

**PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE REGARDING:
Face Coverings, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and Application of Code of
Conduct Necessitated by COVID-19**

Purpose:

The Superintendent of Schools has been directed and authorized to implement the School Board's recent emergency rule, in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19, to reduce the risk of exposure, and to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and the community. In accordance with the restrictions and purposes set forth in that emergency rule, along with any restrictions set forth by Florida and Federal law, the Superintendent, with assistance of District staff (hereinafter, collectively referred to as "District"), has created and hereby directs staff to implement procedures set forth herein.

Face Covering and Social Distancing and Hygienical Requirements:

All employees, contractors, visitors, and students **MUST** wear a mask or other face covering while on school property and/or engaged in school activities. This rule of general application is subject to the enumerated exemptions and exceptions set forth herein. Please review this important information regarding additional requirements and the safe use of face coverings.

Proper social distancing **MUST** always be observed to the maximum extent possible. Students, staff, and visitors must remain six (6) feet away from persons that are not members of their household whenever feasible and possible.

All individuals should wash their hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, which has been placed throughout the school buildings.

Conduct:

Additionally, in an effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19, and to reduce the risk of exposure, the following conduct is identified as prohibited and contrary to Policy:

Level I

- Persons that are exhibiting symptoms such as an elevated temperature, fever, coughing, sneezing, or flu-like symptoms are not permitted on School Board-owned property or at school-sponsored events.

- Students, staff, contractors, and visitors who are not members of the same household must engage in proper social distancing, which requires them to remain at least six (6) feet apart when possible and feasible.

- Students, staff, contractors, and visitors must utilize and wear face coverings in a manner that is consistent with the School Board's emergency rule and these procedures. Students that refuse to abide by these face covering requirements should be counseled, along with their parent/guardian(s), regarding that behavior.

Level II

- Students may not steal, hide, vandalize, destroy, or otherwise intentionally interfere with another person's ability to wear a face covering or personal protective equipment.
- Facial coverings and personal protective equipment that are not being utilized under any of the permissible circumstances contained in this rule are to be stored in the owner's pocket or on their person. Such coverings or equipment are not to be laid on tables, desks, drawers or any other location.
- Facial coverings and personal protective equipment that are not new and unused are not to be shared.
- Students may not purposefully engage in conduct that would lead to the intentional spread of COVID-19, or who otherwise behave in a manner that could lead a reasonable person to believe that they are attempting to cause the intentional spread of COVID-19.
- The usage, possession, and sharing of tobacco products, dip, chew, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vape-pens, and similar items are of increased concern during the COVID-19 emergency.
- Spitting on School Board-owned property in areas trafficked by persons is not permitted during the COVID-19 state of emergency.
- Students who are not members of the same household should not share writing utensils, eating utensils, drinks, snacks, or food in such a way that could lead to an increased risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Students that are not members of the same household are to avoid public displays of affection such as hugging, kissing, and otherwise being in close proximity that is not consistent with social distancing.

Consequences:

School officials and Staff are to apply the following procedures in response to the above identified conduct:

Procedures. The response to prohibited conduct is recommended to be administered progressively as the specific circumstances warrant as follows:

- The "counseling" sessions set forth above must consist of the following, at a minimum:
 - o At least one, but no more than three, verbal warnings or reminders to the student by staff;
 - o After the above warnings or reminders have been provided, then there must be an in-person, telephonic, or virtual conference with both the student and the parent/guardian(s) simultaneously;

- During the conference with the student and parent/guardian(s), there will be a required viewing of a CDC video as well as review of the CDC guidance;
 - During the conference, the parent/guardian(s) will be notified that continued noncompliance with the emergency rule may result in the student being removed from the brick and mortar school, and being educated utilizing one of the virtual or distance learning opportunities made available by the School Board.
- Prior to changing the educational location of a student due to non-compliance with the emergency rules and procedures, administration shall:
 - Submit the required documentation to SSPS Compliance for review and request consideration that the student be moved to MySchool Online or another distance learning opportunity made available by the School Board;
 - SSPS Compliance will review the request/documentation and determine if the requested change of educational location is appropriate;
 - If approved by SSPS Compliance, the school will notify the parent/guardian and transition the student to MySchool Online or another distance learning opportunity made available by the School Board.
 - With regard to all prohibited conduct, it is contemplated that any removal of a student from the brick and mortar educational environment is a non-disciplinary change in educational location for the purposes of protecting students and staff, and the student is not to be disciplined for these actions. However, particularly with regarding to the conduct identified as Level II, to the extent that the student becomes combative, disrespectful, or disruptive as a result of the situation, or otherwise engages in a behavior that is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct (SCOC), then the student may be disciplined for such behavior according to the SCOC. Non-Students that refuse to engage in social distancing are to be removed from School Board-owned property and may be trespassed when administration feels it is appropriate.
 - Administrators are directed to take any and all reasonable steps in preparing and maintaining schools and School Board-owned property in such a way as to fulfill and implement the provisions and purposes of the School Board's emergency rule as well as the content of this process and procedures document.

Additional Guidance:

When to Wear/Remove a Face Coverings:

- Remember, COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through speaking, coughing, or sneezing.
- The face covering must cover your nose and mouth completely.
- A face covering is required on all school buses, in all District buildings, in all school buildings and during all school-sponsored events and activities, and at any time that a person is on School Board-owned property except as otherwise stated herein. This requirement is applicable to all students, employees, contractors, parent/guardian(s), and visitors on School Board-owned property and/or attending a School Board-sponsored event.

- Athletes are encouraged, but not required, to wear face coverings during practice and play. Students participating in Physical Education class will be required to wear a face covering unless engaged in outdoor activities where proper social distancing can be maintained. Staff must take into account the need to wear face coverings during Physical Education classes when indoors or when social distancing cannot be maintained outdoors, and the activities must be such that are appropriate and consistent with face covering usage.
- Everyone is responsible for supplying their own face coverings and optional personal protective equipment (PPE). School buildings will be stocked with a limited number of disposable face masks for emergency situations only.
- The face covering should be put on upon arrival at any school or District building before exiting your vehicle in the parking lot when proper social distancing is not possible.
- Face coverings must be worn on the bus. Those students taking a bus to school must keep the face covering over their mouth and nose until they have exited the bus and have entered a circumstance listed above where removal of the mask is permissible. Students taking a bus home must keep the face covering over their mouth and nose until they have exited the bus and should not remove the same until they can properly social distance.
- The face covering must remain over the mouth and nose at all times while inside all buildings, when working in or walking through both indoor and outdoor common areas such as hallways, stairways, and elevators, and whenever you are in any room, including classrooms, or enclosed area where people are present.
- Face covering may be removed outdoors where social distances of 6 feet exists, when in a room alone with the door closed, and at the end of the day after exiting the building when social distances of 6 feet exists.
- Since eating and drinking with a face covering in place is not possible, it can be removed during meal or snack times. The practice of “cohorting” and/or social distancing of at least 6 feet is still recommended during these times.
- Schools will create “mask break” opportunities for students where appropriate.

Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment:

- For the purpose of this rule, face coverings will be interpreted broadly to include items such as masks, scarfs, bandannas, fishing buffs, and other items made of a suitable and safe material that will cover the wearer’s nose and mouth and prevent or reduce the release of respiratory droplets from the wearer’s mouth or nose.
- Face coverings must cover both the nose and mouth. Face coverings must be worn in accordance with established guidelines. Ineffective mesh face coverings or purposefully wearing face coverings incorrectly or punching holes in them or otherwise modifying them in such a way that degrades effectiveness is prohibited.
- Face coverings and personal protective equipment may not be worn in a manner that conceals the wearer’s face. Face coverings such as ski masks, gas masks, Halloween masks, costume masks, ninja masks, pantyhose, full face masks, or other face coverings that obstruct a wearer’s vision or face are not allowed absent a legally protected right.
- Face coverings and personal protective equipment must otherwise comply with the applicable standards of dress as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, and shall not contain profane, offensive, or disruptive subject matter thereon. Failure to abide with this provision will subject the student wearer to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct

and the student may be sent home when the mask contains content that would be inappropriate for continued use in the educational environment. Non-students may be removed from the school or School Board-owned property for failure to comply with this provision.

- Face coverings and personal protective equipment must be utilized by one person alone. Such coverings and equipment should not be shared.
- Face coverings and personal protective equipment may not be utilized in a manner that disrupts the educational environment. Any disruption of the educational environment may subject the student to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

Proper Care of Your Face Covering:

If using a disposable face covering, it should be discarded after each use.

Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use, at least once per day. Use detergent and hot water. Dry the face covering completely on your dryer's highest heat setting. If you do not have a dryer, dry the face covering in direct sunlight if possible. If you must reuse your face covering before you wash it, wash your hands after you put it back on and do not touch your face. Throw away cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover your nose and mouth
- Are stretched out or do not stay on your face
- Have damaged ties or straps
- Have holes or tears in the fabric
- Have been exposed to or contaminated by COVID-19

Permissible and Optional Personal Protective Equipment and Precautions:

As the situation regarding COVID-19 changes, the District, parents, students, and staff may find it important and necessary to utilize other forms of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), which may include, but is not limited to gloves, face shields, clear or tinted eyewear, respirators, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer or third parties from infection. To the extent that the usage of such items does not otherwise violate the other provisions contained in the emergency rule or these procedures, or otherwise create a substantial and material disruption of the educational environment, then the District may allow such additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be permitted with prior approval.

To the extent that the use of PPE becomes prevalent, then the District may amend these procedures document to provide further guidance on the use of PPE.

Parent/guardian(s) of Middle School and High School students are permitted and encouraged to supply their children with anti-bacterial disinfectant wipes, which their children can utilize to clean their workspaces both prior to, and after utilization of the workspace. The schools will also be disinfecting workspaces throughout the day. However, this additional precautionary cleaning can only help to keep our students and schools safe. Given the age and maturity of elementary school students, it would not be appropriate for them to maintain and utilize such cleaning supplies. As such, it is incumbent on their schools and staff to take reasonable steps to clean and disinfect the workspaces of elementary school students.

Medical Exceptions:

There are certain medical conditions for which wearing a face covering is contraindicated. All requests for a reasonable accommodation from the requirement to wear a face mask will be considered in accordance with the District's policies and procedures as well as all applicable laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, *et seq.*, § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, *et seq.* and/or any other applicable federal, state or local laws.

- Employees who have an underlying medical condition that impacts their ability to wear a face covering should contact his/her worksite supervisor or the Office of Employee Relations to request an accommodation. Medical documentation will be required for a reasonable accommodation that would exempt an employee from wearing a face covering to be granted.
- Students with a medical or mental health condition that impacts their ability to wear a face covering should address the request with his/her individual school (see additional information, below).

Disabled/Exceptional Students, Young Children and Those Unable to Wear Facial Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment:

The CDC recognizes that certain persons in our society are not capable of safely wearing a face covering or personal protective equipment. Based on the CDC guidelines, the following persons are exempted from the face covering requirements of this rule:

- Persons younger than 2 years old;
- Persons that are not conscious, or who do not otherwise have control over their bodily movements;
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance;
- Persons that have a documented medical condition, for which a licensed medical provider has provided a written statement exempting the person from this face covering exemption (See Medical Exceptions section, above).
- Persons that have a disability, an IEP, or a Section 504 Plan, and as a result of that disability, the student is not able to wear or tolerate a face covering.
- Flexibility and exceptions are required for certain groups of students:
 - Students with a documented medical or mental health conditions that would prevent their ability to wear a face covering;
 - Students with documented cognitive or physical impairments that would prevent their ability to remove face covering independently or to communicate;
 - Students diagnosed with asthma or other respiratory conditions (tracheostomy);
 - Students with documented sensory processing disorders who have an inability to tolerate cloth on their face;
 - Students who are unable to refrain from touching the mask therefore, increasing the risk of exposure.
- Unless a student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Plan, or an Individual Health Plan (IHP) which makes clear that the student should be exempted from the face covering requirement, to be exempt from the face covering requirement, the

parent/guardian(s) must present a doctor's note, which states that the student is not able to safely or reasonably utilize a face covering during the school day due to a medical condition or disability.

- Recommended Procedure when a Student has been Exempted from the Facial Covering Requirement:
 - To the extent applicable, documentation of the impairment should already be in place from a 504 or IEP staffing. If neither are present documentation needs to be generated by a physician and provided to the school clinic assistant by the parent. A copy of the documentation should be attached to the student's current IEP or Section 504 plan until the state of emergency created by COVID-19 expires.
 - The clinic assistant will provide the school nurse (RN) a copy of the documentation from the medical provider and maintain the original in the clinic.
 - As appropriate, the school nurse will develop a special needs report indicating student's mask exemption and share with school staff.
 - The student list will be made available to a clerical team member for issuing the lanyard/badge.
 - Considerations for managing spaces with students that cannot wear masks
 - Maintain a six-foot distance when possible;
 - Staff must wear a face covering and should wear a face shields, gloves when working with students without face coverings;
 - Increase frequency of hand washing of the exempt student and others who come into contact with that student;
 - Follow updated guidance and training provided by the school nurse in a timely fashion; and
 - Monitor unmasked students for symptoms during the day
- Students with a disability who are protected by the IDEA or Section 504 have certain substantive and procedural protections under Federal and Florida Law. As such, schools may not unilaterally change a disabled student's placement. To the extent that a change of location would be a change of placement the school and District staff must comply with the mandates of the IDEA and Section 504. To the extent that schools experience situations in which an exceptional/disabled student is not complying with the safety requirements set forth in these procedures, and as a result is presenting a real and reasonable risk to the health, safety, and welfare of others, then the school is directed to contact the Office of Student Support Programs and Services, who will then act in conformance with all applicable laws and guide the school with the available remedies.
- Thus usage of face coverings by staff may have an adverse impact on certain students. Some students may be alarmed by the masks and may need assistance in acclimating to staff's use of the same. Hearing impaired students may be substantially impacted by an inability to hear and read the lips of their instructors due to the facial coverings. The School Board directs staff to consider these, and other possible impacts, and to timely enact courses of action to minimize the adverse effects of staff utilizing face coverings in the presence of students with disabilities.

Accommodations based on Religion and other Protected Activities:

The School Board's emergency rule, these procedures, and their implementation are not to disrupt, interfere with, or otherwise abridge the rightful, protected expression of a genuinely held

religious belief or creed, or any other expression or act that is protected by the Federal or Florida Constitution or law. Staff is to provide reasonable accommodations to students and staff, where feasible and appropriate in such a way that still effectuates the purpose of the emergency rule, which is the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and the community. A reasonable accommodation would include permission to wear a full face covering, when required by a religious belief or creed. Any reasonable accommodation provided must comply with the safety mandates of this rule, and thus, when an accommodation requires it, a non-disciplinary change in the location of a student's educational instruction may be appropriate.

Status while an Exemption Status is Pending:

Until such time that a student, staff, contractor, or visitor provides adequate proof, as set forth herein or as permitted by Federal or Florida Law, of their entitlement to an exemption from the requirements of the emergency rule regarding COVID-19 precautions, such person shall not be permitted on School Board-owned property or at School Board-sponsored events. Instead, those persons will be provided reasonable accommodations and modifications to the services available in order for them to participate and avail themselves of such services.

Appeal Rights:

Change of location:

- A non-disciplinary change in educational location for the purposes of protecting students and staff is not a disciplinary change of placement, and as such, is not subject to the disciplinary alternative placement (DAP) appeal rights set forth elsewhere in School Board Policy. Students that are subject to a non-disciplinary change of location under this rule may have their objection to the change heard by the Principal of the subject school. To the extent that the Principal recommended the change of location and the parent/student does not wish to have the Principal hear their objections, then the student/parent's objection will be heard by an Assistant Principal of the school. At the informal hearing before the Principal or Assistant Principal, the student will have the opportunity to explain or defend their actions, present any additional information that is relevant to the matter at hand, and obtain a decision by the Principal or Assistant Principal as to whether the location change will be upheld, overturned, or modified. The Principal or Assistant Principal's decision is final, and there shall be no additional appeal rights beyond that point.

Discipline Imposed:

- To the extent that a student is disciplined as a result of a violation of any provisions of this rule or any provision of the Student Code of Conduct, then the due process, hearing, and appeal rights, if any, afforded under the Student Code of Conduct shall control.

Change of Placement (ESE/504 Students):

- To the extent that a school seeks to initiate a non-disciplinary change in educational location of a disabled student for the purposes of protecting students and staff, then it must comply with mandates and requirements of Federal and Florida Law. A change of location does not necessarily equate of change of placement for purposes of the IDEA and Section 504. However, it is possible that a change of location can lead to a change of placement in the event that the student's educational services and opportunities are

substantially affected. In such a situation, the student would be afforded all of the rights granted under applicable Federal and Florida Law. These decisions are to be made by the student's IEP or 504 team, with assistance and guidance from the Office of Student Support Programs and Services. Prior to changing the educational location of a disabled/exceptional student, the school must contact the Office of Student Support Programs and Services, who will then act in conformance with all applicable laws and guide the school with the available remedies.

Procedure Modifications Due to Prevailing Conditions:

The Superintendent may modify any procedures or processes utilized to implement the protective efforts contained in the School Board's emergency rule so as to align efforts and actions with the prevailing conditions and local circumstances relative to COVID-19, as well as any additional or amended guidelines issued by the CDC and other health authorities. Any modification of process and procedures by the Superintendent for the reasons set forth herein may be implemented immediately. However, the Superintendent's modification of the procedures on an emergency basis must go before the School Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting for approval. If the School Board fails to approve the Superintendent's emergency modification of process or procedures derived from this emergency rule at the next regularly Board meeting, or otherwise fails to indicate that it will take the matter up at a future meeting, then the emergency modification will expire at the conclusion of that Board meeting.