



GECDSB - Mask Protocol

Students

In accordance with the Ministry of Education's Reopening Schools Guidelines (*July 30, 2020*), it is required that all students in grades 4-8 are to wear cloth or non-medical masks while in class and in the hallways of the school until further notice. It is strongly recommended that students in kindergarten to grade 3 wear cloth or non-medical face masks when indoors at school.

Students may wear masks made available to them by the school or they may wear their own personal non-medical masks provided they cover the nose and mouth. These masks can be cloth or homemade, and can include hijab, nigab, burka, scarf or bandana.

Please refer to [Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings - How to Put On, Remove and Clean](#)

Staff Members

All staff members are provided with medical masks and eye protection (i.e. face shields). Masks must be worn at all times while working indoors, including in hallways and during classes. The only exceptions will be outdoor activities, or when working in an area where there are no other people, for example, in an office. All staff members must wear face shields with their masks when there is a risk of droplets or other bodily fluids making contact with eyes and face. In line with the Windsor Essex County Health Unit, we will not accept face shields in place of masks. All staff members masks must cover the nose and the mouth.

Student Transportation

Student Transportation follows the same protocol as noted above i.e., students in grades 4-12 are to wear appropriate masks while students in kindergarten to grade 3 are strongly recommended to do so.

Mask Exemptions

In some circumstances, there may be medical exemptions to wearing masks at school.

Medical advice:

COVID-19: Guidance for School Reopening (*July 29, 2020*) document indicated that some students may not be able to tolerate wearing masks due to sensory, mental health or cognitive issues. Further, it suggested that students who are unable to put on or remove their masks without adult assistance, should not wear masks.

Dr. Wajid Ahmed, Medical Officer of Health for the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, noted on June 26, 2020 in his guidance to commercial operations that there are exceptions to wearing a mask in public.

"a. Under the age of 5 years either chronologically or developmentally and he or she refuses to wear a face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;

- b. Wearing a Face Covering would inhibit the Person's ability to breathe in any way;*
- c. For any other medical reason, the Person cannot safely wear a Face Covering such as, but not limited to, respiratory disease, cognitive difficulties or difficulties in hearing or processing information."*

Student Exemption Procedure:

1. Parent/Guardian to contact School Administrator directly.

Staff Member Exemption Procedure:

1. Staff members are to work with their assigned Human Resources Officer to create a plan to ensure physical distancing, no sharing of materials or items, and cleaning and sanitizing of work materials.