



## FACE COVERING POLICY –

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Kettering City School District is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with a safe and healthy environment, especially during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In order to maintain a healthy environment, the Board of Education will follow the mandates and requirements set forth by the Ohio Governor, Ohio State Health Department, Public Health – Dayton & Montgomery County, Ohio Department of Education, and other entities (“Directing Entities”) as it relates to protecting the health of students, employees, and visitors. The Board will follow the recommendations of the Directing Entities, but with respect to face coverings/masks, the Board will proceed according to this policy.

The Superintendent, or designee, is otherwise granted the authority to create administrative guidelines detailing where and when face coverings/masks may not be required or otherwise may be temporarily removed (e.g. during recess, during lunch, when instructed by faculty or an administrator).

### Face Covering Requirements

“Appropriate face coverings/masks” should:

- Fully cover the mouth, nose, and chin;
- Fit snugly against the side of the face so there are no gaps;
- Not create difficulty breathing while worn; and
- Be held secure through either a tie, elastic, or similar means to prevent slipping.

Appropriate face coverings/masks shall conform with the District’s dress code policies as set forth under Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

### Staff and Volunteers

Pursuant to COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools issued by the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Education, **all staff members and volunteers must wear appropriate face coverings/masks during the COVID-19 Pandemic, unless it is unsafe to do so or where doing so would significantly interfere with the learning process.**

School nurses or staff who care for individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), provided by the school, in accordance with OSHA standards.

Face shields that wrap around the face and extend below the chin (“face shields”) can be considered as an alternative where appropriate face coverings/masks would hinder the learning process. Some situations where face shields may be appropriate include:

- When interacting with students, such as those with disabilities, where communication could be impacted if an appropriate face covering/mask is worn,
- When interacting with English-language learners or when teaching a foreign language,
- Settings where an appropriate face covering/mask might present a safety hazard (e.g. science labs), and
- Where individuals have difficulty wearing an appropriate face covering/mask.

### Students and Visitors

Unless an exception applies, **all students and visitors will be required to wear an appropriate face**

**covering/mask. All students, regardless of grade level, must wear masks while being transported on school buses.**

### **Exceptions**

Exceptions to this face coverings policy may be made for the following:

- Students younger than Grade 3;
- Staff and students who have trouble breathing;
- Staff and students who are unable to remove the appropriate face-covering/mask without assistance;
- Staff and students where facial coverings in the school setting are prohibited by law or regulation;
- Staff when they are working alone in an enclosed, assigned work area;
- Staff and students where appropriate face coverings/masks for students or staff are in violation of documented safety policies or documented industry standards;
- Individuals who have received approval from administration after discussing their request not to wear an appropriate face coverings/masks due to a physical, mental, or developmental health condition, if wearing an appropriate face covering/mask would lead to a medical emergency or would introduce significant safety concerns. A physician's report is required to accompany such a request.
  - In this exception, the administration may also discuss other possible accommodations for the student or staff member. Such discussion shall follow District policies and procedures under Section 504 and the ADA.

Any individual, other than students younger than Grade 3, staff who are working alone in an enclosed, assigned work area, and staff and students who are unable to remove the appropriate face covering/mask without assistance, who meets one of the exceptions listed above will be required to wear a face shield as an acceptable alternative. If a face shield is also not physically, developmentally, or medically appropriate, a separate physician's report will be required to accompany the request to wear no face covering at all.

### **Justification of Exceptions**

Kettering City School District is required to have on file written justification explaining why a staff member is not required to wear an appropriate face covering/mask in the school. Therefore, requests for exceptions to wearing an appropriate face covering/mask when required to do so by this policy must be submitted in writing to the Department of Human Capital, and a decision on the request will be provided in writing. An individual may be required to wear a face shield or other face-covering as appropriate for the accommodation of this face-covering requirement. The Superintendent, in response to any change in guidance from the Directing Entities, may create administrative guidelines wherein appropriate face coverings/masks may not be required.

### **Violations**

If face masks/coverings are required, and no exception has been applied, students, employees, and/or visitors who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code, staff Code of Conduct, and in accordance with the policies of the Board. Such action, for non-students, may include the individual being escorted from school district property and a prohibition on future entry to District property.