



COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE – MASK MANDATE

Below is the summary of the mask mandate implemented by the *Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (March 30, 2021) found [HERE](#).

For more information about non-medical masks and face coverings (collectively referred to as masks), visit the BCCDC website [HERE](#).

ADMINISTRATORS

Requirements for wearing masks

1. Administrators of each school must ensure that masks are worn by the following groups at all times when inside the school:
 - all staff and any visitors;
 - all Grade 4 to Grade 12 students.

Exceptions

2. The requirements above do not apply:
 - to a person who is unable to wear a mask because of:
 - a psychological, behavioral or health condition; or
 - a physical, cognitive or mental impairment
 - to a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
 - if the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
 - to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.
 - while behind a barrier;
 - while consuming food or beverage; or,
 - while communicating with a person who needs to see visual cues, facial expressions, and/or lip movement.

STUDENTS

Grades K-3

3. Kindergarten to grade 3 students are strongly encouraged to wear masks indoors but are not required to do so. Mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.

Grades 4 to 12

4. Grade 4 to Grade 12 students **are required to wear a mask** indoors when interacting with anyone inside and outside of their learning group.

School Transport

5. All students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 must wear a mask when they are on the bus.

Physical Education/Outdoor Programs

6. Activities in physical and health education are scheduled outdoors where possible and have been adapted to ensure that students are spread out as much as possible to reduce any physical contact beyond a brief moment. Any activities taking place indoors are low-intensity, unless the activity is stationary and students are spaced 2m apart. Grade 4 to grade 12 students are required to wear masks during low-intensity indoor activities where physical distancing is not consistently practiced and a barrier is not present.

Music Programs

7. Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.

K-12 STAFF

8. All K-12 staff must:
 - wear a mask at all times when indoors except when:
 - behind a barrier;
 - while consuming food or beverage;
 - wear a mask during PHE/outdoor program classes when they are indoors and a barrier is not present;
 - wear a mask when working with a student indoors where the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier; and,
 - wear a mask within staff only spaces, including during break times, even when physical distancing can be maintained.

Click [HERE](#) for the Q and A re the Updated Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines