



**Seminole County
Public Schools**

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON USE OF FACE COVERINGS FOR STUDENTS

Will face coverings be required in SCPS for students?

Yes. Face coverings will be required when schools reopen on August 10, 2021, and while on all Seminole County Public School property, unless the parent or legal guardian, if under the age of 18, or a student 18 years or older, submits a signed written note to opt their child out of wearing a face covering. This is a fluid process and the District will continue to monitor the situation with our local health experts.

Why are face coverings required?

Face coverings are being required based upon best available data and input from local health authorities, CDC guidelines, and stakeholder groups. According to the CDC, face coverings have been shown to be an effective tool in reducing the spread of COVID-19, along with social distancing, frequent hand washing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

What constitutes a face covering that complies with SCPS procedure?

A face covering means a uniform piece of material that fits snugly against the side of the face and securely and completely covers a person's nose and mouth and remains affixed in place without the use of one's hands, whether store bought or homemade, consistent with Seminole County Health Department and CDC guidelines.

Do face shields constitute face coverings that comply with SCPS procedure?

A face shield is primarily used for eye protection for the person wearing it. There is currently not enough evidence to support the effectiveness of face shields and the CDC does not currently recommend use of face shields as a substitute for face coverings. Face shields are permitted when they are worn in conjunction with a face covering.

Face shields without a face covering may be permissible if it is determined to be part of an accommodation under the Exceptions provision of the SCPS procedure.

Are there any types of face coverings that are prohibited?

Yes, the following are prohibited:

- Open-chin triangle bandanas and face coverings containing valves, mesh material, lace, slashes, or holes are not permissible.
- Face coverings that are worn in a manner that obstruct the wearer's vision or conceals the wearer's entire face such as ski masks, gas masks, Halloween masks, costume masks, ninja masks, pantyhose, or full face masks are prohibited.
- Any face covering that does not meet the dress code requirements of appropriateness is prohibited.

Will students have to wear face coverings all day?

All employees and all students are required to wear a face covering when they are not able to maintain a minimum of six feet of separation (socially distanced) from others. Students and employees may remove face coverings when socially distanced, during high intensity indoor activities, when outdoors in an area that is not crowded, and while seated for dining.

Will there be exceptions?

Yes. The following approved exceptions apply: Persons eating or drinking; Persons for whom a face covering would cause an impairment due to an existing health condition or disability and a determination is made that an accommodation is not reasonably available; Persons communicating with hearing impaired individuals who need to see the other person's mouth to communicate and a reasonable accommodation is not available; Public safety personnel whose personal protective equipment requirements are governed by their respective agencies; and any person for whom removal of the face covering is necessary to receive health care or if a person is experiencing acute trouble breathing, is unconscious or incapacitated and is personally unable to remove the face covering without assistance; Students, 18 years or older or if under the age of 18, their parent or legal guardian, who submit a signed written note to opt out of wearing a face covering.

Will my child be required to wear a face covering when participating in athletics?

Based on information from current local health authorities, as well as guidelines from the CDC, students actively participating in athletics or high intensity activities will not have to wear a face covering during the athletic event or activity. Students will be required to follow guidance issued by the Florida High School Athletic Association.

Will my child be required to wear a face covering when participating in extracurricular activities?

The expectation is that students will wear a face covering during indoor extracurricular activities, unless such activities are high intensity. Students participating in extracurricular activities outdoors will not be required to wear face coverings during the activity but must still follow any and all safety procedures in place for the activity, as established by the Superintendent. If you have a question regarding a specific extracurricular activity, please contact your Principal.

Must students bring their own face coverings?

Yes. Face coverings must comply with the dress code found in the Code of Student Conduct so that they do not disrupt school activities and are not obscene or otherwise inflammatory. The District has an emergency supply of face coverings that will be offered to students, if needed.

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

If a student forgets, loses or damages their face covering, the District will provide a face covering for that day. The District has an emergency supply of face coverings that will be offered to students, if needed.

What happens when a student refuses to wear a face covering?

Face coverings will be required for all students unless the student has opted out of wearing a face covering with a signed written note from a parent, or an approved exception applies. Every attempt will be made to ensure that the student and the student's parents understand the importance of wearing a face covering.

Will face coverings be required on buses?

Yes, it will be the student's responsibility to wear a face covering while on district transportation unless the student has opted out by the submission of a signed written note by a parent or legal guardian, a student age 18 or older opts out, or the student meets any of the identified exceptions. An emergency supply of face coverings will be available for students who forget their face coverings.

Will SROs be enforcing the face covering requirement?

No. The administration at each school will work with students and staff to encourage and ensure compliance.

How will the face covering requirement apply to students with special needs?

Face coverings will be required for all students unless an approved exception applies. Parents may also opt out of this procedure for special needs students by submitting a signed written note to their student's school administration. Appropriate accommodations will be made based on the individualized needs of the students.