

**NEBRASKA**  
**CHAPTER** of the  
**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
*Incorporated in Nebraska*



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July 2, 2020

RE: Guidance for school reopening & use of masks/face coverings

As pediatricians, the health, well-being and safety of Nebraska children are first and foremost in our minds. We applaud the efforts of teachers, educators, school board members and school health professionals during these challenging times.

On behalf of Nebraska's pediatricians and pediatric health care providers, I would like to communicate our support for your efforts to make the health of Nebraska's children and adolescents a priority in your efforts to open our schools safely and avoid the unnecessary spread of the Coronavirus.

We urge deliberate planning now for the physical reopening of schools in the fall. In doing so we must take the full measure of children's health. We urge a balanced, collaborative approach involving educators, public health officials, pediatricians, mental health professionals, and parents.

Research<sup>1</sup> has shown that the use of masks or cloth face coverings, combined with social distancing practices and good hand hygiene, will play an important role in safeguarding the health of children and adolescents as they return to school. We strongly support the use of masks or cloth face coverings by students and staff as a part of a strategy to keep our communities healthy and our schools open.

Please feel free to reach out to us at any time for information or resources as you continue your planning for the coming school year.

Sincerely,

Melissa St. Germain, MD, FAAP  
AAP Nebraska Chapter President

<sup>1</sup> Resources on mask usage:

- AAP guidance on school reopening: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- Results of mask study in NYC: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/06/200612172200.htm>
- Meta-analysis in the Lancet: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31142-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31142-9/fulltext)