

Starting September 21, 2020, to be fully implemented on October 19, 2020.

Developed for CES from CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Memo #29 and CT Executive Order #9.

1) State Mandate to schools

- To achieve the goal of full-time masks on October 19, teachers will develop routines for wearing masks between September 2 until October 19. As a class, the students will wear masks for increasing intervals of time in anticipation of full implementation.
- During the interim time, children will be assisted in the social emotional aspects of mask wearing.
- Wearing of masks may be prioritized at times when it is difficult to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others (CDC).
- Children will need frequent verbal reminders and positive reinforcement.
- Staff should ensure proper fit of masks, to minimize the discomfort of mask wearing. Additional appropriate child-sized masks will be available for replacement of wet or soiled masks.
- Regardless of child's behavior or compliance, they "shall not be excluded from the program or isolated from their peers due to the child's noncompliance with the mask wearing" (CT OEC 2. c.)

2) Expectations of CES staff

- To respond in a gentle and quiet way to the young students, assisting them in this transition
- To provide practice in mask wearing and mask breaks, paying close attention to developmental needs
- To communicate daily with parents about any concerns or needs
- To provide backup masks as need for students

3) Expectation of Families

- Parents are encouraged to provide a comfortable, well-fitting mask for their child. Masks being the appropriate size is very helpful.
- Parents are encouraged to pack a spare mask in the child's backpack for instances of a necessary mask change, due to a soiled or wet mask.
- A parent who is hesitant to allow his or her child to wear a mask may consult with principal or nurse on the current guidelines and reasons for those expectations.

#### 4) Other considerations

##### a) Age:

In the interest of classroom unity and equity, *all* students will begin intermittent wearing of masks in the classroom. Mask wearing must start at the third birthday, and students have until 3 years, 2 months to acclimate and “support developmental readiness” (CT OEC 2.d.v.)

##### b) Developmental and special care considerations:

A student with documented developmental needs “for whom wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their health or safety is not required to wear a mask” (CT OEC 2.d.iv.)

##### c) New enrollment considerations:

On new enrollment in the program, students will have two months’ time to develop mask skills and acclimate to the expectations of masks in the program (CT OEC 2. d. iv.).

#### 5) More State Mandate Details

- Beginning September 21, 2020, students are to wear masks while inside the classroom.
- There is a transition period from September 21 to October 19, 2020.
- Mask will cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the cheeks.
- Students may remove masks during outdoor activities.
- Students may remove masks during snack time.
- Students may remove masks during designated mask breaks.
- When students are unmasked, extra emphasis will be placed on social distancing.  
Masks are one of several mitigating factors in the prevention of COVID-19.

#### References:

CT Office of Early Childhood, Memo # 29

<https://www.ctoec.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/COVID-19-Memo-29-Masks-and-Group-Size-English.pdf>

Center for Disease Control, cloth mask guidance

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>