Facial Coverings Policy

According to the Center for Disease Control, the COVID-19 virus spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with one another - usually within about six feet. Wearing face coverings is especially important during times of elevated community spread, particularly when social distancing is not possible. School settings are especially high risk for community spread. Although children are less likely to become severely ill, they often are carriers of the virus and can spread it to school staff or family members at home, some of whom may be high-risk. Additionally, those family members can then carry the virus to others in workplace and community settings.

Masks provide a barrier that prevents these respiratory droplets and smaller aerosolized particles from spreading from one person to another. Masks not only protect the person who is wearing the mask, but also protects the people they come in contact with by preventing the spread of that person’s respiratory droplets as they speak, cough, sneeze or even sing. If both people involved in a conversation are wearing masks, it limits the particles passing between them.

In an effort to maintain a safe environment for all, the Coventry Local School District has established the following guidelines for face masks, coverings, and shields.

Students: Students are required to properly wear masks, that cover the nose, mouth, and chin at these points during the school day: on school transportation, entering/exiting the school buildings, in the hallways, common areas, offices, and when a safe social distance/system is not feasible. Students may be excused from wearing a face mask if wearing a mask is prohibited by federal regulations, or advised against due to an impairment, disability, and/or a documented medical condition. Masks/coverings must adhere to district/building rules regarding appropriate apparel.

Employees: School staff are required to properly wear masks, that cover the nose, mouth, and chin. As with other businesses, all school staff and volunteers must wear face coverings, unless it is unsafe to do so or where doing so would significantly interfere with the learning process. Facial coverings are not required when staff members work alone in an assigned work area. Accommodations will be made for staff with documented respiratory issues or medical conditions that would prevent the ability to wear a face mask. With these situations, staff members must provide written justification from a health care physician that indicates that the staff member is unable to comply with this policy due to a medical reason.

Visitors and Volunteers: Visitors and volunteers will be required to have a temperature check, complete a symptom checklist, and properly wear masks, that cover the nose, mouth, and chin, upon entering a school building.

Face Shields: Face shields that wrap around the face and extend below the chin can be considered as an alternative when face coverings would hinder the learning process, or the staff member is unable to wear a mask. Some situations where face shields would be useful include: • Interacting with students, such as those with disabilities, where communication could be impacted. • Interacting with English-language learners or when teaching a foreign language. • Settings where masks might present a safety hazard (i.e. science labs).

*The district superintendent may remove or revise the Facial Coverings policy based on an improved COVID-19 pandemic situation, changes in state/local requirements, and/or based on district need.