

## USE OF FACE COVERINGS

**7010.**

### **POLICY CONCERNING USE OF FACE COVERINGS IN SCHOOLS RELATED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The Meriden Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance of protecting the health and safety of students, staff, and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, and in accordance with requirements and guidelines issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education (“SDE”), the Board requires that all individuals entering a school building, a Meriden Public Schools (“District”) facility, or a District transportation vehicle wear an appropriate face covering. An appropriate face covering shall consist of a cloth mask or disposable procedure-style mask that completely covers the individual’s nose and mouth. An appropriate face covering shall not include “neck gaiters,” bandanas, or exhalation valve masks. Any individual who presents for entrance into a school building, District facility or District transportation vehicle who is not wearing an appropriate face covering shall be provided an appropriate face covering by the District.

Compliance with this policy shall be mandatory for all individuals while in a school building, District facility, and/or District transportation vehicle, unless an applicable exception applies. Any individual who refuses to wear an appropriate face covering at all times while in a school building, District facility or District transportation vehicle shall be denied admission and/or required to leave the premises, unless an applicable exception applies. In addition, failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action for students and staff, and exclusion from school property for members of the community, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and/or Board policies.

All individuals participating in or attending any school-sponsored activities must wear an appropriate face covering, whether or not those activities occur in a school building, District facility or District transportation vehicle, unless an applicable exception applies or the Administration, in consultation with the local health department, determines that face coverings are not required for athletes participating in certain athletic activities.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative regulations and/or protocols to implement this policy. Such administrative regulations and/or protocols shall outline authorized exceptions to the requirement that all individuals wear an appropriate face covering in the school buildings, District facilities and District transportation vehicles and may identify additional face covering rules as related to the safe operation of the school community.

#### **Legal References:**

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221

Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together, Connecticut State Department of Education, as amended by Addendums 1-13 (June 2020 through September

2020).

Coronavirus Memo #29, Group Size and Mask Requirements as part of a system of protections against COVID-19, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (September 14, 2020).