

**Franklin Public Schools
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038**

Action Required

Subject: Policy – 1st Reads

Date: August 25, 2020

Dept: District

Reason: Required Vote

Enclosure: yes

Recommendation:

Policy - First Readings

I recommend moving the following policies to a second reading as discussed:

- EBC (SUPPLEMENTAL) - Creation Of A General (Interim) Policy On Covid-related Issues
- EBCFA - Masks/Face Coverings (New)
- COVID Policy Addendums

Action Requested of the School Committee:

Majority vote of the School Committee is required.

Vote Tabulator

A Bergen: Y / N T Keenan: Y / N

J D'Angelo: Y / N M J Scofield: Y / N

J Pond-Pfeffer: Y / N D Spencer: Y / N

E Stokes: Y / N Action: _____

(NEW - INTERIM) POLICY ON COVID-RELATED ISSUES

The Franklin School Committee takes note of the COVID-19 emergency, resulting in disruption of the traditional school day and year; growing concerns of students, families and the community; and the growing number of issues that will affect public education.

Therefore, the school committee establishes an emergency, interim policy to:

- promote public safety and safety of students and faculty,
- maintain to the extent possible the high and efficient level of educational services,
- ensure support for students in general and in particular for those at highest risk educationally as well as those at social and economic risk, and
- comply with the emergency orders of the governor and adhere to the extent possible, to the guidance of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other agencies of state and federal government, and expedite the safest strategy for returning students to school.

The **Committee** will approve the final plan submitted to DESE which will outline its strategy for returning students to school and will, in collaboration with the superintendent, make such modifications to the “back to school plan,” and district policy, and will authorize the superintendent to suspend, revise or create protocols to facilitate the safe return to school.

The superintendent will designate the appropriate staff members to oversee the safe administration of COVID-related policies during the period of the pandemic emergency and shall make such recommendations to the Committee as needed.

The **Committee** will authorize the superintendent to act expeditiously in executing the “back to school” plan in accordance with current law and regulation and will, where noted, authorize the superintendent to suspend, revise, or recommend policies, rules and protocols as needed to serve the best interests and safety of students, their families, and the community.

The “back to school” plan shall constitute the policy of the school district during the pandemic emergency, and the superintendent shall exercise the authority provided in law to carry out the plan as needed.

- General district goals affected by the pandemic.
 - The superintendent, with the advice and consent of the **Committee**, may suspend or modify individual district policies to address the COVID-19 emergency as declared by the governor. Such suspension of policy shall expire upon the end of the emergency as declared by the governor.
- The goal of emergency pandemic policies shall be to:
 - ensure the safety and health of students, faculty, staff, and all persons who may come in contact with them;
 - provide the most effective educational services as possible to students under the circumstances;
 - authorize changes to operating protocols as needed to open and operate schools effectively from various venues or platforms;

- conduct the district business and operational functions of the district as efficiently as possible;
- allow the superintendent and staff to act quickly to carry out a “back to school” plan and,
- facilitate the re-establishment of a safe and productive school day and year.

SOURCE: MASC

To School Committee for First Reading: 8/25/2020

(NEW) MASKS/FACE COVERINGS

The Franklin Public Schools 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 face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

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;
- can not remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks/face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a mask/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.

Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a mask or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.

Additionally, masks/face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during outdoors physical education classes if 10 feet of distance can be maintained;
- while outside;
- when a staff member is alone in a classroom or workspace

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health

A student's mask/face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members may provide their own mask/face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parents/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be

removed from the school building for remote learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of Franklin 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 rescinded by the 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

To School Committee for first reading; 8/25/2020

**MASC COVID-Related Policy Addendum
For 1st Read on 8/25/20**

As the start of school approaches, the [Franklin School Committee](#) has addressed revisions to some of the policies they have established as well as student handbook language. The School Committee recognizes that there may be additional policies requiring temporary revisions.

Disclaimer: These policy addenda shall remain in effect during the state of emergency declared by the Governor in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and shall expire upon the expiration of said state of emergency unless earlier terminated or extended by vote of the School Committee. The Superintendent, principal, or other relevant official shall document any suspension or revision of a School Committee policy under these addenda, and any such suspension or revision is subject to review and approval of the School Committee at its discretion.

EEA, EEAG - TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES / STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES	1
GCA, GDJ - STAFF POSITIONS/SUPPORT STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS	1
IC - SCHOOL CALENDAR	1
IHB, IHBA - SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS / PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	1
JCA - ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS	1
JH - STUDENT ABSENCES & EXCUSES	1
JIC - STUDENT CONDUCT	1
JL, JLC, JLCC - STUDENT WELFARE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY / STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS / COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	2
JJ - CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	2
JLCC - COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	2
JRA-R - STUDENT RECORDS	2
KI - VISITORS TO SCHOOLS	2
PIVOTING BACK TO REMOTE LEARNING, OR BACK TO IN-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION	3
PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS, INCLUDING THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (MOA WITH THE LOCAL POLICE)	3

EEA, EEAG - TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES / STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

Subject to current law and regulation, the superintendent may suspend or modify policies related to students' transportation by the school district. Legal requirements relating to IEP's that contain transportation for students

shall not be altered without the appropriate family consent. These modifications shall be consistent with the district “back to school” plan.

GCA, GDJ - STAFF POSITIONS/SUPPORT STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The superintendent may revise job descriptions for district staff, considering the provisions of current collective bargaining agreements, in order to secure the safety and health of students and staff, establish effective communications between school and community, maintain facilities, transport students as needed, provide food services, and acquire necessary materials to operate schools safely and securely during the pandemic. The Superintendent will inform the [Franklin School Committee](#) of any such changes. Any changes to job descriptions shall expire at the end of the declared emergency situation.

IC - SCHOOL CALENDAR

Subject to the guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the provisions of collective bargaining agreements, the superintendent may suspend or revise the school calendar with the approval of the [Franklin School Committee](#).

IHB, IHBA - SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS / PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The superintendent and [Franklin School Committee](#) should be mindful that the attainment of a high school diploma may render certain students ineligible for further services.

JCA - ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS

Subject to the guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the superintendent may suspend or revise the assignment of students to schools, including the assignment of new students for such a period as the emergency declaration is in force.

JH - STUDENT ABSENCES & EXCUSES

Subject to operative law and regulations, [the superintendent may](#) suspend, modify or adapt policies related to student attendance including the link between and absences and grades chronic absence policies, and accommodations for students requiring special placements.

JIC - STUDENT CONDUCT

The “back to school” plan recommended by the superintendent and subject to the [Franklin School Committee’s](#) approval shall contain protocols for serving students who are disciplined or suspended during the pandemic emergency.

JL, JLC, JLCC - STUDENT WELFARE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY / STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS / COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

During the state of emergency declared by the Governor in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, the superintendent or principal of a school may temporarily suspend provisions of these policies to the extent necessary to facilitate the education of students at risk or with special physical needs or their family caregivers, including, but not limited to caring for or educating students with disabilities, illness, pregnancy, child rearing responsibilities, or special education needs consistent with law and regulation.

JJ - CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Subject to law, regulation, and standards established by the appropriate and legitimate regulatory body, the superintendent may propose changes to district protocols for participation in extracurricular activities, including sports subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association's rules.

JLCC - COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Subject to the provisions of the "back to school" plan, the superintendent may establish protocols for tracking student contacts as a means of locating others from whom students may contract or expose other persons to the COVID-19. Such protocols will be consistent with law and regulation and consistent with standards to protect students' privacy, their families, and other persons.

JRA-R - STUDENT RECORDS

During the pandemic, the rights to privacy held by students and their families shall not be abridged by the public schools. Such rights extend to the confidentiality of student academic records, health data, economic status, and other such information as may be considered confidential by law.

Massachusetts law prohibits the recording of individuals without their permission. Similarly, students may not be recorded in classrooms by audio, visual, or remote means without the permission of parents/guardians or, if of age, by individual students. During periods of remote learning, the privacy of students participating in online classes shall not be violated by recording them without appropriate permission.

KI - VISITORS TO SCHOOLS

Subject to current emergency declarations, the superintendent may suspend or modify district policies regarding visitors to school buildings during the school day and after school hours.

KF - COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Subject to current emergency declarations, the superintendent may suspend or modify district policies related to community use of school facilities.

PIVOTING BACK TO REMOTE LEARNING, OR BACK TO IN-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

The superintendent shall incorporate into the “back to school” plan protocols for modifying the predominant instructional model, including addressing the needs of students who may require reversion from in-school to remote learning modalities because of the pandemic emergency.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS, INCLUDING THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (MOA WITH THE LOCAL POLICE)

Subject to current law or regulation, the superintendent shall report to the Franklin School Committee of any change in the status of the school resource officer.
