



# GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Mask and Face Covering Guidelines

### Overview

GCPS requires employees, students, and visitors at school facilities to wear masks or cloth face coverings. Mask and other face coverings are a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when we talk, cough, or sneeze.

### Medical Conditions

Students and employees who have medical conditions that make wearing a mask difficult will need to provide medical documentation from a doctor. While some accommodations may be made for these individuals, students and staff will need to wear masks or face coverings at times during the day when social distancing is not possible (on the bus, in hallways, common areas, etc.).

### Students with Disabilities

We understand that some of our students with disabilities are unable to wear a mask for extended periods and accommodations will be made for these students.

### General Guidance

All face masks or face coverings should:

- Fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin.
- Fit securely against both sides of the face.

The CDC **does not recommend** using masks if they have an exhalation valve or vent.

If a student is not wearing a mask or face covering:

- The student will be asked to adhere to current mask guidelines.
- A disposable mask will be provided for the student.

If a student continues to refuse to wear a mask, then the parent will be called to pick up their student and a conference will be held to discuss the option of digital instruction.

Surgical and other medical masks may be recommended for specific situations such as:

1. Students/staff who become ill at school.
2. Staff who are screening or caring for a student who is ill.
3. Staff working with students who require health care procedures or have behaviors that may put staff at increased risk.

### Additional Information

Some students may not be accustomed to wearing a mask or find them uncomfortable. Students should begin wearing a mask for short periods prior to school opening so that they become accustomed to wearing a mask.

- Model and practice how to properly put on and remove the mask.
- Explain the importance of wearing a mask. For young students, explain it in simple, concrete terms such as “masks prevent germs” or “masks help keep everyone healthy”. This will help children understand the reason for wearing a mask.
- The use of face shields is not a substitute for a mask or face covering.
- The use of a mask or face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

Proper use and removal of face covering or mask is important. Please refer to the following guidance provided by the CDC.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Young-Mitigation-recommendations-resources-toolkit.pdf>