

1.13--EMERGENCY POLICY ON WEARING FACE MASKS AND FACE COVERINGS

In consideration of the recommendations and guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Arkansas Department of Health, and the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the guidance provided by the Governor of the State of Arkansas, the Board is adopting this Emergency Policy for all students and employees of the District. This policy will be in effect when an Executive Order regarding face masks and face coverings is issued by the Governor of the State of Arkansas.

Students

All students in kindergarten through the 12th grade shall be required to wear a mask or face covering (a) while attending school or a school function in any school building, District facility or other area of a school campus or the District's grounds, and (b) when riding in school-provided transportation. All masks and face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the student. This Emergency Policy applies to students waiting outside school buildings before and after school, and to students waiting at bus stops. Students shall wear masks and face coverings at all times except for the following:

- Students may remove masks and face coverings for eating or drinking;
- Students may remove masks and face coverings when appropriate physical distancing measures are in place as determined by a Van Buren School District staff member;
- Students may be exempted from this Emergency Policy by the school principal due to a documented medical condition or disability of the student;
- Students may remove masks and face coverings on a case-by-case basis for specific instructional needs, including physical education activities, as determined by a teacher, in which case the teacher will require appropriate physical distancing measures to the extent possible;
- Students may remove masks and face covering while participating in athletic activities where a six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the activity or active exercise; or
- Students may be exempted from this Emergency Policy due to special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the Director of Special Services or the Director of Student Services.

Students who refuse to wear a mask or face covering at school or at a school function under this Emergency Policy shall be subject to discipline consistent with District Policy and exclusion from on-site instruction.

Student absences related to the vaccine will be excused.

Employees

All District employees shall be required to wear a mask or face covering while working or attending a school function in any school building, District facility or other area of a school campus or the District's grounds. All masks and face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the employee. Employees shall wear masks and face coverings at all times except for the following:

- Employees may remove masks and face coverings for eating or drinking;
- Employees may remove masks and face coverings when appropriate physical distancing measures are in place;
- Employees may remove masks and face covering when six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the ability to safely and effectively perform an employee's job duty;
- Employees may remove masks and face covering while participating in athletic activities where a six feet distance is not achievable, but a mask is inhibitory to the activity or active exercise; or
- Employees may be exempted from this Emergency Policy by the school principal or the Superintendent due to a documented medical condition or disability of the employee.

Employees who refuse to wear a mask or face covering at school or at a school function under this Emergency Policy shall be subject to discipline consistent with District Policy.

Adopted by Board of Education 08/11/20
Approved by Board of Education 04/13/21