



*Serving With Pride The
Township of Manalapan
and the
Borough of Englishtown*

Nicole Santora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
nicolesantora@mernsj.us

Peter M. Friedman Building
54 Main Street
Englishtown, N.J. 07726-1599
(732) 786-2500
(732) 786-2541 FAX

August 20, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian:

On Friday, August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy shared [Executive Order 251](#) which took effect August 9, 2021. The order states the following:

All public, private, and parochial preschool programs and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools (collectively "school districts"), must maintain a policy regarding mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors in the indoor portion of the school district premises, except in the following circumstances:

- A. When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
- B. When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face mask without assistance;
- C. When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face mask;
- D. When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
- E. When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face mask;
- F. When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
- G. When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
- H. When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

The Manalapan-Englishtown Regional School District will implement Executive Order 251 as written and as required by law to do so. Students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks in the indoor portion of school district premises. Additionally, we recognize that the exceptions listed above are there for medical necessity; and, therefore, we will be implementing the exemptions as they are part of the executive order.

As outlined above, students and staff will be able to remove their masks while eating and drinking, while engaging in physical activity, and when outdoors.

Additionally, as a district, we promote self awareness and self advocacy for students and staff; therefore, we will trust students and staff to determine when they have met an exemption and need a temporary mask break. If a child feels they need a mask break, they can remove their mask for several minutes. Mask breaks will only be permitted when seated on the bus and in their assigned class seat.

Community members have asked, “What will you do when a child does not wear a mask?” I do not think that it is in the best interest of any child to be in a position of deciding whether they should defy their parent or the law. Nor, in this instance, will I suspend a child for listening to their parent. This executive order was created to limit the spread of COVID-19, a communicable disease. In implementing this order, we will reference District Policy 8451-Control of Communicable Disease. If a child comes to school without a mask, they will be offered one. If they refuse, we will call their parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian states that they will not have their child wear a mask, we will isolate the child until their parent/guardian can pick them up. The child will be given asynchronous work to complete while waiting for their parent/guardian. The child will be excluded from school until they follow Executive Order 251.

If you feel your child qualifies for mask accommodations based on a medical concern, you will need to submit a form completed by a specialist. Please visit the COVID page on our website for the necessary district form.

While I recognize this will not make everyone happy, we are following the executive order. Since this pandemic began, we have followed the guidance of the New Jersey Department of Health, the New Jersey Department of Education and the executive orders. If the guidance or the executive order change, we will address those changes. The revised [Reopening Plan](#) and [Presentation](#) have been updated accordingly. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me or your child’s building administrator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole Santora". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Nicole Santora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools