

Options for Youth

Face Coverings Policy

Options for Youth's ("School") Face Coverings Policy ("Policy") governs the use of cloth face coverings as required by the state and local public health departments, including the California Department of Public Health ("CDPH"). This Policy provides students, staff, parents/guardians, and other visitors (e.g., vendors, delivery personnel, etc.) with information on the requirements for face coverings, including their proper use. This Policy is subject to change based on public health guidelines.

I. General Requirements for Face Coverings

All students, staff, parents/guardians, and visitors are required to wear a face covering at all times except while eating, drinking, or carrying out other activities that preclude use of a face covering. There are limited exemptions to the face covering requirement described below. If a student or staff member does not bring a face covering to School, the School will provide a face covering.

- **Cloth Face Coverings:** A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth ("face covering"). It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.
- **Proper Use of Face Coverings:** Face coverings must be properly worn to cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the side of the face. Face coverings should not be worn around the neck, on the forehead, under the nose, only on the nose, on the chin, or dangling from one ear.
- **Other Health and Safety Measures:** Wearing a face covering is not a substitute for other health and safety measures that help prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition to wearing face coverings, individuals should continue to practice appropriate physical distancing, proper hygiene practices (e.g., handwashing), and staying home when ill.
- **Temporary Removal of Face Coverings:** There are situations when an individual may be permitted to temporarily remove their face covering at School:
 1. The student or staff member is alone in a closed office or classroom.
 2. The student or staff member is actively eating or drinking, or otherwise engaging in an activity that makes wearing a face covering impracticable. Individuals who temporarily remove their face covering should ensure that they maintain a distance of at least six feet away from individuals who are not members of the same household.
 3. In addition, under limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, such as communicating or assisting a

student with a disability, a staff member can use a face shield with a drape instead of a face covering while in the classroom, as long as the staff member maintains physical distance from others. The staff member must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

When a face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean, safe area, clearly marked with the individual's name and date, until it needs to be put on again.

- Other Considerations:
 1. *Clean Masks*: Students and staff should ensure they have a clean face covering each day (e.g., wash reusable face coverings after use).
 2. *Food Handling*: Staff or other individuals handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to wearing a face covering.
 3. *Youth Sports*: Participants in youth sports should wear face coverings when participating in the activity, even with heavy exertion as tolerated, both indoors and outdoors.

II. Exemptions From the Face Covering Requirement

The School recognizes there are some individuals who cannot wear a face covering for different reasons, including a medical condition. The following individuals are exempt from the face covering requirement:

1. Children under the age of 2.
2. Individuals who have a medical or mental health condition or disability that would impede them from properly wearing or handling a face covering.
3. Individuals with a communication disability.
4. Individuals communicating with individuals who are hearing impaired, where communication would be inhibited if the individual wore a face covering.

Staff seeking exemptions from the face covering requirement must submit their request to 9-Dot Human Resources. Students seeking exemptions from the face covering requirement must submit their request to the Assistant Principal or Principal as applicable. The School will review the request and may ask for additional information in order to reasonably accommodate the individual.

These accommodations may include, but not necessarily limited to, wearing a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as the individual's condition permits such accommodations. In addition, individuals with communication disabilities or individuals communicating with those with communication disabilities should consider wearing a clear mask or cloth mask with a clear panel when appropriate.

III. Consequences for Not Wearing a Face Covering

In accordance with CDPH guidelines, the School will exclude students from campus who are not exempt from wearing a face covering and refuse to wear a face covering provided by the School. In the event a student is excluded from School for refusing to wear a face covering, the School will offer alternative educational opportunities, which can include remote instruction through distance learning, as the School determines appropriate. Staff members may face discipline for failing to comply with the face covering requirements described above.