visitors include,

PAGE 2 - ADD - FACE COVERING

but are not limited to, parents/legal guardians, contract service providers, and delivery persons. Visitors will wear a face covering/mask while on district property. Visitors will be asked to leave district property if they refuse to wear a face covering/mask. All efforts will be made to keep necessary visitors to a minimum, including the use of virtual or telephone meetings with families and guests. Parents meeting on-site with school staff must follow social-distancing guidelines and wear masks when appropriate.

Accommodations

Students (or parents/legal guardians) who request to be exempted from wearing a face covering/mask may be offered remote or virtual learning for the period that face coverings/masks are required on district property. Students (or parents/legal guardians) must petition the school's principal in writing for this exemption and provide supporting rationale for this request. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Harassment and Bullying

The district will not tolerate harassment of anyone wearing face coverings/masks or those with recognized exemptions to the face covering/mask requirement and will appropriately discipline students, staff, or visitors who engage in behavior that interferes with any student or staff member's ability to comply with this policy.

Discipline

Failure or refusal to wear a face covering/mask by a staff member or student may result in discipline in accordance with district policy and codes of conduct, as applicable.

This policy is intended to be effective until further notice and to align with district policies, including, but not limited to, student and staff dress codes. To the extent this policy does not align, this policy will supersede others in accordance with applicable law and regulations in effect at the time. For clarification on potential conflicts between policies, the interpretation of the superintendent or his/her designee is final.

The board authorizes the superintendent or his/her designee to amend these requirements as necessary to meet health and safety guidelines.

Adopted 8-24-20

References

CDC Vents and Valves:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html#:~:text=CDC%20recommends%20that%20people%2C%20including,measures%20are%20difficult%20to%20maintain.>

SCDHEC COVID-19 Interim Guidance for School Operations:

https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/School_Operations_COVID-19_Interim%20Guidance-5.18.20.pdf

SCDHEC Use of Cloth Face Coverings (COVID-19):

<https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/use-cloth-face-coverings-covid-19>

Remote Learning- means educational or instructional programming that mostly occurs away from the physical school building and is delivered in a student-focused manner that addresses a student's educational needs. This includes both non-technology-based learning (e.g., paper packets, in-person tutoring) and "distance education" as defined in ESEA section 8101(14)