

Face Coverings

General Rule – Face Coverings Required

The School Board acknowledges the continuing need to follow the Joint Guidance¹ issued by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) with respect to health and safety protocols for the return to in-person instruction. Accordingly, except for individuals younger than 2 years of age, any individual present in any building, facility or transportation vehicle (i.e. bus) owned, operated or used by the District, shall at all times wear a face covering, even when social distancing is maintained.

When Face Coverings May Be Removed

Face coverings may be removed when:

1. Individuals are eating and/or drinking in spaces and at times so designated by the District;
2. Teachers and students are engaged in band activities necessitating such removal;
3. Individuals are outside and social distance (at least six feet apart) is maintained; or
4. Individuals are having trouble breathing.

Reasonable Accommodations

Individuals who cannot tolerate a face covering due to a medical condition or disability related condition, or who present other bona fide reasons for not being able to wear a face covering, 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, visitor, or third-party individual qualifies for a reasonable accommodation. For a student with a medical condition or disability, the student's education team (i.e. IEP team, 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 District may require an individual to provide a physician's note and/or other relevant information, documents, or certifications with respect to the condition or circumstance. Requests for reasonable accommodations from the face covering requirement shall be assessed in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

What Constitutes A Face Covering/Additional Resources

For purposes of this section, "face covering" means a cloth face covering, N95 mask, surgical mask, or other material that fully covers the nose and mouth and is approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For additional information and resources regarding face coverings, please see:

Illinois Dept. of Public Health - <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/mask-use>

¹ <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Part-3-Transition-Planning-Phase-4.pdf>

CDC DIY Cloth Face Coverings (April 4) – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

CDC Recommendations for Cloth Face Covers – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

U.S. Surgeon General How to Make Your Own Face Covering (YouTube) – <https://youtu.be/tPx1yqvJgf4>

CDC Cloth Face Covers FAQ – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html>

Consequences for Violating Policy

An individual's refusal to wear a face covering in accordance with this policy shall constitute a violation of the District's applicable rules of conduct, and may subject the individual to disciplinary action and/or prevent the individual from entering the District's buildings, facilities or transportation vehicles until the individual complies with this policy. Face covering designs and images must comply with the District's Student Appearance Policy and must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety and decency. The Superintendent or designee shall apply and enforce this policy.

Application and Duration of Policy

This policy shall apply any time ISBE and/or IDPH Joint Guidance recommends that face coverings be used in Illinois schools. Upon any change in or withdrawal of the Joint Guidance, the School Board hereby delegates to the Superintendent authority to establish temporary rules and procedures, and/or to suspend this policy, consistent with such change or withdrawal.