

TANTASQUA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FACE MASKS

The District is mindful of the evolving need for emergency measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In consideration of the recommendations issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Massachusetts Department of Health, and the Massachusetts Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the School Committee is adopting this emergency policy for all students, employees and visitors of Tantasqua Regional Schools.

Until further action of the School Committee, all students, employees and visitors attending Tantasqua Regional School District shall be required to wear a mask including **(a)** while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility or other area of a school campus, and **(b)** when riding in school-provided transportation. All masks must cover the nose and mouth of the student.

This policy applies to students waiting outside school buildings, before and after school, and to students waiting at bus stops. Students shall wear masks at all times except for the following:

- Students may remove masks for eating or drinking, only as authorized by school staff and in designated areas;
- Students may remove masks when appropriate social distancing measures are in place as determined by a teacher or school administrator, consistent with DESE Guidance;
- Students may be exempted from wearing a mask by Building Administration when providing medical documentation from a physician of a medical condition prohibiting mask wearing;
- Individual students may remove masks on a case-by-case basis for specific instructional needs, as determined by a staff member, in which case the staff member will ensure appropriate social distancing measures consistent with DESE guidelines; or
- Students may be exempted from this policy due to special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the Special Education Director or Building Principal.

Masks worn by students and staff can be disposable or reusable and shall:

- fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin,
- be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material,
- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and
- be secured with ties or ear loops.

Based on guidance from health authorities, neck gaiters, open-chin triangle bandanas and face coverings containing valves, mesh material or holes of any kind will not be considered appropriate masks.

If a staff member or student does not have an appropriate mask, or soils, loses, or breaks theirs during the day, they will be provided with a mask by the school nurse.

If a student attends in-person learning, the failure of a student to comply with these expectations and the willful defiance to follow direction from school staff will be considered insubordination. Violation of this policy will result in the student being removed from class for dismissal, and a parent/guardian being notified to pick up the student within 45 minutes. Further discipline will be progressive up to and including a requirement to be shifted to fully remote learning.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 –
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks -

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! –
- <https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020