



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

September 16, 2020

Dr. Eddie Ingram
Superintendent
Berkeley County School District
P.O. Box 608
Monks Corner, SC 29461-0608

Dear Dr. Ingram:

As you and I have recently discussed, it has come to my attention through complaints from the Berkeley County School District community that the district has chosen not to implement the requirements for face coverings as outlined in the South Carolina Department of Education Face Covering Guidelines for K-12 Public Schools. While Berkeley has strongly encouraged the use of face coverings, the aforementioned guidelines set forth requirements, which have been widely distributed and are available on our website, calling for face coverings to be worn by students and staff while on state owned school buses and within South Carolina public school facilities. Consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control guidance, the requirements provide exemptions for students and staff who have certain medical conditions.

It is imperative that these requirements be implemented with fidelity to keep students and staff safe and ensure a successful return to in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. With Berkeley offering a five day face to face instruction option, it is vital that these requirements are in place. While I do not encourage overly punitive measures for students and staff who fail to follow the guidelines, schools and districts can use reminders and mechanisms consistent with other dress code policies. Students and staff who refuse to comply may also be moved to one of the district's virtual options.

Failure to implement these requirements will result in the district's forfeiture of the ability to utilize 209 state owned school buses currently allocated to your district. I am also prepared to utilize the broad authority granted to the State Superintendent of Education in law and regulation that compels me to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Attached to this letter you

Face Covering Guidelines

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will find the aforementioned South Carolina Department of Education Face Covering Guidelines for K-12 Public Schools. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff as you work to implement these requirements immediately.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Molly M. Spearman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Molly M. Spearman
State Superintendent of Education

cc: Sally Wofford, Berkeley County School District Board Chair