



CAMBRIA HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent
426 Glendale Lake Road
Patton, PA 16668

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH MASK ORDER FOR K-12 SCHOOLS
September 2, 2021

Dear Parents, and Guardians:

As I am sure you are aware, on Tuesday afternoon, the Pennsylvania Department of Health issued an [order requiring face coverings to be worn in all school entities](#) effective next Tuesday, September 7.

As published on the [PA Department of Education's "Answers to FAQs" page](#), the order applies to children, teachers, staff, and visitors (except those under the age of two) while inside the school, regardless of vaccination status. While our teachers will attempt to hold Physical Education classes outdoors, even when indoors students may remove their masks during P.E.

Although our District's Health and Safety Plan left masks a recommended but optional choice, this order falls under the state's Disease Prevention and Control Law. Fortunately, as our extracurricular activities and athletics resume, this order has no impact on crowd limits at our events. Additionally, given the latest Contact Tracing, Isolation, and Quarantine guidelines (found after this letter), the order will make contact tracing in classrooms unnecessary. After Tuesday, the school will primarily conduct contact tracing based upon seating in the cafeteria during breakfast and lunch, as students would not be considered "close contacts" by these guidelines at any other times.

While we recognize that individual attitudes about this order vary greatly, we must remember that our children are still in their first weeks of the new school year. I want our teachers' time with our students in the classroom spent assessing their academic needs, while at the same time alleviating any natural back-to-school anxiety that children may experience. For our older students, I want the year to not only include high-quality, in-person instruction, but also the extracurricular and social activities that complement the middle and high school experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth J. Kerchenske', written in a cursive style.

Kenneth J. Kerchenske
Superintendent

Contact Tracing, Isolation, and Quarantine

- Schools should continue to work with DOH or county or municipal health departments (CMHD) to complete contact tracing for individuals diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. As part of the contact tracing process, DOH and CMHDs will continue to work with schools to gather information about potential close contacts.
- The CDC guidance adds the following exception to the definition of close contact:
 - In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where:
 - both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting face masks; and
 - other K–12 school prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, increased ventilation) were in place in the K–12 school setting.
 - This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

What type of mask complies with this Order?

The Order requires individuals to wear a "face covering." "Face covering" means covering of the nose and mouth with material that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk or linen. A "face covering" may be factory-made, [sewn by hand, or be improvised from household items](#)  including, but not limited to, scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

Does a disposable face shield suffice in lieu of a mask?

Wearing a cloth face covering is best. A disposable face shield is considered an alternative to a face covering and may be worn when wearing a face covering, as defined above, is otherwise not possible.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education