



COVID-19 Guidelines for Teaching Artists FY 2021-2022

Updated 3/23/22 – 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 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 – March 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.

Following March 7th 2022, mask mandates have been lifted in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. According to Arts Ed NJ's guidance: "THERE ARE NO MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS in 'MASK OPTIONAL' SCHOOLS. Visual and Performing Arts programs should return to pre-pandemic norms."

In compliance with this guidance, YA teaching artists may currently perform maskless in "Mask Optional" schools. However, while no longer mandated, YA strongly encourages teaching artists to comply with recommended mitigation measures listed below in the "Indoor Program Guidelines" section, including masking when not actively performing.

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

Artists will self-check for COVID-19 symptoms daily. If COVID-19 symptoms are present, the artist will reschedule that day's visit to the school and disclose to YA and to the school/venue.

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> If a performer/faculty/staff member is unwell, they should stay home."

Vaccination

YA will require artists to be vaccinated to do in-person work in schools. Upon arrival at school, artist(s) will provide proof of vaccination.

YA will not store any artist vaccination information. However, to ensure compliance with venue requests for vaccination status, teaching artists will privately share their vaccination information with a YA staff member via an unrecorded video call. The staff member will fill out a form attesting to having seen the teaching artist's vaccination confirmation and supply this form to scheduled venues prior to an event. For ensembles, the lead member will view their ensemble's vaccination information and submit a form to YA attesting to the group being fully vaccinated.

Regardless of attestation forms, venues retain the prerogative to require proof of vaccination upon arrival. YA artists are still expected to carry valid ID and digital or physical copies of their vaccination cards when arriving at a school, and understand that without these they may be denied entry.

Note: the CDC's current definition of fully vaccinated is two doses of a two dose-vaccine, or a single dose of a single-dose vaccine. If guidance is updated, this policy will shift to reflect the most current definition.

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.

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 safety measures in this section are applicable for schools with mask mandates still in place. While these standards are strongly encouraged by YA as approved methods to lessen community spread of COVID-19, programs in "Mask Optional" schools should return to pre-pandemic norms.

Performances

Masks

When performing for student audiences, performers will remain masked. All teaching artists will be masked unless the performance involves aerobic or anaerobic activity (as recognized under E.O. 251). If teaching artists or performers remove their masks to perform aerobic or anaerobic activity, they will remain socially distanced from students. Wind players must mask their instrument, wear a face mask that is lowered to the neck when playing. Specially designed player masks are not necessary. Flutes and Recorders do not need any covering as they do not generate aerosols

Teaching artists are still welcome to mask while delivering a program at "Mask Optional" school venues, even if their policy does not require this safety measure. Should a teaching artist only feel comfortable delivering a program if their audience/workshop attendees are masked, YA staff will ask if the school partner is willing to comply. However, teaching artists should note that without a school policy in place mandating mask wearing it is difficult to guarantee 100% compliance.

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some dos 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

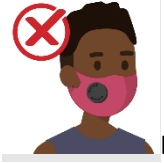


Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

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

[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 they remain 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 their 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.

Breaks and Water

Artists will provide frequent rest and water breaks when students are engaged in dance and other physically demanding activities.

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

When performing for student audiences, performers will remain masked. All teaching artists will be masked unless the performance involves aerobic or anaerobic activity (as recognized under E.O. 251). If teaching artists or performers remove their masks to perform aerobic or anaerobic activity, they will remain socially distanced from students. Wind players must mask their instrument, wear a face mask that is lowered to the neck when playing. Specially designed player masks are not necessary. Flutes and Recorders do not need any covering as they do not generate aerosols

Teaching artists are still welcome to mask while delivering a program at “Mask Optional” school venues, even if their policy does not require this safety measure. Should a teaching artist only feel comfortable delivering a program if their audience/workshop attendees are masked, YA staff will ask if the school partner is willing to comply. However, teaching artists should note that without a school policy in place mandating mask wearing it is difficult to guarantee 100% compliance.

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.

Breaks and Water

Artists will provide frequent rest and water breaks when students are engaged in dance and other physically demanding activities.

Materials & Cleaning

Artists will limit sharing of materials, sanitize materials between uses, and/or create art “kits” for each student. 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 if in a school with a mask mandate in place.

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. YA will discuss classroom or performance space to be used ahead of time with the school partner and will attempt to use outdoor spaces as much as possible.

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 school requires a change in format, YA will offer hybrid or virtual programming to replace in-person programming when possible. 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

There will be full disclosure between YA, artist, and school about exposures and transmission. If there is an exposure at the school or if the artist experiences an exposure, a reschedule will be put in place to allow for quarantine time.

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 Sources: [Arts Ed NJ – March 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.