

## **POLICY RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES**

### **FACE COVERINGS**

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until the Superintendent has determined the policy is no longer required. The Superintendent will consult with the guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) when making this determination. The Superintendent may also decide to reengage this policy based on guidance from the aforementioned entities.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

When following DESE guidelines for social distancing, masks may not be required under these specific scenarios:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes;
- while outside.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. The District is responsible for providing masks or face covering for staff. Staff members are responsible arriving at the building wearing face coverings.

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***FACE COVERINGS (continued)***

However, the District will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

Exceptions to this policy for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Exceptions to this policy for staff with medical issues, who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the Director of Human Resources for the district in consultation with building administration and/or nursing staff. In cases where exceptions are granted, alternative measures or protocols may be required and agreed upon by relevant stakeholders.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 - <https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! – <https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020

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