



## Young Audiences of New Jersey & Eastern Pennsylvania COVID-19 Guidelines for Teaching Artists FY 2021-2022

***Updated 11/22/21 – Subject to change***

It is Young Audiences of New Jersey & Eastern Pennsylvania’s (YA’s) policy to follow all current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance regarding safe instruction in PreK-12 schools during the 21-22 school year. This compliance extends to best practices recommended or required by federal and state governments and individual venues. Since our work is delivered by teaching artists, we also commit to following the safety preferences of individual artists and ensembles unless in conflict with the recommendations of the CDC, federal and state governments, or the venue. Guidelines are designed in order to allow arts education to safely continue while placing the health and safety of students, staff and teaching artists at the forefront.

Sources used in the creation of this document are listed at the end. Primary guidance was drawn from [Arts Ed NJ – September Forward](#).

### **YA Programming in 2021-2022**

As of this writing, YA is offering in-person, live virtual, and on-demand (pre-recorded) arts programming to schools in the region. As with other guidelines in this document, this strategy is subject to change. This activity is supported by Arts Ed NJ’s [October 14, 2021 guidance](#), which states that “Currently there are no prohibitions on indoor performances for schools.”

### **General COVID Safety**

#### **Sickness**

If feeling sick, especially if feverish or with symptoms resembling COVID-19, teaching artists should remain home. If any ensemble member has tested positive for COVID-19 in the ten days prior to the engagement, it must be rescheduled, adapted, or cancelled until after the recommended ten-day quarantine period has taken place. See Cancellation, Adaptation, and Rescheduling guidelines below for more.

#### **Health Screening**

As per Arts Ed NJ’s [October 14, 2021 guidance](#):

“All performers, faculty, and staff should conduct a health screening prior to arriving at the school performance using the CDC Symptoms Self-Checking Tool: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019->

[ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) If a performer/faculty/staff member is unwell, they should stay home.”

### **Vaccination**

YA strongly recommends but does not currently mandate vaccination for teaching artists and ensembles. However, as some safety regulations vary for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, appropriate CDC, state, and school guidance must be followed depending on vaccination status. If an artist is unwilling to abide by necessary regulations, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, they will not be able to continue with a given engagement. Should a venue require proof of vaccination, testing, or other safety measures, teaching artist must comply in order to continue with the scheduled engagement.

In order to ensure compliance with venue requests for vaccination status, teaching artists will communicate this information in a timely manner to Artist Services Manager Joseph Ahmed, [jahmed@yanjep.org](mailto:jahmed@yanjep.org), Program Director Donnajean Reckelhoff, [donnajr@yanjep.org](mailto:donnajr@yanjep.org), or another YA staff member as applicable to the given program.

### **Further Safety Measures**

Depending on CDC, government, and state guidance, as well as the nature of a given program, YA may require more stringent safety procedures. YA reserves the right to require proof of vaccination, temperature checks, a negative COVID test or other safety procedures as guided by the CDC and as deemed necessary by YA and the school partner.

### **Community Transmission Levels**

CDC guidance may vary for different levels of community transmission as shown in the [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#). Programming staff and program managers will be in contact with artists and school contacts a week ahead of scheduled events to check in if any agreed-upon COVID precautions need to be adjusted. If circumstances have shifted to the point where the program is no longer possible, see Cancellation, Adaptation, and Rescheduling guidelines below.

# KEEPING ARTS ED SAFE AT SCHOOL

## MASK Everything!



**SINGERS**  
**ACTORS**  
**DANCERS**

**INSTRUMENTS**

**TEACHERS**

## DISTANCE

← **3 FEET** →  
if possible

## TIME

 **50**  
minutes

\*with proper ventilation

### OUTDOOR



Masks? ✗  
Distancing? ✗  
Time Limits? ✗  
Hygiene? ✓



## MATERIALS\* MATTER



2 LAYERS or more of DENSE FABRIC

*for instruments*

WELL-FITTING MASKS

*for students*



\*Material should consist of MERV13 material or ASTM F2100 (or similar) standard.

## Proper HYGIENE



Instruments  
Spaces  
People

## AIRFLOW / FILTRATION

Good ventilation and  
air change rate for the space.



**ARTS ED NJ**

August 2021

Source: International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study <http://bit.ly/33r1EmK> • <http://www.SeptemberForward.org>

Source: Arts Ed NJ September Forward

## YA Signature Core Services Indoor program guidelines

*Note: the following guidelines are designed based on school policy in both NJ and PA. For non-school venues, or venues outside of these two states, all applicable CDC, state, and venue guidelines should be followed on a case-by-case basis.*

### Performances

#### Masks

New Jersey requires students, teachers, staff and visitors to wear masks in schools. Masks (made of [appropriate material](#)) should be utilized by all performers except wind players where the instrument itself should be masked. Wind players may have a normal mask around the neck when playing the instrument which should be used to cover the mouth when not playing. Specially designed player masks are not necessary. Flutes and Recorders do not need any covering as they do not generate aerosols.

Pennsylvania also requires masks in schools as of 8/31/21.

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

#### DO choose masks that:



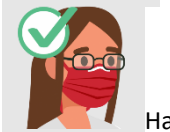
Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps



Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

#### DO NOT choose masks that:



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape



Are prioritized for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators

[Source: CDC.gov Your Guide to Masks](#)

### **Social Distancing**

Performers should remain at least three feet distant from students and faculty while performing, and more than six feet if unmasked for any reason or engaged in an activity such as singing, playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity that might create heightened aerosol spread. No interactions with students should occur which involve them violating school or YA social distancing guidelines. Students may still come onstage with a performer if remaining masked and socially distant. Students may touch props or other objects only if previously sanitized and while socially distant.

### **Hygiene**

When present in a school artists should wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing, or before eating. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can also be used and should be brought to the venue with the artist. Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth. Avoid shared equipment where the mouth may come into contact with equipment (such as mouthpieces, microphones, etc.) and follow manufacturer's instructions to clean thoroughly between uses.

### **Audience Limit**

New Jersey and Pennsylvania currently do not have a numerical limit on indoor or outdoor gatherings. YA will continue to enforce audience limits previously determined in artist agreements.

## **Workshops**

### **Masks**

New Jersey requires students, teachers, staff and visitors to wear masks in schools. Masks ([made of appropriate material](#)) should be utilized by all performers except wind players where the instrument itself should be masked. Wind players may have a normal mask around the neck when playing the instrument which should be used to cover the mouth when not playing. Specially designed player masks are not necessary. Flutes and Recorders do not need any covering as they do not generate aerosols.

Pennsylvania also requires masks in schools as of 8/31/21.

### **Social Distancing**

Distancing of three feet (measured center of seat to center of seat) is suggested when feasible but should not preclude an activity from taking place. A properly ventilated space should be used. Proper hygiene strategies should remain in place.

*Note:* For movement-based workshops and residencies this social distancing guideline of three feet means that choreographic choices involving partnering should be avoided, as well as correcting or instructing students movements via touch. If this is integral to a workshop or residency, YA may require other safety procedures including temperature check or a negative COVID test before entering the

school. If a socially distant solution cannot be found, and sufficient safety measures allowing close contact cannot be agreed upon, the program may be subject to cancellation

### **Hygiene**

When present in a school artists should wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing, or before eating. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can also be used and should be brought to the venue with the artist. Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth.

### **Materials**

Teaching artists should be prepared with enough materials to limit material sharing between students and be prepared to sanitize materials. Avoid shared equipment where the mouth may come into contact with equipment (such as mouthpieces, microphones, etc.). If materials fees need to be increased to account for these guidelines, contact YA staff.

### **Ventilation**

YA understands that proper ventilation is the responsibility of the school or venue and is usually not able to be affected in a major way by visiting teaching artists. Additional strategies that may be put in place include using a [portable air filter](#) and opening windows. *Note:* some [research](#) has shown that open windows can contribute to aerosol spread when the windows are at the same level as student desks. To help with this, fans or deflectors should be placed to direct the incoming air down towards the floor.

## **Professional Learning**

Professional Learning sessions are delivered virtually. If an in-person event is necessitated, guidelines for workshops should be followed.

## **Scheduling and Logistics**

### **Prioritization**

Due to the shifting nature of COVID-19 guidance, YA will be prioritizing scheduling of artists with both virtual and in-person programs in instances when a school partner specifically requests in-person work. YA staff remain open and available to work with artists to develop live virtual or on-demand programming throughout the year, as well as exploring opportunities to provide more formal support in making these adaptations.

### **Outdoor vs. Indoor**

The guidelines earlier in this document apply to indoor programming. When possible, YA will schedule in-person performances to take place outdoors. There are no mask, distancing, or time limitations for any outdoor visual and performing arts activity. Outdoors remain the safest space. No mitigations are needed (subject to level of local transmission rates). Proper hygiene strategies should remain in place.

### **Cancellation, Adaptation, and Rescheduling**

Cancellation and postponement of events is a reality of COVID-19 and may be initiated by the school, YA, or teaching artist depending on such factors as: COVID-19 outbreaks and transmission rates, CDC and government policy, or previously agreed-upon safety standards shifting. If a program is cancelled for a reason related to COVID-19 the following contingencies will be implemented in this priority order:

1. The event will be adapted into a virtual program on the agreed-upon date.

2. The event will be rescheduled either as a virtual program or an in-person program.
3. The event will be cancelled.
4. In the case of full cancellation, YA is exploring whether we will be able to offer partial cancellation fees. In addition, we are continuing to seek funding to offer artist relief separate from programming opportunities.

### **Disclosure of Transmission**

If a YA roster artist tests positive for COVID-19 they must alert YA staff if they have an engagement within the next ten days or the previous ten days. YA staff will share this information only with other staff members and directly involved school partners. YA will reschedule artists who have contracted COVID-19 a minimum of ten days after either onset of symptoms or the date of the positive test, if asymptomatic. Apart from this quarantine period, the Cancellation, Adaptation, and Rescheduling guidelines apply.

### **Advocating for Safety**

Just as YA teaching artists are responsible for maintaining safety standards for the students and schools they encounter, schools are also responsible for protecting the safety of teaching artists. If a teaching artist encounters a venue not following agreed-upon safety standards, they are supported by YA in requesting that those standards be followed and retain the ability to refuse service if they are not. YA may also be contacted to speak directly with the school in these cases. If services are refused due to the school partner not following agreed-upon safety standards, the event will be subject to the Cancellation, Adaptation, and Rescheduling guidelines.

### **Liability**

As stated in the Artist Agreement, teaching artists agree to not hold YA harmless for damages, which includes potential transmission of COVID-19. Additionally, site/venue contracts specify that both YA and teaching artists will be held harmless in the event of COVID transmission at the site of a YA program.

### **Sources used in creating this policy:**

**Primary Source:** [Arts Ed NJ – September Forward](#)  
[CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)  
[NJ.gov COVID-19 Information Hub](#)  
[NJ Department of Health – The Road Forward](#)  
[CDC COVID Data Tracker](#)  
[PA DOE COVID-19 Guidance](#)  
[Arts Ed NJ Indoor Performance Letter, issued 10/14/21](#)

**This document was compiled by Joseph Ahmed, YANJEP Artist Services Manager and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Manager with input from other YANJEP staff members.**