

## **USD 339 Face Covering Policy for Students and Staff**

*September 21, 2020*

In response to the Kansas Governor's Executive Order 20-59, Derek Schmidt, Kansas Attorney General, issued AG Opinion 2020-8 on August 11, 2020, in which he opined that local school boards have authority to develop local policies concerning masks/face coverings, social distancing, hand washing and regular temperature checks in regards to addressing concerns for student and staff safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the consideration of students, staff, and community, the USD 339 Board of Education has carefully reviewed health guidance from a variety of sources to modify the District mask/face covering policy. The USD 339 Board of Education approved the following face covering policy during the September 21, 2020, Board Meeting. The Board reserves the right to adjust and modify this policy based on current COVID-19 health guidance and observations.

Students and staff are expected to wear masks/face coverings at all times while in school buildings with very little exception. Acceptable masks/face coverings should cover the nose and mouth and shall either be wrapped around the head/face or secured to the face with ear loops or ties. Masks/face coverings shall be worn while utilizing school transportation, in common areas of the school (hallways, library, nurse's office, restrooms, etc.), when attending small group instruction/activities and during all musical rehearsals/performances (unless such activities/classes can be held outside or social distancing can occur). Students and staff are expected to wear protective masks/face coverings during all transitions such as, entering or exiting the building, passing periods, traveling to the lunchroom, lunch lines, etc.

An exception to the overarching USD 339 mask/face covering policy is for socially distanced students during class. Once six (6) foot social distancing has been established, a district staff member may grant permission for masks/face coverings to be removed. Such exception shall be implemented at the discretion of the staff member.

No student or staff member shall be prohibited from wearing a mask at any time, should they so choose, or their parent/guardian requests that their student wear one.

This policy is based on USD 339 operating under the GREEN Phase (no to low spread) as defined in the USD 339 Return to School Plan. Should USD 339 transition to operating under the YELLOW Phase (minimal/moderate spread), masks/face coverings shall be required at all times while in the classroom.

USD 339 recognizes that wearing face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for certain people. Exceptions to the face covering policy are as follows:

- While students and staff are eating breakfast, lunch, and snacks.
- When wearing a mask/face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition.
- Persons who are hearing impaired or those that are communicating with the hearing impaired where lip communication is essential.

- Persons that are engaged in high-intensity activities where wearing a mask/face covering would make breathing difficult.
- While working in a room or office space that in which all individuals present can maintain a safe social distance from others with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity.

Students that refuse to wear their mask/face covering when instructed to do so may be sent home for the remainder of the day, or until they are willing to comply with the district policy. Repeated violations will be handled in a similar fashion as dress code violations.

Staff members that refuse to wear their mask/face covering in accordance with this policy may receive a verbal or written reprimand in accordance with the disciplinary procedure outlined in the negotiated agreement.

To assist student and staff in understanding when and where masks/face coverings will be required, please refer to the chart below.

	<i>Mask Required</i>	<i>Mask Optional</i>
Riding Bus, Utilizing School Transportation	X	
Before School	X	
Breakfast/Lunch/Snack	X (while socializing)	X (while eating)
Classrooms	X (when social distancing is not possible)	X (when social distancing can be achieved)
Hallways	X	
Recess		X
PE		X
Music	X (when social distancing is not possible)	X (when social distancing can be achieved)
Restroom	X	
Library	X	

After School	X	
Locker Room	X	
As Requested by District Staff	X	

In developing this policy, USD 339 consulted a wide variety of medical, professional, and governmental sources. Here are the sources to some of the information USD 339 utilized in developing this policy:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coronavirus Disease 2019. (2020). *Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Masks in Schools*. Retrieved August 14, 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>

Kansas Department of Health and Environment. (n.d.). *Kansas Schools Gating Criteria*. Retrieved August 14 2020, from <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1425/Kansas-Schools-Gating-Criteria-PDF->

Kansas State Department of Education. (2020, September 1). *Navigating Change: Kansas' Guide to Learning and School Safety Operations*. Retrieved September 11, 2020, from [https://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Communications/Navigating\\_Change/Navigating\\_Change.pdf?ver=2020-07-15-183032-667](https://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Communications/Navigating_Change/Navigating_Change.pdf?ver=2020-07-15-183032-667)

State of Kansas, Governor Laura Kelly. (2020, July 02). *Executive Order NO. 20-52*. Retrieved September 11, 2020 from <https://governor.kansas.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2020/07/20200702093130003.pdf>