

RESOLUTION

Adopting a Saint Paul Public Schools Resolution Regarding the Use of Masks in all Saint Paul Public School Settings

WHEREAS, on August 18, 2021, the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 625, Saint Paul Public Schools, adopted a “Saint Paul Public Schools Resolution Mandating the Use of Masks in all Saint Paul Public School Buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reviewed that resolution near the start of each academic quarter during the 2021-22 school year; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 infection and hospitalization rates have dropped during the winter of 2021-2022 on a national, statewide, and local basis; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released an updated framework for understanding and responding to the risks and impacts of COVID-19 in communities. Its newest guidelines reflect the latest data and evolving science surrounding COVID-19, creating COVID-19 community levels that account for severity of disease and the capacity of the health care system to respond; and

WHEREAS, the nation is now in a better position than ever before to fight COVID-19 – including to prevent medically-significant illness, minimize the burden on our health care system, and protect the most vulnerable in our communities through vaccines, treatments, and

WHEREAS, as part of its new framework, the CDC no longer recommends universal masking for all K-12, early care, and education settings, such as child care and family child care providers. The CDC now recommends masking guidelines for school and early care settings that follow the same guidelines for the community in which they are located. Based on the latest data, CDC now recommends universal masking for:

- Schools located in areas where the COVID-19 community level is high;
- Early care and education centers located in areas where the COVID-19 community level is high; and
- School buses and vans for schools and early care and education centers where the COVID-19 community level is high; and

WHEREAS, school districts, schools, early childhood centers and homes, and classrooms may still choose to implement masking at any COVID-19 community level depending on their community’s needs – and especially keeping in mind those for whom prevention strategies provide critical protection for in-person learning. Implementing layered prevention strategies in schools can protect the rights of students with disabilities and ensure their continued access to safe in-person learning.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, Independent School District No. 625, Saint Paul Public Schools:

1. Rescinds the August 18, 2021, “Saint Paul Public Schools Resolution Mandating the Use of Masks in all Saint Paul Public School Buildings”
2. Ends all masking requirements when Ramsey County Community Levels are low or medium per the CDC COVID-19 County Check at www.cdc.gov.
3. Requires universal indoor masking for all people in a school setting (ages 2 and older), including all teachers, staff, students, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, when Ramsey County Community Levels are high per the CDC COVID-19 County Check at www.cdc.gov.
4. For purposes of this Resolution:
 - a. the term “school setting” means all buildings and properties owned or leased by the School District and is not limited to only those places where students are present. It includes all administrative and operational buildings and sites as well. It includes all school sponsored activities, regardless of location (i.e., field trips, job sites). It also includes all School District transportation services (i.e., School District-owned vehicles, contracted vehicles, public transportation through which the School District meets its transportation obligations);
 - b. “masks” are manufactured or homemade cloth face coverings that, when properly worn, fit snugly and fully cover an individual’s nose and mouth. Scarves, ski masks, and bandannas do not constitute masks for purposes of this Resolution and are not substitutes for wearing a proper mask;
5. Consistent with CDC and MDH guidance, masking requirements, when in effect, do not apply to:
 - a. Individuals who cannot wear a mask or cannot safely wear a mask because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.;
 - b. Individuals for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations;
 - c. Individuals who are actively struggling to breathe, are unconscious, or are unable to remove a mask without help;
 - d. Individuals in certain situations (e.g., swimming or other activities that will soak or submerge a face covering in water) where masks are unsafe.

6. When masking requirements are in effect:
 - a. Staff may remove masks when working alone, including when alone in an office, classroom, vehicle, cubicle with walls at least face level when social distancing is maintained, or other enclosed work area;
 - b. Staff, students, and other persons present indoors in a school setting may temporarily remove masks in the following situations:
 - i. When actively engaged in an athletic game, scrimmage, or competition subject to any rules, regulations, requirements, or guidance issued by the Minnesota State High School League for activities under its administration;
 - ii. When eating or drinking;
 - iii. During performances involving singing, acting, public speaking, or playing musical instruments that make wearing a mask difficult or impracticable;
 - iv. In response to requests to verify an identity for lawful purposes;
 - v. When communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with that individual while wearing a face covering difficult;
 - vi. While receiving a service—including nursing, medical, or personal care services—that cannot be performed or would be difficult to perform when the individual receiving the service is wearing a mask.
 - c. For infection prevention and control practices, staff delivering direct student support services (e.g., personal care that could expose staff to a student’s bodily fluids, direct care with ill students and staff, or health care procedures involving respiratory or aerosol-generating procedures) are required to wear both a cloth mask as described above and a medical/surgical grade disposable mask when Ramsey County Community Levels are high per the CDC COVID-19 County Check at www.cdc.gov.
7. The District will take corrective action for any violation of this policy. Such corrective action will be consistent with the law and regulations, District policies and handbooks, and any relevant collective bargaining agreements.
8. The Board of Education will review this resolution as necessary in light of changes to community levels and case rates, guidance from the CDC, guidance from the

Minnesota Department of Health and/or Minnesota Department of Education and any other applicable authorities and, minimally, prior to the start of each academic quarter.

9. This Resolution becomes effective as of 12:01am, Monday, April 18, 2022.