

FACE MASKS PROCEDURES- FEB. 1, 2021

All Rogersville City Schools students in grades Kindergarten through 8th, staff, and visitors will be required to wear a face mask. This is a fluid process, and the district will continue to monitor COVID-19 within our community for changes when necessary.

Face masks are being required based upon best available data and input from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). According to the CDC, face masks have been shown to be an effective tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19, along with physical distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces. Nothing regarding this requirement or in this communication is intended to violate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protections for our students and staff.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will people have to wear face masks all day?

Masks and face coverings will be required while on RCS property. Teachers may remove cloth/disposable masks while teaching so long as they are properly physically distanced and wearing a face shield. Teachers and students can also remove masks and face shields during mask breaks, or while eating, drinking, or when, provided they are able to physically distance.

Will there be exemptions?

Yes. The following approved exemptions apply:

1. Persons eating or drinking.
2. Persons who need to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired and who needs to see the person's mouth to communicate, while maintaining physical distance (face shield shall be utilized in this instance).
3. Teachers and students when a face mask would be an impediment to instruction, and they are maintaining physical distance in accordance with CDC guidelines.
4. Persons participating in recess and physical education classes while maintaining social distancing.

Will there be mask breaks for our students?

Yes. Across all grades and age groups, teachers shall utilize a minimum of a five-minute mask break on the hour. The five minutes do not have to be done all at once, and the teacher can utilize more than five minutes to the extent circumstances require or dictate the need for more time. If appropriate physical distancing can be maintained during a mask break while in the classroom, instruction can continue.

Will students be required to wear a face covering when participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities?

Yes. Students will be required to wear a face mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained unless the function cannot be performed with a face mask.

Can students and staff bring their own face masks?

Yes. Face masks must comply with the dress code found in the Code of Student Conduct so that they do not disrupt school activities, are not obscene or otherwise inflammatory, and do not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others.

What happens if a student forgets, loses, or damages their face covering?

If a student forgets, loses, or damages their face mask, the District/school will provide a disposable or cloth face mask.

What happens if a student refuses to wear a face mask? Will student refusal to wear a mask constitute a disciplinary violation?

Face masks will be required for all students, staff, parents, and visitors. Every attempt including re-educating and supporting the students will be made to ensure that the student and the student's parents understand the importance of wearing a face mask. If these attempts are unsuccessful the student will receive a disciplinary consequence.

Teachers and administrators should use an equity lens and good judgement in determining if a student's refusal to wear a mask is a situation requiring re-educating, social and emotional support, or discipline.

What happens if a visitor or vendor refuses to wear a face mask?

Visitors are not allowed in our schools or buildings at this time. In the rare instance that a visitor or vendor is permitted access, face masks are required to be worn.

Will replacement masks be only for students?

No. While the district encourages staff and students to come wearing their own mask provided it complies with safety requirements and does not interfere with educational programming and/or violate any District rules, replacement masks will be available for staff and students.

The safety of our students and staff is our priority and is at the forefront of our planning. State guidance and policies related to school reopening safety plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Under the guidelines, masks, physical distancing, and hand washing protocols are required for all students.

Special consideration will be given to students who may have difficulty acclimating to the standard protocols (students with significant communication and/or executive functioning challenges, students with impaired vision, hearing, and/or other physical disabilities.

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