

# Face Covering CPS SC Policy

Chelmsford Public Schools February 17, 2022

## Timeline

- 8/18/2020 SC Policy EBCFA Face Coverings Approval
- 2/9/2022 Governor Baker and Commissioner Riley's Announcement to Mask/Face Covering Mandate Lift as of 2/28/2022
- 2/17/2021 School Committee Meeting and Action on Current Masking Policy





## **Current Policy**

#### **SC Policy EBCFA** – **Face Coverings**

(To remain in place until rescinded or amended by the Chelmsford School Committee)

- Requires face covering of nose and mouth of all individuals in K-12 buildings, grounds, school transportation.
- Exemptions provided per CDC guidance and other factors including:
  - medical;
  - behavioral;
  - or other challenge making it unsafe to wear.
- Face coverings are not required when socially distanced for:
  - Mask breaks;
  - Eating and drinking;
  - Physical education classes;
  - While outside.

Current Vaccination Rates

School	Rate
Chelmsford High School	86%
McCarthy Middle School	72%
Parker Middle School	69%
Byam Elementary School	58%
Center Elementary School	63%
Harrington Elementary School	53%
South Row Elementary School	57%

## **Consultation with Health Department and School Physician**

- Chelmsford Health Department
  - Continually aligned with the DPH and DESE
  - Support guidelines issued by DESE on masks mandate lift K-12
  - Positivity rate decline town wide and increase in vaccination options
  - Recommend delay in rescinding mask mandate until 3/14 February break
- MA DPH Advisory Update For Indoor Masks Use Outside of Home
  - Vaccinated Individuals Should wear a face covering/mask for personal or family member with weakened immune system, increase risk because of age or underlying medical condition.
  - Unvaccinated Individuals Should wear a face covering/mask to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- COVID-19 positive cases are down at the schools, town, and state-wide.
- Goal is to start planning next phase of COVID-19 to include:
  - Community transmission rates
  - Availability of vaccines
  - COVID-19 testing
- Current data supports:
  - Positive cases in the community and in our district continue to decline
  - The vaccine is widely available in the community and in our school vaccine clinics
  - Weekly Pool Testing and Weekly At-Home Rapid Antigen Testing is available

# Continued Mitigation Strategies

- Face coverings required on school buses <u>January</u>
  29, 2021 Order
- Face coverings required in Health Offices
- Distancing where feasible
- Deep cleaning and additional cleaning at schools
- Distribution of At-Home Antigen Tests
- Continuation with Pool Testing
- Hosting Vaccine Clinics
- Continued messaging and updates
  - COVID-19 Dashboard
  - Pool Testing Dashboard
  - Availability of Vaccination and Booster Clinics
  - Newsletter Messages

## **Community Decisions**

#### **Bordering Towns**

- Billerica Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28
- Carlisle Voting Thursday
- Lowell Lifting Mask Mandate 3/7
- Westford Lifting Mask Mandate 3/7
- Tyngsborough Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28

#### **Additional Merrimack Valley Communities**

- Andover Voting at March 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting
- Bedford Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28
- Burlington Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28
- Dracut Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28
- Tewksbury Lifting Mask Mandate 2/28



## **School Committee Considerations**

#### **SC Policy EBCFA**

- 1. Keep/Rescind Current Policy
- 2. Amend Current Policy
- 3. Or adopt MASC Updated Policy: In accordance with guidance and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.
  - A face covering that covers the nose and mouth is strongly recommended to be worn by individuals who remain unvaccinated or are otherwise immunocompromised in school buildings, and on school grounds, even when social distancing is observed.
  - Individuals who are vaccinated are not required to wear a mask but may do so if desired.
  - Students and staff returning from 5-day quarantine following a positive COVID test must follow strict mask use, other than when eating, drinking, or outside, and conduct active monitoring for symptoms, through day 10 of exposure.
  - Masks will be required in all school health offices.
  - By federal public health order, all students and staff are required to wear a mask on school buses.

