

COVID-19 Mitigation Procedures For Calhoun County Schools

From August 31, 2021 until September 17, 2021, Calhoun County Schools' students received virtual instruction. This decision was implemented due to the large number of staff members who tested positive for covid 19. This created an extreme shortage of available substitutes. Because we recognize the importance of face-to-face instruction, the decision was made to return to school with additional efforts in place to mitigate the spread of covid. Due to the data from adjoining systems as well as systems from across the state of Alabama reflecting a significance decrease of positive covid cases in schools, CCS has chosen to implement a temporary mask mandate. To address the spread of covid, on September 16th, 2021, the Superintendent recommended to the Board of Calhoun County Schools a temporary facial mask mandate beginning on September 20, 2021 with the review and possible end date on October 29, 2021.

These procedures are applicable to the mask mandate:

1. **Face Coverings**. Face coverings that cover the nose and mouth are to be worn in the following circumstances:
 - a. ***Inside CCS Facilities***. Face coverings that cover the nose and mouth are to be worn by everyone inside any CCS facility *regardless of vaccination status*. This requirement also applies to any indoor CCS activity or event, including Calhoun County Board of Education meetings.
 - b. ***Traveling on School Bus***. Face coverings that cover the nose and mouth are to be worn by everyone while traveling on any CCS school bus. This provision is intended to comply with CDC Order, authorized by 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 C.F.R. 70.2, 71.31(b), and 71.32(b).

2. **Exceptions**. Face coverings are not required in the following circumstances:
 - a. ***Toddlers***. Face coverings shall not be required for individuals younger than four (4) years of age.
 - b. ***Strenuous Physical Activity***. Face coverings shall not be required for any student while engaged in strenuous physical activity. When a student is not participating in such an event, he or she should wear a face covering.
 - c. ***Exigent Circumstances***. A face covering will not be required if a parent, guardian, or visitor is: experiencing acute difficulty breathing;

unconscious or incapacitated; receiving health care where it is necessary to remove the face covering; or is personally unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

d. ***Medical Exemptions.***

- i. If a family believes that their student requires an exemption to this procedure based on a medical, physical, or psychological contraindication, that family should reach out to their student's principal.
- ii. CCS may require documentation from a licensed health care provider before granting an exemption, and it is ultimately CCS' determination – and not the outside licensed health care providers – as to whether a student's medical condition justifies an exemption.
- iii. It may take several days before CCS can review a particular request for an exemption and to determine whether any such exemption is warranted.

3. **Questions.** If a family or student is unwilling to comply with this procedure, the school principal will attempt to contact the student's family to discuss possible alternatives to in-person instruction. Otherwise, the student should wear the mask.

4. **Enforcement.**

a. ***Student Discipline.***

- i. **Misplaced or Forgotten Mask.** CCBOE will not punish students for failing to bring a mask to school or for misplacing their masks or for forgetting to bring a mask with them to school. Each school will have spare masks for students as supplies last.
- ii. **Disruption.** If a student disrupts class or school as a part of failing to wear a mask, the student will be subject to the applicable consequences of a dress code violation from the Code of Conduct.

5. **Updates.**

- a. ***Amendments.*** The Superintendent, and his designees, will develop, and amend as necessary, these procedures based on current guidance from local and state government and health officials.
- b. ***Notice.***

- i. The Superintendent, and his designees, will ensure that this page is updated to reflect the latest version of the COVID-19 mitigation procedures.
- ii. The Superintendent, or his designee, will update the Board of Education when making major changes to these procedures.
- iii. The Superintendent and/or school administrators will send updates to CCS families using typical methods of communication when making major changes to these procedures.

6. **Effective Date:** September 21, 2021