



Safety Update

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What the Statewide Mask Mandate Ban Means for Fargo Public Schools

On Thursday, April 22, the North Dakota Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1323, which prohibits state officials from mandating face coverings. What does that mean for staff or students at Fargo Public Schools (FPS)?

House Bill 1323

House Bill 1323, which goes into effect on August 1, 2021, prohibits only statewide elected officials and the state health officer from issuing a state-wide mask mandate. HB 1323 still allows Fargo Public Schools and political subdivisions to require masks while on school property or at school events.

What does this mean for Fargo Public Schools?

This bill does not change anything for Fargo Public Schools guidelines. FPS will continue to require masks for students and staff while on school property or at school events.

Why are we requiring masks still?

Fargo Cass Public Health and the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) still recommend wearing masks as a COVID-19 mitigation strategy. Furthermore, mask wearing is critical for keeping students in school. During the week of April 19-23, FPS had a total of 221 students who were considered close contacts. Out of those 221, only 66 students were required to quarantine because we are using the NDDoH mask exemption, which allows people to stay out of quarantine if both individuals are wearing face coverings. This means that FPS was able to keep 155 student close contacts in school who would have otherwise had to stay home. If FPS no longer requires masks, the number of students being required to quarantine would rise significantly.

