Music

March 7 Face Covering Update

Beginning March 7, face coverings will become optional, indoors and outdoors on NYC public school grounds and on school buses, for all K-12 students and staff with a few exceptions. Please note that while wearing a face covering will no longer be required, anyone who chooses to wear a mask may continue to do so. For more information, please visit the updated Face Coverings InfoHub page.

Considerations for In-Person Rehearsal Safety and Procedures

Upon NYC’s full return to in-person instruction, music classes will make a full return to in-person music making. Music is essential in creating a supportive, inclusive, innovative, and rigorous learning environment for all students. The arts (dance, moving image, music, theater, and visual arts) are core contents and must be taught as part of in-person learning in reopening NYC DOE schools for Fall 2021. Schools must meet New York State Instructional Requirements in the Arts for
instruction by certified arts teachers and should refer to the NYC Blueprints for Teaching and Learning in the Arts for learning benchmarks, recommended resources, and instructional considerations.

To ensure equity across all content areas, schools are expected to offer in-person music performance classes (e.g., band, chorus, guitar, orchestra) as well as core music classes. Students across various cohorts and grade levels will have the opportunity to make music together during the school day, since they can move safely through hallways to dedicated music spaces.

Schools are expected to fully return to in-person music instruction with appropriate prevention strategies in place.

**Overall Guiding Principles: A Multi-Layered Approach**

The following is recommended when making music in person:

- Modify indoor instruction for small-group and sectional work whenever possible.
- Increased ventilation
- Screening/testing aligned with school-wide procedures
- Encourage vaccination for eligible students.
- Engage in outdoor rehearsal whenever possible.
- Consider local and site-specific conditions (e.g., ventilation, community transmission rate) to determine the level of layered prevention strategies.

Students and staff should continue to:

- Complete the DOE’s daily health screener on school days and for activities held on weekends.
  - Students may complete electronically [https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/](https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/) or complete a paper version.
addition to undergoing a temperature check (conducted by a staff member or School Safety Agent).
  - The screening results are valid until midnight of the same day.
- Stay home when feeling even slightly unwell, even if that means missing a performance.

**Five Key Areas**

The following summary also highlights recommendations in key areas:

1. Hygiene
2. Air Flow
3. Time

**HYGIENE**

- Strong emphasis continues on hygiene, including frequent handwashing, using sanitizers, not sharing wind instruments, preventing uncontrolled spit valve release, and cleaning storage areas.
- Wind instruments (i.e., woodwind and brass families) should not be shared.
- Be sure to include expanded transition time for cleaning and disinfecting protocols, as well as entry and exit of storage areas and the rehearsal room.
- “Spit valves” (i.e., water keys) on brass instruments should not be emptied on the floor; contents from the spit valve should be safely discarded by the student assigned to the instrument.
- Non-wind instruments should be individually assigned whenever possible. If non-wind instruments (e.g., strings, percussion, keyboard instruments) are shared, they must be properly cleaned and thoroughly disinfected between use by each participant, according to acceptable procedures and in accordance with CDC, State, and local guidelines.
- Follow all CDC guidelines and school-required cleaning and disinfection protocols, including routines for wiping music classroom surfaces, equipment, and instruments using proper cleaners and methods.
- Maintain ample quantities of appropriate disinfecting and cleaning supplies.
Select disinfectants containing ingredients that are approved by the CDC/EPA as disinfectants for Coronavirus and appropriate for and will not damage surface(s) upon which they will be used.

- Read product instructions and follow them closely; whichever disinfectants are chosen, this is crucial.

NOTE: Disinfectants do not remove dirt, so mouthpieces and instruments must still be cleaned thoroughly before using.

**AIR FLOW**

- Outdoors remains the best place for air flow.
- When rehearsing indoors, increase the amount of clean air and the number of air changes per hour (ACH).
  - It is strongly recommended that HEPA air cleaners be used. Increase ventilation e.g., with three or more HEPA air cleaners per music room, rather than one.

Rehearsal space recommendations in order of preference remain:

- Outdoor rehearsals, using mitigation techniques in accordance with local and state transmission rates.
- Indoors with elevated outdoor air exchange rate from HVAC.
- Indoors with typical outdoor air exchange rate from HVAC plus recirculation of air through MERV 13 filters or addition of appropriately-sized HEPA air cleaners.
- Indoors with outdoor air exchange rate from open windows supplemented with appropriately-sized HEPA air cleaners when airflow is reduced under certain outdoor wind conditions.
- Partitions/room dividers are NOT recommended, as they inhibit the function of the HVAC system.
- Please refer to the Association for Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guidance on ventilation during COVID-19.
• When engaging in outdoor music learning, tents with side panels should not be used.

**TIME**

• OUTDOORS: Rehearsals should be limited to 60 minutes. Then, leaders should allow a five (5) minute break before the next rehearsal.

• INDOORS: In spaces with good ventilation rates (i.e., a minimum of 3 air exchanges per hour) AND HEPA filtration, increased indoor rehearsal times of 50 minutes may be considered. (If there are spaces with higher air change rates, longer rehearsal times may also be considered.)

Otherwise, indoor rehearsals should be limited to 30 minutes. Then, the room should be cleared and leaders should wait until at least one (1) HVAC air change has occurred before the next rehearsal.

**Resources**

• CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

• New York State Education Department (NYSED) Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year (August 2021)

• NFHS Updated Guidelines – International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study (July 9, 2021)
  ○ [https://www nfhs.org/media/4716954/international-coalition-performing-arts-aerosol-study-july-2021-update-final.pdf](https://www nfhs.org/media/4716954/international-coalition-performing-arts-aerosol-study-july-2021-update-final.pdf)

• NFHS Updated Statement on United States CDC Distancing Guidance (March 19, 2021)
• Unprecedented International Coalition led by Performing Arts Organizations to Commission COVID-19 Study

• Third Round of Performing Arts Aerosol Study Produces More Scientific Data for Return to Activities

• International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study Report 3
  ○ https://www.nfhs.org/media/4294910/third-aerosol-report.pdf

• NAfME Supports Arts Coalition Study on Effects of COVID-19
  ○ https://nafme.org/nafme-supports-arts-coalition-study-effects-covid-19/

• Arts Coalition Study on Effects of COVID-19 on Return to the Rehearsal Hall
  ○ https://nafme.org/nafme-supports-arts-coalition-study-effects-covid-19/

• Association for Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guidance on ventilation during COVID-19
  ○ https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources

• Use the links below to access previous recommendations or refer to Considerations for Blended and Remote Learning in Music for additional recommendations regarding Space and Procedures and Safety:
  ○ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K5yOjjrFFMmQVAYMPQpn0vhPWLZOX9I/usp=sharing
  ○ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yAm6Tto7KsAlhhWDdYRJXBsB-WkprSsh/view?usp=sharing

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