

BUSD Policy on Face Coverings for students with IEP's, 504's or with medical exemptions

In recent guidance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised school districts to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 as a part of their reopening plans, including the requirement of wearing masks. Wearing a mask can be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, especially those students with special educational or other healthcare needs. And in some instances, such as a child with a disability and extreme sensory issues who cannot tolerate wearing a mask in school or at all, it is recognized that enforcing a mask requirement could impede the child's ability to receive the FAPE required by Section 504 and IDEA. BUSD will therefore make reasonable modifications in our policies, practices, or procedures—including any addressing the use of masks—when those modifications can be made consistent with the local health orders and the health, safety, and well-being of all students and staff, and are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability.

However, current Los Angeles County Public Health Guidelines do not allow for students to be in a classroom with other students without wearing a mask or other approved face covering to protect the health and safety of students and employees.

If your child is on an IEP or 504, and has challenges wearing a mask related to their disability, or has a doctor's note indicating your child cannot wear a mask during in-person instruction, please see the steps outlined below.

- 1) Contact your case manager (for students on IEP's), school nurse or the school administrator and provide documentation regarding the reason why the student cannot wear a mask (documented disability, doctor's note). For students on an IEP, the IEP may be used as documentation, if appropriate.
- 2) School staff will meet with you (administrator, special ed case staff, and school nurse) to review your child's needs and whether modifications and/or accommodations can be made that are consistent with public health guidelines.
- 3) If the staff is able to provide modifications and/or accommodations, then those will be documented and the school team will work to provide those modifications.
- 4) If the staff is unable to provide modifications and/or accommodations in accordance with public health guidelines, then it may be recommended that your child continue with Distance Learning until such time as masks are not required.

We want to reiterate that our staff is already successfully working with students and helping them learn to follow health and safety guidelines as well as provide accommodations like mask breaks (outside) and other techniques to assist students who have challenges wearing masks.