



Updated Mask Policy for Blanchester Local Schools

What is an acceptable face covering/mask?

PER THE CLINTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

The CDC does not recommend the use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings. A face covering should cover the nose and wrap securely around the face. A face shield is NOT considered a face covering or mask.

- All Students attending Blanchester Local Schools (**Preschool- 12th grade**) will be required to wear some type of face mask or covering. Face shields WILL NOT be permitted without a mask/face covering too.

Who provides a mask for my child?

- Parents are expected to provide a mask for their child each day (cloth masks need to be washed daily, disposable masks need to be replaced daily).
- If a replacement mask is needed during the school day, the school will provide a mask.
- If a student forgets his/her mask, the school will provide a mask.

Mask Breaks

Mask breaks will be provided multiple times throughout the day. Students will be able to remove face coverings when they are:

- Actively eating or drinking (lunch time)
- Appropriate educational times during the day where distancing is possible
- Engaged in any physical activity (PE class, recess)
- Outdoor classroom opportunities

Mask Exemptions:

The Ohio Children's Hospital Association (OCHA) and the Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) recommends all children wear face coverings/masks when returning to school consistent with AAP and CDC guidelines-- and specifically children in grades K-12- with the **FOLLOWING EXEMPTIONS:**

1. Children under the age of 2 years old
2. Any child unable to remove the face covering without assistance
3. A child with a significant behavioral/psychological issue undergoing treatment that is exacerbated specifically by the use of facial covering (e.g. severe anxiety or a tactile aversion)
4. A child living with severe autism or with extreme developmental delay who may become agitated or anxious wearing a mask.
5. A child with a facial deformity that causes airway obstruction.

If your child meets one of the above exemptions, please contact the school nurse, Linda Miller millerl2@blan.org prior to the start of the school year.

****You will need to provide a doctor's note based on the 5 exemptions.**

Beyond these categories, there are no diagnoses that warrant **blanket** exemptions from wearing a face covering/mask. Specifically, asthma, allergies and sinus infections are not a contraindication for using a face covering/mask. (The Ohio Children's Hospital Association (OCHA) and the Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP)).

What if my child refuses to wear a mask?

Policy for refusing to wear a mask:

Procedures will follow the student code of conduct under disobedience/insubordination. Discipline will be fast, fair, and firm to the extent of suspension/removal from school if disobedience is habitual.

If you feel that your child cannot follow the policy set forth by Blanchester Local Schools, you will need to consider the Virtual Learning option.