

Red Wing Public Schools
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School Board Meeting Agenda Item

Topic: Policy 808: COVID-19 Face Covering Policy (Updated)
Contact(s):
Presenter(s): Karsten Anderson, Superintendent

Nature of Action Requested by Board

Board action
Board information or scheduled report

Background Information

On Friday, January 15th, the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) issued an updated model policy for Face Coverings. Proposed changes in the model policy are incorporated into Red Wing's Policy 808: Face Coverings Policy.

The COVID Response Team consisting of Joni Gorman, Shanda Jorgenson, and Dawn Wettern reviewed MSBA's proposed policy changes and made some additional suggestions that are highlighted in yellow.

As per the MSBA, please note: The Governor's Emergency Executive Order 20-81 generally requires Minnesotans to wear a face covering in certain settings and circumstances, including in various school settings. Emergency Executive Order 20-82 states that all Minnesota public schools must adhere to parameters determined by Minnesota Department of Health ("MDH") in implementing or shifting between in-person learning, hybrid learning and distance learning. MDH's Safe Learning Plan for 2020-21 and the 2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools requires school district and charter schools to develop and implement a face covering policy that is clearly posted and communicated to students, staff, families, and potential visitors to the school building. The provisions of this policy substantially reflect the requirements of the 2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools, Executive Order 20-81, and Executive Order 20-82.

The Minnesota Safe Learning Plan was updated, stating "[I]t is strongly recommended that districts and charter schools require staff to wear face masks and face shields together whenever possible during the school day. School districts and charter schools should strongly consider the following as the only exemptions for their masking and face shield requirement policy.

- When staff are serving students in settings where seeing a person's lips is necessary, staff are strongly encouraged to wear a clear face mask in addition to the required face shield. If they do not have access to a clear face mask, they can choose to only wear the required face shield.
- When staff are providing direct services that require close, physical, and prolonged contact, schools should follow MDH's Guidance for Delivering Direct Student Support Services: Staff Protective Equipment.

- When staff are performing duties in which a face mask and a face shield worn together are creating a safety concern (e.g. visual impairment while operating a vehicle, working in a kitchen, lab etc.), staff may choose to only wear the required face mask.”

School boards may determine whether to amend this policy in light of these recommendations, but the Superintendent does not recommend the requirement that staff members wear both a mask and a face shield.

Recommendation

I move to revise Policy 808 as recommended.