MASKS

Indoor Mask Use: For everyone’s safety, all individuals will be required to wear masks indoors in both Hildreth and Bromfield schools except during indoor eating.

When student programming is not in session and/or students are not present fully vaccinated adults will be able to meet in-person and may choose to wear a mask or not. Unvaccinated adults are expected to wear a mask unless they are in a room by themselves.

In the district offices, when students are not present, fully vaccinated adults will be able to meet in person and work without a mask if they choose. Unvaccinated adults are expected to wear a mask unless they are in a room by themselves.

Masks will only be off when eating in an inside space with maximized ventilation and with 3-6 ft distancing between students, facing in the same direction. Staff will keep their masks on while supervising the students while they are eating.

Students, teachers, and staff may lower their mask for a quick drink of water as long as they are at least 3 ft. away from other people. Ideally these drink breaks will be done in a vacant hallway or outside.

In addition to masking, teachers, staff and students are encouraged to participate in COVID-Safe Schools testing weekly regardless of vaccination status.

Outdoor Mask Use: Students and adults will have a choice to either wear a mask or not when outdoors. Distancing will not be regulated. Teachers, staff, and students will be supportive of students and adults who choose to wear a mask while outdoors. Unvaccinated adults are encouraged to wear masks when outdoors and unable to maintain a 6 ft. distance from others.

Indoor Mask Use Changes: The School Committee and school leaders will use the following parameters to update the policy:

- Local and state-wide vaccination rates
- Pooled testing results and participation rates
- Local and state-wide COVID cases
- Guidance from MASS DPH, CDC, DESE, AAP and other organizations

Bus and Nurses’ Offices Mask Use: Required to be worn by everyone in the school nurses’ offices and on school transportation including school buses and special education transportation vehicles and while entering and exiting buses/vehicles.

Masks for MIAA Sports Participants: The athletes and coaches will follow the MIAA policies. These policies may differ from HAA or Harvard Public School policies.
Types of Masks:

Appropriate masks:

- Are made of layered, tightly woven material;
- Fully cover the mouth, nose, and chin;
- Fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps.

Masks with exhalation valves are not permitted.

The school will provide a disposable mask for a student who brings a mask that does not meet the requirements for an appropriate mask listed above.

Masks should be clearly identified with the student’s name or initials to avoid confusion or swapping. Masks may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.

Staff and students will be educated on the safe wearing and use of masks. This will include instruction on safe removal and storage of masks during breaks and safe re-application of the mask after a break.

Exemptions to this policy can be made under certain circumstances, such as for students for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety concerns. Parents may not excuse their child from the mask requirement by signing a waiver. A written note from a physician or health care provider is required to initiate the exemption process and must be received by the Superintendent of Schools at least two weeks prior to the student’s planned attendance at school. Requests for an exemption with the supporting medical note should be sent to Harvard Public Schools, Office of the Superintendent, 27A Massachusetts Avenue, Harvard, MA 01451. Requests for exemptions are subject to review and approval by the Superintendent who may consult with the district nurse, district physician or local Board of Health. If an exemption to this policy is granted, the Superintendent/designee will work with the family to consider alternative methods of keeping the student as well as other students and adults around the student safe. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

Staff seeking exemptions to this policy should follow the same process for requesting an exemption as outlined above for students.

The Superintendent/designee will identify the need for and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in addition to masks for certain staff, such as but not limited to school nurses based on job duties and the need to maintain safety for all staff and students. PPE will be made available for use accordingly throughout the school year. Staff will be provided training on the proper use of PPE, including putting on and removing PPE.

Masks must be worn properly at all times. If a student is in violation of this policy, the following steps may be taken:
- Staff will signal to the student to put the student’s mask on correctly;
- If a student is not able to immediately comply, staff may take the student outside for a mask break;
- Staff will work with families to discuss challenges and reinforce compliance

The superintendent has the authority to grant exceptions to this policy in consultation with the Chair or/and Vice Chair of the School Committee. This information will be reported, with privacy considerations, to the School Committee through the superintendent’s update.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.


Massachusetts Department Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines – http://www.doe.mas.edu/covid19/


Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Fall 2021 Covid-19 Guidance