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2021-2022 STUDENT FACE COVERING GUIDANCE

The goal of the CDPH guidance “is to make sure all California students get access to safe and full in-person instruction.” The safe and full in-person instruction depends on a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- Vaccination of all eligible people (ages 12 and older) to reduce COVID-19 rates in the community
- Wearing face coverings while indoors at school by all students and adults
- Face coverings are optional for everyone for all outdoor activities in K-12 schools

According to the CDPH, research has shown that in-person classes can safely happen without spacing requirements (social distancing) as long as other prevention strategies, such as wearing face coverings, are in effect. Wearing a face covering for indoor activities has shown to be one of the most effective and simplest strategies to reduce and prevent COVID-19 from spreading in schools. In short, wearing face coverings for indoor activities allows our children to get back into classrooms for in-person learning with their teachers. Individuals may still be exempted from face covering requirements in accordance with CDPH face mask guidance. Such individuals exempted from wearing a face mask due to a medical condition must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, so long as their condition permits it. We acknowledge that wearing a face covering while indoors at school is not considered ideal by some, but we must establish and maintain health and safety protocols and procedures to keep our classroom doors open for in-person instruction. None of us wants to experience widespread school closures again like we did last year.

Despite ongoing research and improved COVID-19 vaccine availability, as of August 6, 2021, a significant number of Madera County residents eligible to receive the vaccine are not yet fully vaccinated. Only 43% of Madera County’s eligible population has been fully vaccinated. The Delta variant is two times more contagious than earlier variants of COVID-19, leading to the current rapid increase in positive cases throughout the county, state, and nation. Because of this, universal masking in indoor school settings is required so that students and staff are able to return to in-person learning on a daily, full-time basis.

The following is a summary of our District’s current face covering protocols, as per CDPH guidance:

INDOOR FACE COVERING GUIDANCE---STUDENT SETTINGS

- Students AND Staff in a TK-8 school setting are required to wear face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidance in all indoor settings.
- Students exempted from wearing a face mask due to a medical condition verified by a physician must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape along the bottom edge.
- Masks are required for all students and staff while riding in a school bus since it is considered an indoor area.

OUTDOOR FACE COVERING GUIDANCE---SCHOOL SETTING

- Face coverings are OPTIONAL for all outdoor TK-8 school settings for students and adults.