



## CUSD 303 Guidance on Face Coverings

In accordance with guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Illinois State Board of Education, all persons, including students, staff, and visitors, must wear a face covering when present in school. Any person not wearing a face covering will not be permitted to enter. All individuals on a bus must wear a face covering.

In accordance with the guidance from the CDC, face coverings must **completely** cover the nose and mouth and:

- Be snug but comfortable against the sides of the face.
- Need to be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Include multiple layers of material.
- Must allow breathing without restriction.
- Be able to be washed and machine dried without damage or change to shape (unless it is a standard medical grade surgical mask that will be disposed of daily).

Any mask that incorporates a valve or is designed to facilitate easy exhaling is not a sufficient face covering. They allow droplets to be released from the mask and are **NOT** allowed. These include, but are not limited to:

- mesh masks, lace masks, bead masks, knit masks (made of yarn), nylon masks
- masks with openings, holes, vents, visible gaps in the design or material

All face coverings must meet school dress code guidelines in terms of logos, images, and language.

Discard and replace any cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric

Face coverings are not required outside if social distance is maintained (if individuals remain 6 feet apart from each other). Individuals may temporarily remove face coverings while eating and drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart.

## **Key Messages About Face Coverings**

### **Please:**

- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth while wearing face coverings or face shields to prevent potential contamination.
- Wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer before putting on a face covering or face shield.
- Remove your face covering or face shield carefully and wash your hands thoroughly after removing or use hand sanitizer.
- Wash the face covering or face shield after each use (daily).
- Do not reuse disposable masks
- Label the mask(s) with your child's name using a permanent marker.
- Consider purchasing multiple masks to use over the course of the week.
- Consider sending an extra mask in a plastic bag to school with your child.
- Wearing a face covering or face shield does not replace the need to continue frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are our best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.

### **Bandanas and Neck Gaiters**

Bandanas and neck gaiters do not provide the same coverage as a cloth mask. Since cloth masks provide more protection than bandanas and gaiters, the use of these face coverings will only be allowed as a medical accommodation for individuals who are unable to wear a face mask.

### **Face Shields**

The Illinois State Board of Education has determined that face shields cannot be used as substitutes for face masks. There may be a small minority of individuals who have a medical accommodation related to face masks. If face shields can be tolerated, face shields might be utilized in these situations, understanding their limitations and the heightened need for strict adherence to social distancing.

### **Face Covering Exceptions**

Individuals with a medical condition that prevents them from safely wearing a face covering may seek a reasonable accommodation. Exceptions will not be considered for individuals who have a personal objection or preference.

A request for medical exception must include a written letter, signed by a medical doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner, demonstrating that wearing a face mask poses a medical risk to a person's physical well-being and is medically contraindicated.

Face mask exceptions pose a risk to other individuals and will only be granted when accommodations can be made to protect the safety of others. All exception requests will be considered on an individualized basis if a person's medical needs can be safely accommodated.

All exceptions, if granted, will require strict compliance with an individualized safety plan and may exclude the individual from certain activities that may pose an increased risk to others.

Considerations for exception include:

- Whether the student's medical condition is conducive to in-person attendance or if needs would be best met remotely.
- The ability to protect the safety of others.
- The person's behavior and capacities, including to control secretions, cover mouth/nose when sneezing and coughing.
- The person's ability to maintain a six foot physical distance from others at all times.
- The person's ability to tolerate wearing a face covering (may consider the option of an alternative face covering such as of face shield)
- The person's ability to wash hands with/without assistance, and ability/safety of use of hand sanitizer.
- Exclusion of the person when any symptom of illness is present, regardless of cause (including allergies).
- Wearing a face covering or face shield does not replace the need to continue frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are our best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.