

ARTS ED NJ

DATE: March 1, 2022

TO: All New Jersey Arts Educators, Administrators, Principals, Superintendents, Executive County Superintendents, School Board Members, Health Officers

FROM: Robert B. Morrison, Arts Ed NJ

SUBJECT: March Forward 2022 Guidance for Arts Education

CC: Governor Phil Murphy, Commissioner of Health Judith M. Persichilli, Acting Commissioner of Education Angelica Allen-McMillan, New Jersey State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg, LEE Group, NJDOE Road Forward Team.

Arts Ed NJ has suspended mitigation guidance for schools designated as “mask optional” effective March 7, 2022.

The announcement coincides with the just-released March Forward Spring 2022 Guidance for Arts Education (MarchForwardNJ.org), which provides the most up-to-date policy guide for administrators, K-12 arts educators, and the community at large to ensure that students can take part in arts education programs safely and effectively as schools return to pre-pandemic norms.

This update comes in the wake of New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy’s [February 7, 2022 announcement](#) lifting the universal school mask mandate for all students, educators, staff and visitors effective on March 7, 2022, as well as the [February 25, 2022 announcement](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) easing mask recommendations.

The latest update from Arts Ed NJ includes:

1. No mitigation requirements for “Mask Optional Schools”
2. For schools with a mask requirement, Arts Ed NJ reinforces the previous recommendations for indoor performing arts, including:
 - Masks made of appropriate material should be worn; however, wind players should mask their instruments while playing. This allows them to remove their face masks during performance only. Physical “Social distancing” of three feet is also recommended “when feasible.”
 - In spaces with good ventilation, indoor rehearsal time should be limited to 50 minutes, followed by one air exchange before resuming. If there are spaces with higher air change rates, teachers may consider longer rehearsal times.
 - Proper hygiene ventilation strategies should be a priority at all times.
3. There are no mitigation requirements when outdoors for any school.

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

*** For classes over 50 minutes start and end the class with a non-performance activity*

The recommendations outlined in March Forward 2022 build on work that began in 2020 with a taskforce of more than 100 of the state's leading arts educators and stakeholders, who met regularly throughout the school year and beyond to understand the challenges for students and teachers during the COVID era. This work is informed by the groundbreaking research of the International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study led by Dr. Shelly Miller, University of Colorado Boulder and Dr. Jelena Srebric, University of Maryland.

Recommendations are based on:

- [New Jersey Department of Health Announcement](#) (February 7, 2022)
- [New Jersey Department of Health Recommendations for Schools](#) (February 22, 2022)
- [Current CDC Guidance as of February 25, 2022](#)
- [International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study](#) (February 15, 2022 Update): Dr. Shelly Miller, University of Colorado Boulder and Dr. Jelena Srebric, University of Maryland, Lead Researchers

For more detailed information on this and other visual and performing arts guidance, please visit <http://MarchForwardNJ.org>

Arts Ed NJ is the performing arts affiliate for the National Association of State High School Associations for New Jersey.