

QACPS STUDENT FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my child wear a face shield instead of a mask?

No, Maryland Legislature now states any person in a school building must wear a face covering. Per COMAR, "Face covering" means a material that covers the nose and mouth to prevent respiratory droplets from being expelled into the air and that:

- (a) is secured to the head, including with ties or ear loops;
- (b) fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; and
- (c) is either manufactured or homemade and is a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.

Will our students get breaks from wearing their face covering?

Yes, we encourage teachers and staff to offer frequent breaks.

Do our students have to wear face coverings outside?

No, if they are involved in an activity. However, if a student is sitting outside, they must be wearing a face covering if closer than 6 feet from another person.

Do our athletes have to wear face coverings?

They do not have to wear a face covering while actively playing the sport or activity. If they are on the sidelines, yes, a face covering must be worn.

Will QACPS supply face coverings?

Yes, QACPS has purchased face masks. If a student is in need of one, they just need to ask a school staff member.



Will the school playgrounds be utilized for recess?

Elementary school playgrounds are open for use during the school day by socially distanced students. If students are not able to socially distance, face coverings should be worn. During recess, students are able to utilize the permanent hand sanitizer stations installed near each elementary school playground. After recess, students are able to wash their hands before returning to the classroom. This guidance could change throughout the school year and will be done in coordination with the Queen Anne's County Department of Health.

Will we have virtual learning as an option?

No, at this time virtual learning opportunities for secondary students have passed. On June 10, 2021 an email went out to all parents/guardians from "QACPS Public Info" which asked for your information should your child require distance learning. All 9 counties on the Eastern Shore are offering the same program, through APEX. Deadline to submit an application for this Blended Virtual Plan (BVP) was June 30, 2021. No elementary options are available for the upcoming school year.

What happens if a student refuses to wear a mask?

If a student is provided a face covering and refuses to wear it, the student's parents will be notified and the student will be sent home. The student will be marked absent for the time they miss and will be expected to make up all work assigned for that day.

What directive or guidance could cause QACPS to move from in person learning to a hybrid or virtual learning environment?

QACPS will not revise our instructional model unless schools are directed to do so by the Maryland State Department of Education or the Queen Anne's County Department of Health. QACPS relies heavily on the expertise of the QAC Dept. of Health while making decisions regarding the health of our students and staff. QACHD references the guidance provided by the CDC, and the MD Department of Health. QACPS will continue to monitor local metrics and consider changes based on these recommendations.



What happens if my child is deemed a close contact to a positive COVID-19 person while at school?

- A quarantine time of 14 days remains the safest option for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated. Shortened quarantine times of 7 or 10 days may be acceptable if MDH and MSDE guidelines are followed.
- As per the K-12 exception, if both the infected student and exposed student were correctly and consistently wearing masks the entire time, and spaced **more than 3' apart**, then the exposed student will not have to quarantine provided they are symptom free.
- If the close contact was unmasked and unvaccinated and closer than 3' from a covid positive person, for 15 minutes over a 24 hour period, they must quarantine regardless of symptoms or vaccination status.
- If the exposed student is fully vaccinated, the student will not have to quarantine provided they are symptom free.
- If a student athlete is required to quarantine and uses the shortened 7 or 10 day option; the student will be required to wear a mask upon return through day 14, even for outdoor sports/activities.

How long will the universal face covering be enforced?

The MD state order states, 180 days from September 14, 2021 or until further evaluation.

What metrics are being used and what do the metrics mean?

The level of community transmission, including positivity rate and the number of cases per 100,000 are taken into consideration. Also the vaccine rates of the county residents are monitored when determining strategies to implement.

Why aren't face coverings an individual choice?

If a student were to choose not to wear a face covering and tests positive for COVID-19, the unvaccinated students around that child (masked or unmasked) are then required to be quarantined. However, if all students have face coverings and at least socially distant in the classroom, only the child testing positive would miss school days. There may be other settings such as the bus or the cafeteria where social distancing cannot be maintained. Our best chance at keeping classrooms and schools safe and open is to require everyone to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing whenever possible.