Additional Considerations for the Use of Cloth Face Coverings Among K12 Students

CDC recommends that people, including teachers, staff, and students, wear cloth face coverings in public settings as able when around people who live outside of their household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

The following table contains examples of some, **but not all**, situations schools might encounter.

Possible Student Scenario	Cloth Face Coverings Recommended	Cloth Face Coverings May Be Considered	Additional Considerations
Students are seated less than 6 feet apart while riding a bus or while carpooling	✓		• Cloth face coverings should always be worn by bus and carpool drivers as able*
Students are less than 6 feet apart while entering or exiting school (e.g., carpool drop off/pick up) or while transitioning to/from other activities	✓		• Consider having staff monitor students during transitions to encourage correct use and distribute cloth face coverings as needed. • Teachers and staff should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a cloth face covering.
Students are seated **at least** 6 feet apart in the classroom		✓	• Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.
Students are seated **less than** 6 feet apart in the classroom, or are engaging in learning stations or circle time that require close contact	✓		• Schools may consider keeping students in "cohorts." Cohorts are groups of students that do not mix with other cohorts/groups of students throughout the school day. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.
Students are less than 6 feet apart while transitioning between classes or to other activities during the school day	✓		• Schools may consider staggering classroom transition times and allow only one-way pathways/hallways. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

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Students are at recess or in physical education class.		✓	• Vigorous exercise in a confined space (e.g., indoors) may contribute to transmission of COVID-19 and should be limited. • Social distancing helps protect students at recess or in physical education class. • Consider conducting activities in an area with greater ventilation or air exchange (e.g., outdoors). • See CDC's guidance on youth sports for more information. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.
Students are in band, choir, or music class.		✓	• When students are not singing or playing an instrument that requires the use of their mouth, they should wear a cloth face covering in music class (unless class is outdoors and distance can be maintained). • Social distancing helps protect students in music class. • While students are singing or playing an instrument, use visual cues to keep them at least 6 feet apart. If it's safe and weather permits, consider moving class outdoors where air circulation is better than indoors and maintain at least 6 feet distance between students.
Students are at least 6 feet apart during mealtimes in a common area.		✓	• Cloth face coverings are recommended when transitioning to and from mealtimes if outside of the classroom. • Schools may be able to stagger mealtimes to ensure 6 feet distance between students in a cafeteria or lunchroom. • Schools can serve meals in classrooms if students are able to maintain 6 feet of distance between one another in the classroom. • Consider allowing students to eat meals outside, if weather permits.
Students participating in an assembly or event that requires close contact.	✓		• Large assemblies of students should be discontinued, unless necessary. • When necessary, consider having the assemblies outdoors, plan for social distancing, and encourage use of cloth face coverings according to CDC guidance. • Cloth face coverings should be worn by teachers and staff at all times* and are especially important at times when social distancing is difficult to maintain.
Student has severe asthma or breathing problems.		✓	• Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance. • Administrators and/or teachers should consult with parents, caregivers, or guardians about strategies to protect these students and those around them. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

Possible Student Scenario	Cloth Face Coverings Recommended	Cloth Face Coverings May Be Considered	Additional Considerations
Student is deaf or hard of hearing, or relies on lip reading to communicate		✓	• Clear face coverings may be considered for teachers or staff who interact with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. • Face shields are not considered clear face coverings. • It is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings. Some people may choose to use a face shield when sustained close contact with other people is expected. If face shields are used without a mask, they should wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend to below the chin.
Student has a disability, childhood mental health conditions, sensory concern/tactile sensitivity.	✓		• Administrators and/or teachers should consult with parents, caregivers, or guardians about strategies to protect these students and those around them. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading.
Student is receiving one-on-one services or instruction.	✓		• Students and service providers should wear a face covering as much as possible during service delivery.* • Administrators and/or teachers should consult with parents, caregivers, or guardians about strategies to protect these students and those around them. • Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading. • Cloth face coverings should be worn by teachers and staff at all times* and are especially important at times when social distancing is difficult to maintain. • Students and service providers may need additional protective equipment depending on the individual characteristics of the student. See CDC's Guidance for Direct Service Providers for additional information.

* CDC recognizes that wearing cloth face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a cloth face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns. Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one. Learn more.