

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
<i>Administrative Procedure</i>	<i>Administrative Procedure Number</i>
Students Wearing Masks	(NEW) #817
<i>Directional Policy</i>	
800 – Healthy Schools & Workplaces	

TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Students Wearing Masks

DATE APPROVED:

September 2020

PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:

September 2021 (annually)

DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:

The Board recognizes that the health and well-being of our students and staff is foundational to their success. This AP focuses on applying that collective effort and engagement during a public health emergency by ensuring a clear and consistent approach to the requirement for students to wear masks.

ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

This AP combines several aspects of the board's strategic plan: ensuring safety and inclusivity, fostering self-directed learning, and making explicit the call to become caring and responsible citizens.



Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Vision

Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education
LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

Mission

To educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body and spirit of all.

LEARN

Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.

LEAD

Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.

SERVE

Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Following the Ministry of Education guidance document Guide to Reopening Ontario's Schools, July 2020, students in Grades 4-12 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways, during classes, before- and after-school programs and on school transportation. In January 2021, the Ministry of Education required students in Grades 1-3 to wear non-medical or cloth mask and added the requirement for students in Grades 1-12 to wear masks outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained. For students in Kindergarten, the wearing of a mask is strongly recommended.

The board recognizes there are students with medical restrictions (e.g. severe breathing difficulties, inability to remove a mask on their own, etc.) that may require the student to be exempted from wearing a mask at school. All principals will follow this procedure in guiding parents/guardians or students over the age of 18, or students between the ages of 16 and 18 who have withdrawn from parental authority in understanding and applying for an exemption.

STUDENT MASK EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Any student who requires an exemption from wearing a mask must have a diagnosed medical condition that prohibits its use or partial use.
- The parent/guardian must get a physician's note authorizing the exemption of

wearing a mask if a note for a relevant medical condition is not already on file (e.g. asthma, other breathing difficulties, etc.)

- The parent/guardian for the student must also fill in the Student Exemption of Non-Medical or Cloth Masks Form (Appendix A) and attach the physician's note to the form.
- The form must be received by the school prior to commencement of school or student attendance without the mask.

Note: The Ministry of Education will allow all students wearing a mask indoors to remove them when outdoors.

SCHOOL PROCEDURE:

Once a Student Exemption of Non-Medical or Cloth Masks Form (Appendix A) is received by the school the following will occur:

- The Administrator or designate will confirm with the parent or guardian that the form was received.
- The student will receive a card from the school that states, **“I have permission from my school to not wear a mask.”**
- This card can be shown to any school or transportation staff that requests to see it.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring the alignment of the Students Wearing Masks Administrative Procedure with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Designating resources for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure

Superintendents of Schools and System Portfolios are responsible for:

- Ensuring principals are consistent with the application of this Administrative Procedure.

- Ensuring that all employees for whom they have supervisory responsibility are aware of the requirements under this Administrative Procedure.

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Ensuring staff and students who they supervise are aware of the requirements under this Administrative Procedure.
- Listening to and documenting a parent/guardian/student's concern with the Ministry of Education requirement to wear a mask
- Ensuring that students and staff members in the workplace are aware of and comply with this procedure.
- Discussing the issue of masks / mask exemptions in schools with staff and/or students prior to the start of school.
- Implementing the student mask exemptions procedure as necessary and granting appropriate exemptions if they meet the criteria.
- Addressing concerns about mask-wearing that are reported by staff or bus drivers.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that students are educated on the importance of mask wearing during the pandemic, while at the same time maintaining the dignity of all students, those wearing masks and those who have been exempted.
- Addressing any concerns with respect to masks according to normal progressive discipline practices.
- Advising their supervisor of issues related to mask-wearing and collaborating in potential resolves.

Students are responsible for:

- Complying with the Ministry of Education's requirement to wear a mask during the time of Pandemic.
- If exempted from wearing a mask, carrying with them the message card for students who have been exempted from wearing a mask, and showing it to a staff member or bus driver upon request.

Parents are responsible for:

- Completing the application form for Student Exemption from Wearing Non-Medical or Cloth Masks and submitting it to the principal along with appropriate medical documentation prior to the commencement of school or as soon as possible as they become aware of the medical issue.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

- Students in Grades 1-12 will be wearing their non-medical or cloth masks as required unless exempted in accordance with this procedure.
- Exempted students will carry and show the message card for students who have been exempted from wearing a mask.

DEFINITIONS:

- Non-medical mask: a mask designed specifically for medical procedures, sometimes referred to as a surgical mask, and distinct from an N-95 mask which is for severe respiratory treatment in hospitals, and not required for schools.
- Cloth mask: a mask sewn from cloth that covers the nose, mouth and chin and has loops or straps for the ears (this does not include bandanas or any other type of face covering). Cloth masks with graphics or insignia must be appropriate for school.

Non-medical face masks or face coverings **should**:

- allow for easy breathing
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- maintain their shape after washing and drying
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping

Some masks also include a pocket to accommodate a paper towel or disposable coffee filter, for increased benefit.

Non-medical masks or face coverings **should**:

- not be shared with others
- not impair vision or interfere with tasks
- not be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- not be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- not be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- not be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- not be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing

REFERENCES:

- [Guide to Reopening Ontario's Schools](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix A - Student Exemption of Non-Medical or Cloth Masks Form