

MASK REQUIREMENT TO PROTECT AGAINST THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

It is a high priority of Oklahoma City Public Schools to promote health and safety in our learning and working environments so that our students can remain in full-time, in-person learning this school year with layered prevention strategies in place. Accordingly, the following procedures will be implemented immediately and until revised or revoked, in an effort to provide reasonable protection for the health and safety of students, employees, and any visitors while on school property, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored events.

Transmission of COVID-19 within schools can be limited with strict implementation of layered mitigation strategies, including universal and correct usage of masks and physical distancing. The CDC and our local city county health department officials recommend universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students (age 2 and older), and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

While Senate Bill 658 prohibits *school boards* from mandating the wearing of masks, the law does not prohibit the Superintendent and district administration from requiring the wearing of masks by our students, staff, and visitors.

Therefore, it is immediately required that all OKCPS students, employees, and visitors must wear a face covering that covers both the nose and mouth strictly as provided below:

1. Masks are required to be worn by all OKCPS students, employees, parents/legal guardians, and visitors while on school property, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored events regardless of vaccination status.
2. Masks will be provided, when available. OKCPS cannot guarantee the caliber of protection of such items but seeks to do so to protect the safety and health of staff, students, and visitors.
3. It is the mask wearer's own responsibility to wear, re-use and clean masks according to CDC guidelines.
4. Masks may be removed only (1) when alone in an enclosed private workspace and (2) while participating in activities in which a face mask cannot practically be worn, such as while eating and drinking. When a mask is removed, it is vital that a physical distance of at least six (6) feet be observed, whenever possible.

Medical Restrictions Negating Mask Use

- **Students** - If a parent/legal guardian or eligible student indicates that compliance with mask use is not possible due to medical or religious or strong personal reasons, the parent, legal guardian, or eligible student may request an exemption in writing.
- **Employees** – If an employee indicates compliance is not possible due to medical reasons, the employee should be referred to Human Resources to request accommodations on the basis of disability.

This regulation is subject to change as new or different federal, state, and local guidance may become available.

REFERENCES:

70 O.S. § 1210.190

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance

Oklahoma City County Health Department (OCCHD) Guidance

Oklahoma State Department of Education Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools (June 3, 2020; updated August 5, 2020)