

## **Davidson Charter Academy COVID-19 and Face Mask Policy – Effective September 24, 2021**

Davidson Charter Academy (DCA) will follow all COVID-19 related requirements as outlined in Executive Orders by the Governor of North Carolina and/or in the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#), whichever takes precedence at the time. DCA Administration reserves the right to make changes to this COVID-19 & Face Mask policy at any time if an Executive Order is put into place, if the Toolkit is updated with new requirements for public schools, and/or if the local Health Department provides additional guidance to control the spread of the disease based on community transmission and vaccine uptake.

DCA will consistently follow the most current and updated version of the Toolkit for guidance on monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms, requiring quarantine of students and staff members and subsequently allowing them to return to school, and for putting required protocols in place for the safety of all. DCA will follow all guidance from the local Health Department regarding contact tracing and notify impacted individuals any time there is a school-affected positive test result for COVID-19. A school-affected case could be a student, employee, visitor, or contracted vendor who was on the DCA campus. The identity of the individual will not be revealed by the school.

Students and staff members who are not well should not come to campus until they are symptom-free for the appropriate amount of time or have a negative COVID test result within the guidelines. Students who develop symptoms while at school will be moved to a separate isolation area until they can be picked up. Staff members who develop symptoms while at school will be sent home immediately.

### **Self-reporting:**

DCA requires all students and staff members to self-report COVID-19 tests, symptoms, and exposure.

Students and staff members must notify DCA immediately if he/she:

- Receives a positive COVID-19 test
- Starts to experience COVID-19 symptoms
- Has been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19
- Has been contacted by any health department or health care provider and advised to quarantine.

If any of the above situations for required self-reporting arise, the student's parent/guardian or the employee is asked to report those findings by sending an email to [nurse@davidsoncharter.org](mailto:nurse@davidsoncharter.org) or by calling the school and speaking with the School Nurse or Director of Business Operations.

### **Water Fountains & Water Bottle Filling Stations**

Water drinking fountains will NOT be available for use by anyone on the DCA campus.

Water bottle filling stations will be available for use. Students and staff members are encouraged to bring water bottles and refill as necessary.

## Cloth Face Coverings (Face Masks)

Effective September 24, 2021, DCA will make the use of cloth face coverings (face masks) **mandatory**. All students, staff members, contracted vendors, and visitors are required to wear a face mask while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility, or other indoor areas of the school campus. All face masks must cover the nose and mouth of the individual.

Wearing a mask protects others as much, if not more, than the person wearing it. Students who do not follow this policy will be subject to the school's disciplinary process. Employees who do not follow this policy, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Because not wearing a mask places other students and staff in direct harm, the school will be providing mask exemptions only in exceptional circumstances. Any mask accommodation will be reviewed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Face coverings shall not be required to be worn by an individual who:

- Should not wear a face covering due to any medical or behavioral condition or disability (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance).
- Is under two (2) years of age.
- Is actively eating or drinking.
- Is seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible.
- Is giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience.
- Is temporarily removing his or her face covering to secure government or medical services or for identification purposes.
- Is engaged in strenuous physical activity and able to maintain 6 feet of distance from other people.
- Is working in a classroom, office, or other enclosed space and no other person is present.

### Permitted Face Masks

- A face mask is any face covering that covers the nose and mouth which can be secured to the head with ties or straps or wrapped around the lower face. A face mask has a minimum of two or more layers.
- Students, staff members, contractors, and visitors may wear disposable masks, or reusable cloth masks that do not have lewd or obscene images.
- Teachers and staff who may consider using clear masks (not face shields) that cover the nose and wrap securely around the face include:
  - i. Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
  - ii. Teachers of young students learning to read
  - iii. Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
  - iv. Teachers of students with disabilities
- Face shields are not permitted.
- Scarves, ski masks, bandanas, and turtleneck collars are not permitted to be worn as face coverings for the purpose of this policy.