

CONCORDIA CHARTER SCHOOL
COVID-19 STUDENT FACE MASK/SHIELD POLICY

As your student returns to School in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Concordia Charter School wants to assure you of its continued commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy school environment and that we are taking additional measures to protect the staff, your child, and your families from the spread of COVID-19. As part of those efforts, we are implementing this COVID-19 Face Mask Policy. This policy applies to all students over the age of 5.

For the purposes of this policy, a “Face Mask” is a covering that fully and snugly covers a person’s nose and mouth, including a cloth face mask or surgical mask. Acceptable types of Face Masks are discussed in more detail below; however, the School requires all students over the age of 5 to wear a Face Mask in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as local, county, or state guidance or requirements.

The Need for Face Masks

The CDC has found that Face Masks can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially in areas with significant community spread or when social distancing or physical distancing (6 feet of separation) cannot be accomplished. Additionally, many county and local governments in the State of Arizona have adopted orders generally requiring persons to wear Face Masks at School or in public.

This policy is a key part of the School’s overall strategy and commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Although knowledge about the virus and how it spreads continues to evolve, based on the information we have now, we believe these measures may help limit the virus’s spread because, among other things:

- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that is highly contagious;
- The CDC recommends a face mask to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face-covering coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice;
- COVID-19 spreads mainly when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks and respiratory droplets from their mouth or nose enter the nose or mouth of someone nearby;
- Even a person without symptoms may be infected with COVID-19 and spreading it throughout the community;
- Studies have found that mandatory face masks significantly reduce the possibility of spreading COVID-19 to others; and
- Face masks are particularly important when people are close to each other (generally 6 feet) or where social distancing is difficult to maintain.

When Face Masks/Shields Are Required

In accordance with guidance from the CDC and applicable guidelines and requirements issued by local, county, or state authorities, the School requires that all students over the age of 5 wear a Face Mask at all times when on campus, including when students are:

- In a classroom and there are more than 1 students physically present;
- When visitors enter the classroom;
- Using any common spaces including the halls and library;
- Interacting with other students, particularly when social distancing is difficult to maintain;

Exceptions: Face Masks are not required under the following limited circumstances: (1) when eating or drinking, (2) when outdoors and able to socially distance, (3) where a reasonable accommodation has been granted by an authorized School official.

The School will not allow visitors on campus except for very narrow exceptions. The School will require any visitors allowed on campus to wear a Face Mask for the entire duration while they are on the School's property.

Wearing a Face Mask is not a substitute for general hygiene and social distancing practices.

Acceptable Face Masks

Students who report physically to campus are expected to provide their own Face Masks that comply with the requirements set forth below. Parents will be required to go back home to get Face Masks if they are forgotten.

A Face Mask is acceptable only if it meets current CDC guidance and:

- Fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- Is secured with ties, ear loops, or another reliable method;
- Includes multiple layers of fabric sufficient to block respiratory droplets from permeating the Face Mask; and
- Allows the user to breathe without restriction.

Students may *not* use any face covering that incorporates a one-way valve that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling. The School encourages students to leave medical grade masks (i.e. N95, KN95, or other masks intended for a health care setting) for those serving in front-line health care settings.

Students may not share Face Masks with any other individual. Face Masks shall not contain any offensive, harassing, or discriminatory words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, slogans, writing or images, and must comply with the School's Dress Code Policy. If the School determines, in its sole discretion, that a student's Face Mask does not comply with this policy, the School will ask the student to return home to get an appropriate Face Mask.

Proper Face Covering Use, Removal, and Disposal/Washing

When putting on and wearing the Face Mask, students should:

- Wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before putting it on their face;
- Place it over their nose and mouth and secure it under their chin;
- Ensure that it fits snugly against the sides of their face and seals around the bridge of their nose to the extent practicable;
- Ensure that they can breathe well when wearing it;
- Do their best to not touch the Face Mask while wearing it and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer any time they inadvertently do so;
- Remove the Face Mask as needed to blow their nose, eat, or drink; and
- Replace the Face Mask if it becomes soiled or wet.

When removing the Face Mask, employees should:

- Handle only by the ear loops or ties;
- Fold the outside corners together;
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth;
- Wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately after removing or otherwise handling the Face Mask; and
- Wash the Face Mask Daily.

Accommodation Requests

Students requesting an accommodation regarding this policy for reasons based on religion, disability, or other grounds protected by federal, state, or local laws, should contact Margaret Roush-Meier.

Students may request the accommodation orally or in writing, but should include all relevant information, including:

- A description of the accommodation requested; and
- The reason for the accommodation.

Upon receipt of a request for an accommodation, the School will engage in an interactive dialogue to determine the precise limitations of the student's ability to comply with this policy and explore potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. The School encourages parents to suggest specific reasonable accommodations; however, the School is not required to make the specific accommodation requested and may instead provide an alternative effective accommodation, to the extent any reasonable accommodation can be made without imposing an undue hardship on the School. Accommodation requests that impose an undue hardship may be denied.

Enforcement and Non-Retaliation

Failure to comply with this policy may result in student discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

The School prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation for reporting a violation of this Policy or any other health and safety concern.

Policy Subject to Change

Given the constantly developing legal obligations, scientific understanding, and industry best practices relating to the containment of COVID-19, the School reserves the right to modify this policy at any time, in its sole discretion, and without advanced notice in order to adapt to changing public health guidance, legal obligations, and operational needs.

If any part of this policy conflicts with applicable local, county, state law, regulation, or public health guidance, the School will comply with the applicable law, regulation, or public health guidance.