

FACE COVERINGS

The Hanover Public School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A multi-layer cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn at all times by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation, except in the situations listed below. In all cases, appropriate six foot physical distancing is required:

- during designated mask breaks based on guidance from the Director of Health Services;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes when outdoors, when activities can occur with 10 feet of distance between individuals.
- while outside if securely seated 6 feet from other individuals.

Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements must be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. The exemption must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one or in the event a mask is damaged during the day. Masks must have at least two layers of material that do not restrict breathing. Single layer gaiters, bandanas, and comparable items do not comply with this policy.

Students who knowingly violate this policy are subject to discipline as outlined in the COVID-19/Remote Learning student handbook. Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 -
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks -
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines -
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>
Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! –
<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020