



COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY

POLICY:	808
ADOPTED:	08/17/20

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for employees, students, and other persons (including visitors, guests, contractors, etc.) present on school property to wear face coverings in classrooms, preschool, child care settings and other indoor areas, as well as outdoor areas where a physical distance of 6 feet cannot be maintained between persons, in order to minimize exposure to COVID-19.

Further information on current exceptions and alternatives to face coverings for employees, students, and other persons can be found in the ISD 199 808 PR COVID-19 Face Covering Procedure.

This policy is based on current guidelines from the Minnesota Governor, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). This policy is subject to change due to new requirements and recommendations from the state, MDH, and MDE.

II. General Statement of Policy

- A. The policy of the school district is to comply with Executive Order 20-81, Executive Order 20-82, and applicable face covering requirements from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Department of Education.
- B. Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer does not know they are infected.
- C. Unless an exception described in 808 PR COVID-19 Face Covering Procedures applies, all students, staff, and other people present indoors in school buildings and district offices or riding on school transportation vehicles are required to wear a face covering.
- D. A violation of this policy occurs when any student, staff, or other person present in a school building, in the school district office, or on a school transportation vehicle fails to wear a face covering, unless an enumerated exception applies.

III. Definition of Face Covering

- A. A face covering must be worn to cover the nose and mouth completely, should

not be overly tight or restrictive, and should feel comfortable to wear. The following are included in the definition of face covering:

1. Paper or disposable mask;
 2. Cloth face mask;
 3. Religious face covering; and
 4. Medical-grade masks
- B. A face shield is a clear plastic barrier that covers the face and allows visibility of facial expressions and lip movements for speech perception. A face shield should extend below the chin anteriorly, to the ears laterally, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece.
- C. Masks that incorporate a valve designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh masks, or masks with openings, holes, visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow exhaled droplets to be released into the air.

IV. Face Covering Appearance Parameters

- A. The parameters concerning facing covering appearances are intended to:
1. Maintain a safe environment where face coverings are required.
 2. Ensure all employees, students, and other persons are treated equitably.
 3. Prevent employees, students and other persons from wearing face coverings that are lewd, vulgar, obscene, offensive, defamatory, profane, advocate violence or harassment against others, or are likely to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities including, but not limited to, profanity and hate speech.
- B. It is not the intention of this policy to abridge the rights of employees, students, and other persons to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing face coverings on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane or do not advocate violence or harassment of others.
- C. These face covering requirements will apply to all in-person regular school days, as well as to all relevant school-related events and activities.

- D. When, in the judgement of the administration, an employee, student or other person's face covering interferes with or disrupts the educational process or school activities, or poses a health or safety threat, the employee, student or other persons will be directed to make modifications.

V. Implementation

- A. This policy will be conspicuously posted in each school building and administrative office and communicated to students, staff, families, and potential visitors to the school building.
- B. The school district will provide face coverings and/or face shields to employees and students. Employees and students may choose to wear their own face covering as long as it covers the nose and mouth. To the extent practicable, the school district will maintain an extra supply of face coverings for people who forget to bring their face covering.
- C. The school district will teach and reinforce the use of face coverings and/or face shields for students and staff throughout the school day, including on transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and generally when on school grounds.
- D. Individuals who cannot tolerate a face covering due to a medical condition or disability related condition may be permitted to utilize alternative options such as a face shield or other reasonable accommodation. The Superintendent or designee shall have discretion to determine whether an employee, parent, or community member qualifies for a reasonable accommodation and the accommodation to be provided. For a student with a medical condition or disability, the student's education team (i.e. IEP team, Section 504 team, health plan team) will determine whether the student qualifies for a reasonable accommodation and the accommodation to be provided. As a condition to granting a reasonable accommodation, the school district may require an individual to provide a physician's note and/or other relevant information or with respect to the condition or circumstance. Requests for reasonable accommodations from the face covering requirement shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- E. All face coverings shall meet the requirements of applicable dress code policies and/or codes of conduct. To the extent the face covering requirements of this policy conflict with Policy 504 – Student Dress and Appearance, this Policy shall control.

- F. The school district will make available distance learning to its enrolled students who may be medically vulnerable or otherwise unwilling to return to in-person or hybrid learning.

VI. Enforcement; Consequences for Non-Compliance

- A. In order to promote the health and safety of employees, students and members of the community, and make available a safe environment that is conducive to learning, compliance with this policy is necessary.
- B. Employees who fail or refuse to comply with this policy may be subject to discipline, as appropriate, up to and including the termination of employment.
- C. Students who fail or refuse to comply with this policy may be subject to discipline or removal from school property. Students unwilling to participate in in-person or hybrid learning in compliance with this policy will be offered distance learning.
- D. The school district may, in its discretion, report violators of this policy to law enforcement. Any individual who willfully violates Emergency Executive Order 20-81 or 20-82 is guilty of a petty misdemeanor and upon conviction must be punished by a fine not to exceed \$100. (NOTE: This does not apply to: (1) children younger than 14 years old; or (2) students 14 years old and older who are enrolled in a school identified in Paragraph 12 of Emergency Executive Order 20-81, and who are on the premises of the school for educational purposes).

Legal References: Emergency Executive Order 20-81
Emergency Executive Order 20-82
Minn. Stat. § 12.45 (Governor's Orders and Rules, Effect)
Minn. Stat. § 12.45 (Violations; Penalties)

Cross References: Policy 807 - Health and Safety Policy
Policy 504 - Student Dress and Appearance
808PR - COVID-19 Face Covering Procedures