



## Great Heats Texas Face Covering Policy

*Updated August 25, 2020*

Governor Abbott's executive order and the Texas Education Agency's subsequent guidance documents have mandated that all persons ten years of age and older must wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside [the school building], or when in an outdoor public space, wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing...."

The term "face covering", as defined by the TEA, includes medical and non-medical grade disposable face masks and cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). **Full face shields are no longer considered face coverings for those ages ten and up.**

For students under the age of ten, we recognize the need for developmentally appropriate layers of safety measures. Our comprehensive approach includes the required use of face coverings, other measures such as desk shields, and high responsiveness to symptomatic individuals and those who have had close contact with a confirmed positive person.

We understand that students cannot be expected to wear a mask without breaks for 7 hours a day, especially our youngest students. Therefore, we have developed a face covering policy that submits itself to TEA guidance and authoritative ordinance while affording students safe and reasonable space to be mask free.

The face covering policy is as follows:

### **Students in Grades 4 through 12, Faculty and Staff**

Students in grades 4 through 12 who are attending school in the building, and all faculty and staff members who are working in the building, are required to wear a face covering at all times, from drop off until pick up with the following exceptions:

Face Coverings may be removed for lunch, designated activities in PE, and socially distanced activities outside such as recess and short additional breaks scheduled at the campus level this year for each section of students. Travel from room to room is not exempt: face coverings are to be worn while moving throughout the building.

Additionally, teachers, with headmaster approval, may allow students in class to wear full face shields in place of a face covering for certain, limited activities when a mask is not feasible or the educational context benefits from the ability to see the students' full face. Activities of this sort include Spalding exercises, foreign language pronunciation work, speech therapy, and limited portions of class devoted to Socratic discussion when six feet of social distance is maintained. Likewise, teachers, with headmaster approval,



may wear full face shields in place of a face covering for limited portions of instruction when a mask is not feasible or the educational context benefits from the ability to see the teacher's full face, so long as 6 ft. of social distance is maintained. Movement amongst the students requires the face covering to be on.

Face coverings may be solid color or patterned but must be without verbal or visual symbolism or reference to elements of popular culture including decorative brand logos.

### **Students in Grades 4 through 12**

- **Drop Off** – Face covering required.
- **Hallways** – Face covering required.
- **Classroom** – Face covering required.
- **Lunch** – Social distancing will be implemented. No face covering requirement while seated and eating. Face covering required when walking to the lunchroom and within the lunchroom.
- **Playground** (Lower School students) – Hand washing or sanitizer before and after playground. Face covering may be removed when social distancing is maintained.
- **Pick Up** – Face covering required.

### **All Faculty and Staff**

- **Drop Off** – Face covering required.
- **Hallways** – Face covering required.
- **Classroom** – Face covering required.
- **Faculty Room & Lounge** – Social distancing will be implemented. No face covering requirement while seated and eating. Face covering required when walking to faculty spaces and within them.
- **Lunch Duty** – Face covering required.
- **Pick Up** – Face covering required.



### **Kindergarten through Grade 3**

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 are under the same requirements as grades 4 - 12, with the additional two exceptions:

1. They may remove their face covering when seated at their desks. Every desk in these grade levels will be outfitted with a three-sided, clear desk shield.
  2. They may wear a full face shield in place of a mask whenever masks are required.
- **K-3 Classrooms** – Face Coverings may be taken off while seated at desk. Desk Shields installed for extra safety.

**Note:** Individual cases and unique circumstances will be vetted by academy leadership on a case-by-case basis.

### **POLICY SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

*Great Hearts Texas will evaluate this policy every quarter, or as needed, to determine if our schools are following the appropriate level of safety measures, meaning that requirements may ease or tighten throughout the 2020-21 academic year. These routine evaluations will also ensure our schools remain up to date and in compliance with local public health and safety protocols. Guardians will be notified of any changes to this policy.*