

# COVID-19: Personal Face Coverings

## *Boscobel Area Schools*

Updated 4/22

- Personal face coverings/masks are optional, unless required under specific circumstances. Masking protocols MAY be affected by other protocols such as positive case status. A symptomatic student or adult will be asked to wear a surgical mask until leaving the building.
- If/when PFCs are required during the school year, students who have conditions that might exempt them from wearing a PFC must provide a note from a licensed, medical health care provider to the school-either to excuse the PFC or to confirm a medical or other diagnosis that would warrant exemption. If a student has a previously documented health, sensory, or other condition with the school, the parent/guardian must contact the school and request consideration by the school nurse and building principal or pupil services director. If/when PFCs are required during the school year, staff members who have conditions that might exempt them from wearing a PFC must provide documentation to the school from a licensed, medical health care provider. Note that a face shield is not a PFC and does not afford the same level of protection.
- If/when PFCs are required at school, staff and students may remove PFCs when eating or drinking or outdoors, and staff may remove their PFC if working alone in a room or office.
- Masking is addressed under specific circumstances in other protocols. **Please review those protocols in reference to masking.** Individuals with face mask exemptions may choose to wear a school-provided face shield as applicable to the situation (no exemptions or exceptions).

Guidance for personal face coverings/masks for indoor spaces in schools comes from Grant County Health Department, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The district's masking protocols are decided by the school board. For guidance and recommendations about personal face coverings (PFCs) or face masks, go to:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/schools.htm> and <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/mask.htm>
- <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/2019-novel-coronavirus>
- <https://www.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

### **When are personal face coverings/face masks NOT recommended?**

PFCs should not be worn by children under the age of 2 or by anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Persons with medical considerations, including autism and respiratory conditions, as well as those with traumatic personal experiences, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, or sensory issues may have challenges wearing a mask. They may need to consult with health care providers or the school nurse for

guidance. It may be difficult for younger children to wear a PFC properly, but ensuring proper mask size and fit and providing children with frequent reminders and education on the importance and proper wearing of masks may help address these issues. (CDC, DPI)

### **How do you wear a personal face covering/mask?**

A PFC should cover the nose and mouth, fit snugly on the face, and be secured in place via ear loops or strings that tie behind the head. Avoid touching the face covering, especially if hands have not been washed recently. To remove a PFC, untie the strings behind the head or stretch the ear loops. Handle the PFC only by the ties or ear loops, and fold the outside corners together. Wash hands after handling or removing your PFC. (CDC)

### **How do you care for a personal face covering/mask?**

It's a good idea to wash your PFC frequently as they should not be worn longer than one day before needing to be washed. Store them in a designated bag or bin until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you are unable to machine wash the covering, wash it by hand with laundry detergent and hot water before air drying. Re-wearing a cloth face covering without washing it is not advised. (DPI)