

Lacey Township School District 2021-2022

The Road Forward - Frequently Asked Questions



(This document will be updated as new information and questions arise)

BEFORE You Read This FAQ:

Please review the [Lacey Township School District Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year](#)

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MASK QUESTIONS

Are masks required to be worn in school buildings and on school buses?

The Lacey Township School District must abide by [Executive Order 251](#) and [Executive Order 253](#). All staff, students, volunteers, and visitors to the indoor premises of the school district and on school buses shall be required to wear face masks. There are limited exceptions to the mask order. The exceptions are as follows:

- When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors (medical documentation required per [Executive Order 253](#))
- When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance (medical documentation required per [Executive Order 253](#));
- When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face covering (medical documentation required per [Executive Order 253](#));
- When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
- When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face covering;
- When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
- When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Will there be mask breaks?

- At the high school and middle school levels, mask breaks will be conducted when opportunities exist for the students to either be 6 feet apart or during times of good weather when students are able to go outside.
- At the elementary level, students will receive a minimum of two mask breaks in the morning and two in the afternoon at the direction of their teacher. These will take place in the classroom when 6 feet of social distancing can take place or when good weather permits students to be outside. Additionally, students will remove their masks during lunch and during outside recess.
- The timing and number of mask breaks will be reviewed throughout the school year.

When can masks be removed?

- While eating or drinking;
- Playing a musical instrument that requires the mask to be removed;
- During phonics or speech instruction and where the student and staff member can maintain 6 feet of social distancing; and
- At the discretion of a staff member when a student is having a hard time emotionally.

Can masks be removed during times of high heat? At what temperature will the district allow students to remove their masks?

BUSES: The Lacey Township School District will suspend the mandated wearing of masks on buses during times of excessive heat, which will be determined each day using a combination of the heat index and the current daily weather prediction. Heat index is determined by utilizing the National Heat Index Chart which compares the temperature to relative humidity. This chart can be found on many sites, including the [National Weather Service](#). District staff and bus drivers will inform students if they are allowed to remove their masks - students should NOT remove them until a staff member directs them to do so. This will be determined and communicated on a daily basis to staff and parents. Parents need to clearly inform their children whether they do not want masks removed at any time, even during times of excessive heat.

SCHOOLS/CLASSROOMS: All Lacey Township school buildings have a mixture of air conditioned and non air conditioned spaces with the exception of Lacey Township Middle School. During times of excessive heat, each building administrator will make the decision to allow masks to be removed based on the conditions within the building and the individual spaces within the building. This will be determined each day using a combination of the heat index and the current daily weather prediction. Heat index is determined by utilizing the National Heat Index Chart which compares the temperature to relative humidity. This chart can be found on many sites, including the [National Weather Service](#). This information will generally be communicated the night before school however, at certain times conditions will warrant the decision to be made during the course of the school day. Parents need to clearly inform their children if they do not want masks removed at any time, even during times of excessive heat.

It is important to note that students should wear masks unless a staff member indicates that they may be removed due to excessive heat.

What will happen if a student refuses to wear a mask?

Students will not be disciplined and school personnel will not engage in discussions with students other than to inform/remind them that they must wear one when in school and offer them a mask to wear. If the mask is refused, the student will be directed to go to a

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designated area in the school (varies by school) and staff will call the student's parent to pick them up from school. The student will be marked absent. Parents will continue to be called each time a mask is not worn, and the student will be marked absent and subject to the district's attendance policy and regulations, (i.e. students who do not attend school may not attend after school activities including athletics and extracurricular activities).

[What will happen if a student refuses to wear a mask on the bus?](#)

Passengers may not board the bus if they do not have a face mask and refuse to put on a disposable mask. Drivers will radio the administrative office if there is no parent present.

[What should I do if my child has a medical exemption from wearing a mask? What kind of documentation do I need to support my child's medical exemption?](#)

If a parent believes wearing a mask is contraindicated to a medical condition, the first step is to provide a note from your child's medical doctor with a diagnosis to your school's building principal and/or school nurse. This request may be forwarded to the school physician for review and additional information may be requested in order to make a determination.

If your child has an IEP that does not already preclude the use of a face mask and you believe your child's diagnosis should exclude him/her from wearing one, your case manager is your first point of contact to explore whether a medical exemption should be included in his/her IEP, based on medical documentation.

[Executive Order 253](#) clarifies [Executive Order 251](#) to read that individuals seeking a medical exemption from mask wearing due to their child's individual health must produce written documentation from a medical professional (e.g. licensed medical practitioner, psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed mental health therapist, LCSW) to support the exemption. Self-attestations and parental attestations (meaning letters or statements from a parent/guardian) are not sufficient for this purpose.

[Will my child need to wear a mask during physical education class?](#)

Every effort will be made to hold physical education classes outdoors (masks are not required outdoors). When outdoor classes are not feasible, they will be held indoors in a well-ventilated space. If the activities in the physical education class are of high intensity and proper distance can be maintained, masks will be optional. High-intensity extracurricular athletics taking place indoors will be mask-optional for participants.

[What will be the procedure for a parent who attends a school function and refuses to wear a mask?](#)

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The parent will not be admitted into the building or inside other district premises, as per Executive Order 251.

SOCIAL DISTANCING QUESTIONS

How will social distancing take place in school?

Seating arrangements have been re-configured to promote as much social distancing in the classroom as possible. With all of our students returning to school for full-day instruction, our ability to social distance will vary by school.

Will desk barriers be used this school year?

There will be no use of desk barriers this school year during times of instruction. They will be used during lunch and snack in the classrooms when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Will students be allowed to participate in band, chorus, theatre, and other clubs?

All programs and performances will take place unless restricted by any further executive orders. Outside venues will be used whenever possible. Playing and singing will be socially distanced to the greatest extent practicable.

How will lunch and breakfast work this year?

Lunch and breakfast will consist of hot and cold offerings and will be FREE to all students, all year, as per the USDA. Students in the K-4 buildings will eat lunch in the classrooms and 5th and 6th grade students will rotate weekly between eating in their classrooms and the cafeteria. 7th through 12th grade students will be spread out in the building utilizing classrooms and alternate dining locations with students socially distancing to the greatest extent practicable.

VACCINE QUESTIONS

Do all staff have to be vaccinated?

On August 23, 2021, Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order 253](#) requiring public employees, including all school personnel, to either be fully-vaccinated by October 18, 2021 or participate in a weekly COVID-19 testing protocol. We are developing our processes for implementing this policy and will provide full details to our staff and parents once they are finalized.

Do students have to be vaccinated?

There is no requirement for students to be vaccinated and the Lacey Township School District is not considering any policy requiring students to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

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Will students be tested for COVID-19 in school?

The Lacey Township School District is not testing students in school for COVID-19. All testing is to be performed by parents based upon exclusion mandates and guidelines, and at the discretion of their health care provider.

Will there be a vaccine clinic during the school day?

Lacey Township School District will not be conducting any COVID-19 vaccine clinics during the school day.

QUARANTINE QUESTIONS

What happens if my child has to quarantine?

When an individual student, group of students, or entire class(es) are excluded from school due to meeting the NJDOH's COVID-19 exclusion criteria, the Lacey Township School District will provide virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with in-person instruction. Teachers will use Google Classroom in grades K-8 and Canvas in grades 9-12 to provide students with instructional lessons supplemented with one-to-one contact tailored to the student and the content. This may include live streamed instruction utilizing web cameras and/or pre-recorded videos.

If my child wears a mask does he/she have to be quarantined?

As outlined in the NJ Department of Education's *Road Forward Health and Safety Guidelines*, there are several exemptions that will preclude students from needing to be quarantined. In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to unvaccinated teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Will there be virtual days this school year?

During 2021-2022, school districts are not permitted to use the virtual school day option to count towards the 180-day requirement unless (pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9) a district is required to close the schools of the district for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive and/or recommendation by the appropriate health agency or officer to

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institute a public health-related closure. Days of virtual or remote instruction under those circumstances that are commensurate with in-person instruction will count towards the district's 180-day requirement.