

REQUIRED FACE COVERINGS

The Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical School District will adhere to all mandates related to face coverings in school buildings issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the United States Federal Government.

Pursuant to authority granted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education issued a directive to all public schools in the Commonwealth on August 25, 2021 requiring the wearing of appropriate cloth or disposable paper face masks by public school students (age 5 and above) and staff in all grades through at least October 1, 2021. After October 1, 2021, if a school demonstrates a vaccination rate of 80% or more of students and staff in the school, vaccinated individuals in that school would no longer be subject to the DESE mask requirement.

In accordance with the DESE's August 25, 2021 Mask Mandate and to ensure compliance with the Department's directives, the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical School District is requiring that all students and staff wear an appropriate cloth or disposable paper facemask that fully covers the individual's nose and mouth at all times while in the school facilities. Any depictions or statements printed on a mask must also comply with student dress code requirements. Students who are appropriately distanced shall not, however, be required to wear masks while eating in the school cafeteria during designated lunch periods or while outside of the school building. A procedure for mask breaks during the school day will also be established by the School administration while in the school facility. Parents, visitors, and third parties seeking to enter the School building will also be subject to the same masking requirements applicable to students and staff and will be denied entry without an appropriate face mask in the absence of an approved written exemption by the School administration.

Written requests for exemptions from the mask requirement applicable to all students, staff and visitors to the School building will be considered based on the existence of a specific documented medical or behavioral issue which would result in a safety risk to the individual if required to wear a cloth or a commercially produced disposable face mask. All requests for exemptions must be accompanied by documentation/correspondence from a medical physician, licensed and practicing in the state of Massachusetts, identifying the specific medical condition or behavioral need which would prevent the individual from safely wearing the required mask. Such requests and supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Administrator of Student Services and may be subject to further review by the Principal. Exemptions from, and alternatives to, the wearing of a required a mask will be determined on an individual basis when an exemption is requested. To the extent that a student or their parent disagree with an initial decision regarding a requested exemption, a meeting will be convened by the Administrator of Student Services to review the request for a disability related accommodation in the form of an exemption to the mask requirement applicable to all students, staff and school visitors. that are now in effect.

A student's refusal to adhere to the masking requirement may, in the absence of a written prior exemption from the School administration, result in a disciplinary action against the student including, but not limited to suspension from school. All such disciplinary actions shall be implemented in compliance with the procedural requirements set forth in the Massachusetts Student Discipline regulations, 603 CMR 53.00.

This policy will be revised at such time as none of the authorities listed above have in place face covering mandates affecting school buildings.

SOURCE: DESE

[DESE Implementation of Mask Requirement August 25, 2021](#)

Adopted: September 9, 2021