

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OR CRISIS

The Cohasset Public Schools are committed to promoting the health and safety of students, staff, families and the community. In connection with public health emergencies or events or to prevent widespread infection, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Governor of the Commonwealth, and state and local public health officials (collectively referred to as “Authorities”) may issue requirements or guidance relative to various safety measures applicable to public schools.

If, to address a public safety emergency or event or to prevent widespread infection, the Authorities (or any one of the individual entities that make up the Authorities) issue specific requirements with respect to health and safety measures that would apply to public schools, such as the use of face coverings and social distancing, the Cohasset Public Schools will adopt those requirements. If any of the requirements imposed by one or more of the Authorities are in conflict with one another, the Cohasset Public Schools shall adopt the requirements issued by DESE, except as otherwise required by law.

If the Authorities (or any one of the individual entities that make up the Authorities) issues non-mandatory guidance with respect to health and safety measures in the event of a public health emergency or event or to prevent the spread of widespread infection, the Cohasset School Committee, shall decide, in its discretion, which guidances to adopt, in consideration of the safety and well-being of all members of our school community and the community-at-large.

If the Authorities do not expressly define the term “mask” or “face covering,” then the following definition shall apply:

A cloth, fabric, or synthetic covering, which does not contain holes or vents and, which fits properly, without large gaps and without impeding vision; which entirely covers a person’s mouth and nose, and which is held in place using ear loops or an elastic or fastening cord that runs around the back of the head.

Exceptions to general policies and practices may be made in certain circumstances. For example, exceptions to a general mask policy may apply when an individual is unable to wear a face mask or face covering due to medical, behavioral, or other challenges that would make it unsafe for the individual to wear a mask or face covering. Such exceptions to general policies and practices will be made in the discretion of the Superintendent or designee or as otherwise required by law.

Violations of this policy by staff or students will be handled in the same manner as other violations of District policies or procedures.

Visitors in violation of this policy may be denied entry to the school/district facility, in the discretion of the Superintendent or designee.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted or construed as prohibiting masks or face coverings, as describe herein, which are employed for health reasons and as otherwise permitted by District policy.

Cohasset Public Schools reserve the right to implement any safety protocols, procedures, and/or measures available to it, regardless of any explicit guidance from the Authorities if, in the determination of the Superintendent, in collaboration with the School Committee and public health agents, any particular safety protocol, procedure, and or measure is deemed necessary to preserve the health and safety of students, staff, familiesand the community.

Incorporated by reference is the masking policy approved and adopted by the School Committee at its August 16, 2021 special meeting, which shall be effective until October 6, 2021 unless otherwise rescinded or modified by majority vote of the School Committee or superseded by order of the Cohasset Board of Health.

Adopted by Cohasset School Committee: June 28, 2021

Revised: August 18, 2021