

**Franklin Public Schools
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038**

Action Required

Subject: Policy

Date: October 26, 2021

Dept: SC

Reason: Required Vote

Enclosure: yes

Recommendation:

Policy Adoption

I recommend adoption of policy EBCFA - Face Coverings as discussed.

Action Requested of the School Committee:

Majority vote of the School Committee is required.

<u>Vote Tabulator</u>	
A Bergen:	Y / N
J D'Angelo:	Y / N
J Pond-Pfeffer:	Y / N
E Stokes:	Y / N

T Keenan:	Y / N
M J Scofield:	Y / N
D Spencer:	Y / N
Action:	_____

FACE COVERINGS

The Franklin Public Schools is committed to providing a safe environment in schools during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Maintaining a safe environment is critical to the District's ability to return students to a full-time classroom learning experience.

According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus, and its variants, and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, using the guidance and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the District has established the following requirements which will remain in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings and on school transportation.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing.
- is unconscious.
- is incapacitated.
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A written note from a qualified health professional is required for a requested exemption. Parents/guardians may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required:

- during mask breaks.
- while eating or drinking.
- while outside.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

The District may modify its mask requirements in accordance with DESE guidance.

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 a disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

Students are expected to comply with the mask or face covering requirement. Student noncompliance will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with the first goal to encourage compliance. Principals will consult with parents/guardians and health professionals to determine if an exception should be made. Where appropriate, additional supports/accommodations may be provided in order for students to comply. Students in violation of the mask or face covering requirement may be removed from the school setting until such a time as they can comply with the mask or face covering requirement. Disciplinary action, as a last resort, may be applied. Discipline will be progressive but could include suspension from school.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

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

Guidance Statements

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/updated-advisory-regarding-masks-and-face-covering-s-july-30-2021-0/download>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools Updated August 5, 2021 -

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Center for Disease Controls – Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention on Public Transportation

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Fall 2021 Covid-19 Guidance

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2021-0730fall-2021-covid19-guidance.pdf>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education -

August 25, 2021

Mask Mandate

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/mask-requirement/mask-requirement.pdf>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education -

September 27, 2021

Mask Mandate

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/mask-requirement-extension/mask-requirement-extension.pdf>

Adopted by School Committee: 9/8/20

Reviewed: 7/28/21; 8/12/21; 9/22/21

Reviewed; Revised; Adopted by School Committee: 9/28/2021

Reviewed: 10/6/2021

To waive first read; to second read/adoption 10/26/21

SOURCE: MASC – August 10, 2021