



## Magnolia School District

### Face Coverings Guidelines – Executive Order and FAQs

“If you’re going to ask the children in the school setting to wear face coverings for everyone’s health and safety then the adults must help them to be ready and to set the right example for them.” (Asa Hutchinson, COVID-19 Update; July 16, 2020)

Pursuant to Governor Hutchinson’s [Executive Order 20-43](#) effective July 20, 2020:

The Secretary of Health shall issue a public health directive requiring every person in Arkansas to wear a face covering over the mouth and nose:

- in all indoor environments where:
  - they are exposed to non-household members and
  - distancing of six (6) feet or more cannot be assured and
- in all outdoor settings where:
  - there is exposure to non-household members, unless there exists ample space of six (6) feet or more to practice physical distancing.

Exemptions for Persons:

- younger than 10 years of age
- with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering;
- performing job duties where a six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the ability to safely and effectively perform the job duty;
- participating in athletic activities where a six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the activity;
- consuming food or drink;
- driving alone or with passengers from the driver’s household;
- receiving services that require access to the face for security, surveillance, or other purposes may temporarily remove a face covering while receiving those services;
- voting, assisting voters, serving as poll watchers or actively performing election administration duties; however, face coverings are strongly encouraged;
- engaged in religious worship activities; however, face coverings are strongly encouraged;
- giving a speech or performance for broadcast or to an audience; however, those persons shall safely distance from nearby individuals;
- in counties where the Arkansas Department of Health has certified that risk of community transmission of COVID-19 is low.

Executive Orders of the Governor have the force and effect of law.

Violation of a directive from the Secretary of Health during this public health emergency is

- a misdemeanor offense, and
- upon conviction punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

Law enforcement and local officials have the authority and are encouraged to enforce this directive.

- First-time violators of this order shall receive a verbal or written warning.
- No law enforcement officer or local official may detain, arrest, or confine in jail any person for violation of this order.
- Violators of this order under 18 years of age shall only receive a verbal or written warning.
- This order shall not prohibit law enforcement officers or local officials from enforcing trespassing laws or other applicable laws in removing violators at the request of businesses or other property owners.

Further,

- Cities and counties may issue local ordinances consistent with this order.
- Cities shall not impose any measure that is in conflict with a directive or guideline issued by the Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor.
- This order shall automatically expire upon termination of the current emergency.

Before getting to the FAQs, please be assured that all MSD faculty and staff share the priorities of our community as we attempt re-opening.

Based on the comments provided through the District's survey, students/parents/guardians/teachers all agreed . . .

1. We want our students learning and our teachers teaching. 2. We want our students and teachers safe.

The Magnolia School District will take those steps necessary to ensure that those needs are met.

But this will be hard. It will require understanding, patience and above all compassion from and toward all our community members.

**The answers to these questions are subject to change as DESE/ADH issues additional guidance.**

**Will face coverings or masks be mandatory?**

For students in grades 3-12, yes. This would include Magnolia High School, Magnolia Middle School, and Central Elementary.

For students pre-k through 2nd, no; however, face coverings will be strongly encouraged where feasible and appropriate. This will cover Walker pre-Kindergarten Center and Eastside Elementary.

In any class where the number of students allows for proper physical distancing of six (6) feet or more, face coverings may be optional but will continue to be worn where feasible and appropriate.

During class transitions (between classes), face coverings will be required due to the difficulties involved in monitoring for physical distancing.

During Breakfast/Lunch the exemption for “consuming food or drink” will be applied. However, all MSD campuses have planned for physical distancing during all mealtimes.

During P.E./Recess the exemption for “participating in athletic activities where a six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the activity” will be applied. We do anticipate further guidance from AAA and the Magnolia School District Athletic Department.

Face coverings/masks that may cause disruption in the school environment will be removed and students will be provided a substitute mask.

- **DESE/ADH continues to provide frequent guidance on the use of face-coverings.**

### **What about Faculty and Staff?**

Yes, they will be following the same Executive Order and face coverings will be required.

In addition, all of our faculty and staff (teachers, administrators, janitorial services, bus drivers, etc.) are not only essential, but many of them are in the “high-risk for serious complications” group should they be exposed to COVID-19.

None of this will happen without them, so they will be given the respect they deserve and the authority to apply the Executive Order and any Guidelines for Re-Entry/Policies provided by the Magnolia School District.

### **Will face coverings or masks be provided by Magnolia School District?**

Students will be asked to bring their own face coverings/masks as part of their school supplies. In addition, MSD will provide each student with three cloth washable facemask(s). Once provided, students will be responsible for their use. Bandanas are not allowed. Face coverings should meet dress code guidelines.

**If my child or a staff member has sensory issues or other health issues, are they required to wear a mask or face covering?**

MSD will follow the guidance from the ADH regarding mask requirements. If a student or staff member has sensory issues, or any other health-related issues that would prohibit a mask, the student/staff member will not be required to wear one.

**Expectations regarding an eligible student's wearing of a mask will be addressed in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individual Healthcare Plan, or 504 plan.**

In other words, documentation of the medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering must be provided as would be required for any medical condition or disability for which modifications must be made.

**Will disciplinary action be taken if a student refuses to wear a face covering?**

We will follow the Executive Order on mask requirements. If a student refuses to wear a mask in situations where they are required, the refusal could be considered insubordination and addressed according to the student handbook.

If a student consistently refuses to follow the Executive Order regarding face coverings, the first step in the disciplinary process would be a parent contact. If that does not resolve the issue, a parent conference would be the second step. If after these documented attempts to correct the issue have not succeeded, MSD may impose such attendance restrictions as may be necessary to ensure the public health of all MSD students and staff.

**Will disciplinary action be taken if an adult refuses to wear a face covering while on campus?**

We will follow the Executive Order on mask requirements. If an adult refuses to wear a mask in situations where and when face coverings are required, they will be politely and respectfully asked to leave. Refusal to leave is considered trespassing and law enforcement officers or local officials may enforce trespassing laws or other applicable laws in removing violators at the request of MSD administrators.

**Will students on school buses be required to wear a mask and socially distance?**

Yes. MSD will follow the Executive Order on mask requirements. All persons on an MSD bus or in any other MSD vehicle will be required to wear a mask (unless they are the sole occupant).

If a student refuses to wear a mask in situations where they are required, the refusal could be considered insubordination and addressed according to the student handbook.

This does not imply that students will be denied transportation due to not having a face covering.

Bus Drivers will be provided with a supply of disposable masks which can be distributed as needed so long as that supply lasts.

If a student consistently refuses to follow the Executive Order regarding face coverings, the first step in the disciplinary process would be a parent contact. If that does not resolve the issue, a parent conference would be the second step. If after these documented attempts to correct the issue have not succeeded, MSD may require parent transportation to and from a student's campus until the issue is resolved.

The bus is a confined area where physical distancing is not feasible. In addition, when riding in MSD school busses or standing at their bus stops, students are considered to be on school property.

If students maintain a distance of six feet apart while waiting on the bus to arrive, masks would not be required (though would remain strongly encouraged) per the Executive Order.

There are exceptions for students with health, sensory, or other conditions. Expectations regarding an eligible student's wearing of a mask will be addressed in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individual Healthcare Plan, or 504 plan.

In other words, documentation of the medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering must be provided as would be required for any medical condition or disability for which modifications must be made.

Parents should use the current ADH Guidance to screen each student prior to sending the student to board the bus.

Again, due to the confined nature of public school busses, social distancing measures will be difficult to maintain.

**Magnolia School District strongly encourages parents to bring their students to school when possible.**

**How will elementary students be able to hear their teachers and watch letter-sound formation when their teachers wear masks?**

Teachers will be allowed to use clear face shields for phonics instruction.

**Can a student wear a face shield or a dust scarf (pulls up from neck) instead of a mask?**

Students can wear dust scarves, but the district will have to receive additional guidance about the face shields for students. We will update this page when additional guidance is received.

