

Face Coverings Operational Guidance:

All students, staff, and visitors must wear a face-covering in school buildings and while riding in district provided transportation.

The Kalispell Public Schools Board of Trustees unanimously approved a face covering recommendation on Tuesday, August 11, 2020.

On Wednesday, August 12, the Governor of Montana also issued a directive that required face coverings in public and private schools in counties with four or more active cases.

KPS will follow the Governor's order. Please be advised that the District has both the right and a legal obligation to enforce the Governor's mask directive. If you and/or your child attempt to enter any school building without a face covering, you and/or your child will not be allowed in the building. We will be strictly enforcing this directive for staff and students and will, of course, be assisting students with the proper wearing of their masks. If your child has an underlying medical condition and you are requesting a reasonable accommodation, we will address those on a case-by-case basis with supporting medical documentation. According to the County Health Department, supporting medical documentation must be from a medical doctor. Our administrative teams are equipped to help parents through this process.

The full directive from the Governor can be found here: [Governor's Face Covering Directive](#).

The goal is to return kids back to school safely and maintain in-person instruction. Masks are a tool to reduce risk of transmission, decreasing the likelihood of transmission within a school. These requirements aim to protect teachers, administrators, students and families. We understand that no policy or decision will eliminate risk altogether and both flexibility and adaptability will be essential to designing and implementing school reopening plans in our community.

Requirements:

- These requirements are subject to change based on current recommendations from the Governor, CDC, or County Health Department.
- For current recommendations, Kalispell Public Schools will provide a face covering to staff and students who do not have one.
- Staff: Have a face covering with you at all times, and wear it when in the presence of others including, but not limited to: common spaces, hallways, shared office space, and classrooms.
- Students: Have a face covering with you at all times, and wear it when in the presence of others including, but not limited to: common spaces, hallways, shared office space, and classrooms.
- Visitors: Have a face covering with you at all times, and wear it when in the presence of others including, but not limited to: common spaces, hallways, shared office space, and classrooms.
- Educate students, particularly younger students, on the rationale and proper use of face coverings.
- Follow [CDC Guidance on Use of Masks to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- Face covering requirements do not apply to the following:
 - Children under the age of two.
 - Any individual who cannot wear a face covering because of a documented medical condition, mental health condition, developmental disability, or if it presents a safety risk.
 - Anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
 - While eating and/or drinking.
 - While engaging in high intensity activities if wearing a face covering causes difficulty breathing.

- While seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired.
- “Face covering” means a fabric, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth and which does not have an exhalation valve. The term “face covering” includes face shields.
- Encourage those wearing face coverings to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth when putting on or taking off the covering and to wash hands immediately after removing face coverings.
- Make reasonable efforts to remind students of the expectation to wear face coverings in school.
- Incorporate mask breaks during snack time, lunch, and outdoor time if able to maintain physical distancing of six feet apart.
- The Governor’s Directive requires students and staff to wear face coverings in all areas of the school. ***While children are encouraged to wear masks at all times, schools may allow children to remove their masks if they are seated and socially distanced in a classroom.*** This is a narrow allowance. Social distancing is defined as having 6 feet of spacing from any other person, ***this flexibility is permissible only where such spacing is strictly observed. The flexibility described here applies only to classrooms where social distancing can occur and when children are seated at their desks. If a teacher is working one on one with a student, both teacher and student must wear a mask. If students are working in small groups, they must be wearing masks.***
- Teachers giving a lecture in front of a classroom qualifies under the Section 4 Exception of the Governor’s Order that says, "Businesses, government offices, other persons responsible for indoor spaces open to the public, and sponsors of organized outdoor activities are not required to ensure the following individuals wear face coverings if... persons giving a speech or engaging in an artistic, cultural, musical, or theatrical performance for an audience, provided the audience is separated by at least six feet of distance.”