

Face Coverings

Office of the Superintendent of Schools ~ Diocese of Brooklyn

Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed.

Faculty and Staff shall be required to wear masks. Masks will be provided to all staff members by the individual school. Choosing to wear a mask of their own is equally acceptable. In addition, face shields will be provided upon request, but they are not to be used in lieu of a mask.

All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building.

All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.

Non-disposable mask should be washed daily.

NYS Department of Health Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at PK – Grade 12 schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (July 13, 2020)recommends that if face coverings are to be worn by all individuals at all times, students should be allowed to remove their face coverings during meals, while outside in the fresh air, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.

CDC recognizes that wearing cloth face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a cloth face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns. Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

Appropriate and consistent use of cloth face coverings may be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, including:

- Younger students, such as those in early elementary school.
- Students, teachers, and staff with severe asthma or other breathing difficulties.

- Students, teachers, and staff with special educational or healthcare needs, including intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

While cloth face coverings are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a cloth face covering may not be feasible.

In these instances, parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, and school administrators should consider adaptations and alternatives whenever possible. They may need to consult with healthcare providers for advice about wearing cloth face coverings.

Clear Face Coverings or Face Shields

Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings or face shields include;

- Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) 
- Teachers of young students learning to read
- Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
- Teachers of students with disabilities

Face shields are not to be used for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings because of a lack of evidence of their effectiveness for source control.

Practical Recommendations

- Include cloth face coverings on school supply lists and provide cloth face coverings as needed to students, teachers, staff, or visitors who do not have them available.
- Include clear face coverings on school supply lists for teachers and staff who regularly interact with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students learning to read, students with disabilities, and those who rely on lip reading as a part of learning, such as students who are English Language Learners.
- Ensure that students and staff are aware of the correct use of cloth face coverings, including wearing cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth and securely around the face.
- Ensure that students, teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize their hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before putting on a cloth face covering.
- Ensure that students, teachers, and staff are aware that they should not touch their cloth face coverings while wearing them and, if they do, they should wash their hands before and after with soap and water or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol).
- Ensure teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a cloth face covering.

- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that cloth face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that they should never share or swap cloth face coverings.
- Students' cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.
- Cloth face coverings should be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labeled containers or bags, personal lockers, or cubbies).
- Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- Students and schools should consider having additional cloth face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up cloth face covering is needed during the day and to facilitate every day washing of cloth face coverings.