

PROTOCOL ON THE USE OF FACE MASKS INSIDE KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (KPRDSB) SCHOOLS TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2022

(PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PROTOCOL IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to provide direction on the use of face masks in schools to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

The KPRDSB is committed to providing learning environments, services and workplaces that are welcoming, respectful, safe, inclusive, equitable, accessible and free from harassment and discrimination. This protocol must be carried out in a manner that is consistent with this commitment.

This protocol has been developed and updated to comply with the Ministry of Education's direction to school boards on August 5, 2022. The Ministry of Health has also consolidated direction and guidance into the June 2, 2022 [Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID 19 in Ontario](#) publication, which includes information that is applicable to schools and child care.

On the advice of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, for the 2022-23 school year, most health and safety requirements remain unchanged from the previous direction provided to school board partners at the end of the 2021-22 school year.

2. Definitions

2.1 **Face Mask:** a mask (medical-grade or non-medical) that is large enough to cover a person's nose and mouth without gaping and that can be secured to a person's head with ties or ear loops.

2.2 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** According to the Ontario Ministry of Labour, this is equipment and clothing worn by a worker to minimize exposure to hazards and prevent illnesses and infection. PPE is used to protect the wearer and can include such things as masks, eye protection, gloves and gowns. Employees who require PPE as a function of their roles and responsibilities must wear the PPE provided by the school board.

3. Direction

- 3.1 Continuing with the previous direction provided to school board partners at the end of the 2021-22 school year, and based on the advice of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, masks will not be required for students, staff and visitors in schools, school board offices, or on student transportation.
- 3.2 As some students and staff may choose to continue to wear masks or eye protection, the school board will continue to provide free masks and eye protection, funded by the Government of Ontario. Specifically, all staff will continue to have access to non-fit-tested N95 masks. Staff and students may also provide their own masks.
- 3.3 The Ministry of Education and the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board strongly encourage all schools and departments to actively promote respectful, welcoming and inclusive environments for individuals who choose to wear, or not to wear a mask within their school or workplace communities.
- 3.4 Where staff are required to perform an Aerosol Generating Medical Procedure (AGMP) or required to be in the same room when an AGMP is being performed, N95 respirators (fit tested) are recommended, they will continue to be provided and they should be worn in accordance with existing KPRDSB Occupational Health and Safety procedures.
- 3.5 Students and staff will continue to have access to rapid antigen tests to be used in accordance with [provincial testing guidance](#).
- 3.6 Staff, students and visitors should continue to self-screen every day before attending school using [the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#). Following public health guidance, individuals should stay home if they are feeling ill to prevent the spread of illness.
- 3.7 The provincial screening tool indicates scenarios where mask wearing is required for a specific duration of time, such as after illness, COVID exposure or [international travel](#). Individuals should continue to wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings (including school and child care); and avoid activities where they need to take off their mask (for example, playing a wind instrument in music class or removing their mask for sports). Reasonable exceptions would include temporary removal for essential activities like eating, while maintaining as much distance as possible from others.
- 3.8 Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should continue to be promoted and integrated throughout the school day. Hand sanitizer will continue to be provided to schools.