

San Marcos Unified School District Face Covering Policies

IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with the California Department of Public Health's guidance for face coverings, students, staff and visitors must wear face coverings when on San Marcos Unified School District (SMUSD) campuses, unless they are exempt per state guidelines. This includes while in the classroom, waiting to enter campus, on school grounds, when leaving school and, for students that receive District provided transportation, riding in a bus or van.

Students may remove masks while eating or drinking or during designated times as long as they maintain 6 feet distance. Students may also remove masks during outdoor physical education classes and outdoor recreational activities as long as they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others.

Schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under [CDPH guidelines](#) and refuse to wear one provided by the school. Face coverings will be provided to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Students excluded from campus will be offered alternative educational opportunities.

GUIDELINES FOR FACE COVERINGS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), along with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency ([SDC-HHSA](#)) have provided updated guidance for acceptable face coverings that may be worn in schools.

- Must cover the nose and mouth.
- They may be secured to the head with ties or straps that loop around the ears.
- Face coverings can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen.
- Cloth face coverings should no longer be used when they do not cover the nose and mouth, have stretched out or damaged ties or straps, cannot stay on the face and have holes or tears in the fabric.
- Review the [proper use, removal and washing of cloth face coverings](#) for additional information.

Acceptable Face Coverings	Not Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disposable face masks• Cloth face masks (store bought or homemade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Masks should not have vents or valves.• Face Shields (unless exempted)

Face Shields – At this time, [the CDC does not recommend the use of face shields](#) as a substitute for cloth face coverings. However, in very limited circumstances, a face shield with a drape may be used for students who are unable to wear a mask if required for special needs students or instructional reasons (i.e., speech therapy). For staff, if face coverings cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom. Identified teachers and staff members will also receive a reusable face shield as an added layer of protection that should be used in compliance with updated CDC and state face covering guidelines.

The most effective type of face shields are those that wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend below the chin, a hooded face shield. [CDC guidance for face shield](#).

ACCESS TO FACE COVERINGS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

SMUSD has procured enough face coverings to support free access for all students and staff to ensure anyone who needs one will have access while on our campuses or visiting our sites. Students and staff will be provided reusable cloth face masks and are expected to wear them daily or to augment personal face coverings allowed in compliance with the California Department of Public Health guidelines and the District's dress code policy.

Identified teachers and staff members will also receive a reusable face shield as an added layer of protection that should be used in compliance with updated CDC and state face covering guidelines.

PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING AN EXEMPTION REQUEST

Families should experiment with different types of masks or a face shield with a drape on the bottom to see if these options work for their student. If not, families should speak with their healthcare provider to determine the best option.

Families need to submit their reasons and healthcare provider's recommendations to the school principal. Exemption requests will be reviewed by district office staff. SMUSD LEVS Program District's option for students/families who are unwilling to comply with the facial covering mandate.

Note: The Student Exemptions will be maintained by the Health Aid and electronically, and securely stored in Google Drive. Only staff members with access to individual students' confidential student health records shall have viewing privileges to the document.