

## ***Bridgman Public Schools Mask Order***

Pursuant to the powers vested in the Superintendent and the Board of Education by resolution and applicable law, the Bridgman Public Schools finds:

- A. On September 1, 2021, the Berrien County Health Department issued an “Order for Face Masks in Educational Settings within Berrien County, Michigan” (the “Berrien County Order”).
- B. The Berrien County Order was based upon medical and public health data and conclusions which have not since been amended or modified, which remains in effect, and which are adopted by the District as the factual basis for this Order.
- C. Maintaining an order concerning masking within the District is in the best interests of the health of the District’s students, staff, and Board members, and of community members having contact with the District, and **further may allow students to potentially avoid having to be quarantined following a close contact tracing inquiry**, so long as the advice underlying the Berrien County Order remains unchanged.

The Bridgman Public Schools therefore orders the following, applying the definitions that follow:

### **I. *Definitions***

- 1. “Educational Settings” includes all Bridgman Public Schools facilities used for any School District functions between the hours of 7:00 am 4:00 pm, including but not limited to instruction, administration, transportation, and food service. **All non-athletic extracurricular activities that meet in a classroom setting, regardless of the time of day, are considered to fall within the Educational Setting.** School sponsored athletic practices and contests are not considered part of the Educational Setting. Board of Education meetings are not considered part of the Educational Setting.
- 2. This order applies to students’ pro-5 through grade 12, teachers, support staff, administrative staff, Board of Education members, volunteers, guests, coaches, parents/caregivers, and other employees of Educational Institutions.
- 4. “Face Mask” means a tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material that fully covers an individual’s nose and mouth.
- 5. “Neurodivergent” means anyone living with developmental conditions for whom it has been demonstrated that the wearing of a face mask would inhibit the person’s access to a free, appropriate public education (“FAPE”), as that term is defined under applicable law and regulation.

### **II. *Order***

It is ordered that:

- 1. The District’s students in pro-five (pro-5) and above, regardless of vaccination status, shall consistently and properly wear a facemask covering both nose and mouth while inside any enclosed District building or structure during the educational setting. Failure to do so, absent a valid exemption, may result in removal from the class or activity, and/or other disciplinary action.

2. The Educational Institutions shall ensure that all its employees, contracted service providers, volunteers, Board members, and guests, must properly and consistently wear a face mask while inside any enclosed District building or structure during the educational setting. Failure to do so may result in employment-related discipline, removal from the activity or meeting at issue, and/ or other actions permitted by law.

The following exemptions to the above order apply:

1. Persons engaged in the action of eating or drinking.
2. Persons participating in outdoor activities.
3. Children under the age of four (4) years, although supervised masking is recommended for those age two (2) and older.
4. Neurodivergent students of any age attending school where masking would result in a denial of FAPE or otherwise materially inhibit educational progress, although supervised masking is encouraged.
5. Teachers who are hard of hearing, or who are working with children who are hard of hearing or neurodivergent students and where masking would result in a denial of FAPE or materially inhibit instruction. These teachers or staff should be fully vaccinated persons or comply with masking directive.
6. **Persons who have a current medical reason confirmed in writing from a board-certified Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) or Physician's Assistant (PA) or Nurse Practitioner (NP) currently licensed to practice medicine in the State of Michigan.**
7. Student athletes while participating in athletic activities. Guidance issued by the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan High School Athletic Association may be considered in fashioning further exemptions.
8. The superintendent may designate other exceptions to this order for the orderly running of the educational institution.
9. **Any event or activity occurring outside of the classroom setting (athletics and extracurricular, and/or performances, etc.).**
10. Contrary laws or orders superseding this Order.

This Order is effective 12:00 a.m. on Monday, November 15, 2021, and shall remain in effect until extended or revoked by the Superintendent and/or Board of Education.

Shane M. Peters, Superintendent

11/14/2021

Bolded Items have been amended on 11/16/2021

