



**Student Mask Protocol for 2021-2022 School Year**  
(Updated August 2021)

When worn properly, wearing a mask helps reduce the spread of COVID-19 by reducing droplet transmission between people. Face masks do not replace the need to maintain social distancing and frequent hand washing as mitigation strategies against COVID-19.

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), all School District of Philadelphia students must wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times while in an indoor space.

**APPROVED FACE MASKS**

A mask is defined as a covering of the nose *and* mouth that is secured with straps that loop over the ears or tie around the back of the head. Acceptable masks may be factory-made; sewn by hand or machine; or created by using materials cut or constructed from household or clothing items like scarves, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. These clothing items in their original forms are not themselves acceptable face coverings for use in District facilities and are not acceptable substitutes for the types of face coverings approved for use on District premises.

Individuals who are communicating, or seeking to communicate with, someone who is hearing impaired, or who has another disability, where the ability for the student to see the mouth is essential to communication, may wear a face shield instead of a mask. The student should maintain a mask during this interaction when feasible.

Please follow the guidance below for applying, removing, and cleaning the types of masks approved for wear by District students. Hand hygiene should be performed before and after applying and removing a mask.





Masks containing valves are not an acceptable covering in District buildings. Gaiters are also not an approved face mask in District buildings.

**GENERAL GUIDANCE**

- Students may wear personal, clean, well-maintained masks appropriate for the school environment that meet one of the approved face masks types identified in the chart below.
- Students must wear a face mask at all times in hallways, classrooms, indoor public spaces, and other common indoor areas across District spaces.
- Students should remain mindful not to unnecessarily touch masks except for removal for meals and breaks.
- Masks should not be worn during water play activities that could get masks wet whether indoors or outdoors. Because masks should not be worn at these times, students should maintain appropriate physical distance.
- Students are not required to wear face masks while participating in outdoor activities if a minimum of three feet of social distancing is maintained.



- Disposable surgical masks will be available for students whose mask becomes damaged or lost or forgotten.
- Students may remove face masks indoors when eating or drinking if seated three feet away from others.
- When masks are removed, they must be placed below the chin, in a pocket, or on the lap. Masks should not be placed on tabletops or other communal surfaces.

Type and Intended Use of Approved Masks				
Approved Masks	<p><b>Disposable Surgical Mask</b></p> 	<p><b>Cloth Mask</b></p> 	<p><b>Face Shields (not to be used in lieu of approved masks)</b></p> 	<p><b>KN95, N95 or other filtered masks (non-vented)</b></p> 
Mask Application	<p>Hook loops snugly around ears or behind head. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.</p>	<p>Secure ties to head or hook loops snugly around ears. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.</p>	<p>Bending forward, hold face shield with both hands, expand the elastic with thumbs and place the elastic behind head, so that the foam rests on forehead. Ensure the shield covers the front and sides of the face and no areas are left uncovered.</p>	<p>Hook loops snugly around ears or behind head. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.</p>
Mask Removal	<p>Unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask. Fold so the inner part of the mask faces inward. Dispose immediately into trash can.</p>	<p>Untie or unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask. Fold so the inner part of the mask faces inward.</p>	<p>Remove and pull up and away from face without touching the front of the mask. Check for cracks in the mask and discard if cracked or damaged.</p>	<p>Unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask.</p>



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<b>Mask Cleaning</b>	Dispose immediately into trash can.	Wash after daily use in washing machine with other laundry OR by hand soaking in a solution of 1/3rd cup of household bleach per gallon of room temperature water. Rinse clear. Place in the dryer or hang dry.	Carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the face shield with a disinfectant wipe.	Dispose of into trashcan when soiled.
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**Accommodations for Students Who Are Unable to Wear a Mask Due to Medical Conditions or Other Reasons**

Any student who cannot wear a mask or face shield due to 1) a medical condition, 2) mental health condition, 3) disability, or 4) inability to remove a mask without assistance are not required to wear face coverings.

Students with the following conditions are eligible to use a face shield in place of a mask. This list is not exhaustive. Additional requests will be considered on an individual basis.

- Tracheostomies
- Neuromuscular and other conditions that limit the ability to self-remove a mask
- Autism
- Hearing Impairment
- Chronological young age
- Developmental young age
- Cognitive impairment

For any student with a disability that cannot wear a mask, the school IEP/504 teams should be contacted to assist with accommodations around mitigation efforts.