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MSDE/MDH Guidelines for Face Coverings in School

Cloth face coverings are non-medical coverings that protect others if the wearer has COVID-19 and may be asymptomatic. There are many types of cloth face coverings. For school use there is not a specific type of cloth face covering that is recommended. However, face coverings should be worn as recommended by the CDC. Cloth face coverings must be worn in schools according to the MDH/MSDE guidance.

The specific requirements are below:

- All students age 5 years and above, school staff or other adults, and bus drivers must wear a cloth face covering while on a school bus or school-provided transport, while in the school building, and on school grounds when not contraindicated due to a medical condition, developmental immaturity, disability, or other health or safety concerns as indicated by the CDC. ACPS will also permit surgical masks in place of cloth masks;
- Other adults must wear cloth face coverings when they must enter the school building or school grounds when not contraindicated due to a medical condition, disability, or other health or safety concerns as indicated by the CDC;
- The use of cloth face coverings is most important at times when physical distancing measures cannot be effectively implemented, especially when indoors; and
- The CDC does not recommend the use of gaiters or face shields as a substitute for a cloth face mask. Evaluations of these face coverings are on-going, but effectiveness is unknown at this time. ACPS does not permit these as a substitute for a cloth face mask.

NOTE: Cloth face coverings should not be worn by children under the age of 2 years and anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

The use of cloth face coverings is recommended for pre-kindergarten students below age 5 years on the school bus, in the school building, and on school grounds when not contraindicated due to a medical condition or developmental or safety considerations.