



# Atlanta Public Schools Implements Universal Mask Wearing Protocol

(As of July 21, 2021)

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) remains committed to ensuring healthy and safe learning environments for the 2021-2022 school year. APS will implement a Universal Mask Wearing Protocol in all schools and buildings as we begin the new school year on August 5. In reviewing our data, approximately 18 percent of our eligible students are fully vaccinated (source: Fulton County Board of Health) and approximately 58% of district employees have indicated that they are fully vaccinated or plan to be (source: APS survey data). In our effort to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, APS will continue to offer COVID-19 surveillance testing weekly. APS will also offer the COVID-19 vaccine at two upcoming opportunities: Vaccines will be offered at the Back to School Bash on July 31, and starting August 9, APS will offer on-site COVID-19 vaccinations to eligible students in our middle schools and high schools and our staff.

## Masks Required

**Universal Mask Wearing:** Masks are required for all students and staff in all schools and buildings during the school and workday, as well as all indoor after school activities, clubs, and programs. Clear masks will be provided and used for serving students in special populations i.e. Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Pre-K, and ESOL as needed. *Exceptions should be made for persons who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).*

**School Buses:** Consistent with CDC recommendations regarding public transportation, all students and staff must wear masks when riding or operating school buses.

**Indoor Athletics:** Students and staff are required to wear masks in locker rooms, weight rooms, traveling to/from sporting events, meetings, and other related indoor settings. Schools must follow all guidelines and protocols established by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA).

**Band and Chorus:** Masks are required for all indoor practices, classes and events.

## Masks Optional or Not Required

**Outdoor Activities:** Masks are optional for outdoor activities. This includes the following:

- Recess
- Physical Education
- Outdoor Activities, Clubs, and Programs
- Outdoor Afterschool Activities

**Cafeteria or Eating:** Mask wearing is not required when eating; however physical distancing is necessary. Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as the gymnasium or outdoor seating can help facilitate physical distancing. Schools will utilize best practices for physical distancing in cafeterias and other areas where it would be difficult for students to wear masks.

**Outdoor Athletics:** Students and staff are not required to wear masks for outdoor athletics such as football, baseball, cross-country, track, etc.

**Band and Chorus:** Masks are not required for outdoor practices and events, such as marching band.

APS schools and district offices will utilize additional multi-layered mitigation strategies and best practices, which will include but are not limited to: physical distancing, surveillance testing and health screenings via staff/parent attestation.