

# REDBANK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT



920 BROAD STREET  
NEW BETHLEHEM, PA 16242  
TELEPHONE 814-275-2426  
FAX 814-275-2428  
[www.redbankvalley.net](http://www.redbankvalley.net)



August 31, 2021

Dear Parents:

As you have most likely heard, today the Acting Secretary of The PA Department of Health issued an order effective at 12:01 AM on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 that all students and staff in public Pre-K-12 schools shall wear face coverings while indoors.

From the order:

*Each teacher, child/student, staff, or visitor working, attending, or visiting a School Entity shall wear a face covering indoors, regardless of vaccination status, except as set forth in Section 3.*

### *Section 3: Exceptions to Covering Requirement*

The following are exceptions to the face covering requirements in Section 2. All alternatives to a face covering, including the use of a face shield, should be exhausted before an individual is excepted from this Order.

*A. If wearing a face covering while working would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.*

*B. If wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability.*

*C. When necessary to confirm the individual's identity.*

*D. When working alone and isolated from interaction with other people with little or no expectation of in-person interaction.*

*E. If an individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired or has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.*

*F. When the individual is under two (2) years of age.*

*G. When an individual is: (1) Engaged in an activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating and drinking, or playing an instrument that would be obstructed by the face covering; or (2) Participating in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities, including during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals.*

*H. When a child/student is participating in a sports practice activity or event, whether indoors or outdoors.*

### **In addition to those exceptions, the following School Entity (District) obligations must be met:**

*1. Require and enforce the requirement that all teachers, children/students, staff, and visitors (subject to the exceptions in Section 3) wear a face covering indoors, regardless of whether this Order is reflected in a school entity's Health and Safety Plan.*

*2. Post prominent signs in conspicuous locations for teachers, children/students, staff, and visitors stating that face coverings are required by the Order of the Secretary of Health.*

*3. Provide reasonable accommodations for individuals who state they have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the person to maintain a face covering.*

**The School Entity(District) should NOT:**

1. Enforce face covering requirements when there is an exception under Section 3 or if it is unsafe to do so.
2. Restraine, use force, or physically remove, teachers, children/students, staff, or visitors who refuse to comply with this Order when it would not otherwise be legal to do so.
3. Violate other laws, including state and federal antidiscrimination laws.

The entire order as well as a FAQ is attached to this correspondence. Here is a summary of the document:

1. All students in the Redbank Valley School District are required to wear face coverings (masks) of various types and fabrics for the duration of the school day.
  - a. Face shields may be worn if they cover below the chin to ears with no gap between the forehead and shield.
2. Students will **not** have to wear a mask during the following times:
  - a. while eating or drinking at lunch or snack time
  - b. during PE classes when 6 feet or more apart
  - c. during band class
  - d. when participating in a sporting activity whether indoors or outdoors

As per the Health and Safety Plan submitted to the state and approved by the Redbank Valley Board of Directors on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we will follow any mandates handed down to us by the state. I understand that this is not favorable news for most of you, but we, as a public school entity, need to abide by mandates. Please read the above guidelines carefully as this is information comes directly from the order.

Thank you for your continued support of the health and safety of our students. Although we do not currently have any positive cases, we have a number of students quarantined due to close contacts from home. Any positive cases will be reported to you in a timely manner.

This is the most up-to-date information that I have; any updates will be communicated to you through email and social media.

Sincerely,



Amy Rupp, Acting Superintendent