

Dear Parents and Students:

Please see below for an email I received Monday afternoon at 2:22 pm. It includes a new face covering order from Dr. Levine and the Pennsylvania Department of Health that requires all students and staff to wear a face covering while in school at all times with few exceptions. The Order States: ***“Schools must require all students over 2 years of age to wear face coverings, except for any student who has a medical or mental health condition or disability that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Notwithstanding Section 3, Paragraph B of Secretary Levine’s July 1, 2020 Order regarding face coverings, schools may require such students to provide medical documentation. PDE recommends that any documentation that is provided be in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA of such medical or mental health condition or disability.”***

It is unfortunate that Dr. Levine waited until Monday to issue this order based on all of the precautionary plans that we have made for the opening of school to provide for social distancing. We have met administratively and with the Board to discuss this order and its impact on the students and staff. Although we must adhere to this order, please know that our plans will be to keep our students comfortable as they get back to learning. The order allows for 10 minute face covering breaks and we intend to use these frequently during the school day. With that said, I know that our students are resilient and that they will be able to adapt to the requirements of this order.

Based on the order above, we need to document the students who fall into one of the health related exceptions of the order and will not be wearing a face covering while at school. Therefore, please submit written documentation, preferably from a physician, to keep on file at the school. This information will remain ***confidential*** and should be turned in to the main office of the building that your child(ren) attend no later than August 26, 2020.

We are very excited to have our students return and we will continue every effort to make the learning environment safe and positive. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with this new order.

Sincerely,  
T.J. Kakabar, Superintendent

**From:** RA-EDContinuityofED <[RA-EDCONTINUITYOFED@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EDCONTINUITYOFED@pa.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 2:22 PM

**Subject:** Updated Face Covering Guidance

Dear Colleague,

As you know, the health and safety of Pennsylvania's school communities is top priority, and the guidance we release to support and maintain the health and safety of school communities is rooted in science, data, and research. As more data and research becomes available, the information that becomes guidance must evolve – something we've shared with you since we began releasing reopening guidance.

Last week, the [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\) released an update to their guidance](#) strongly recommending children age two and older should wear face coverings **at all times** to help mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Prior guidance we released in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) stated students in schools could remove their face coverings as long as six feet of social distancing could be maintained. Given this recent change from the AAP, and consistent with the [Secretary of Health's Face Covering Order issued on July 1, 2020](#), DOH is requiring **students wear face coverings at all times while in school**, even when six feet of social distancing can be achieved. There are limited exceptions.

[Visit our Answers to FAQs on Face Coverings/Masks webpage for more information.](#)

Please email any questions you have to [RA-EDContinuityofEd@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EDContinuityofEd@pa.gov).

Thank you for your continued commitment to ensuring a safe learning environment for your students and staff.

-Matt

Matthew Stem | Deputy Secretary  
Department of Education | Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
333 Market Street | Harrisburg PA 17126  
[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)