

PHM Protocol for Band Instruction

Fall 2020

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic there is a great deal of concern with the playing of musical instruments and the aerosolization of viral particles. Due to the nature of playing wind instruments extra care and precaution must be taken to maintain safety. A recent study that was sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations, the College Band Directors National Association along with 125 arts organizations has released preliminary data to help inform directors and administrators. This study has not been quality assessed and peer reviewed.

<https://www.nfhs.org/media/4029958/preliminary-testing-report-7-13-20.pdf>

With the advice of the general considerations from the study here is a list of recommended protocols:

- Masks should be worn by all students and staff prior to entering the performing arts room. Masks should continue to be worn until all students are seated and ready for instruction (example, long rests, sectional work, moving around the room, etc.)
- No talking should occur in the room without a mask being properly worn.
- Every student will utilize hand sanitizer prior to entering the classroom.
- When possible, a mask with a small slit for mouthpiece access should be worn while playing.
- Percussion should wear masks at all times and should re-apply hand sanitizer prior to changing large instrument equipment such as bass drum, marimba, xylophone.
- In instrument groups where a mask cannot physically be worn, the mask should be worn over the chin and replaced during periods where the student is not playing. No talking without a mask.
- Social distancing should occur as suggested by the CDC. Currently that distance is a 6x6 foot space around each student with the student sitting in the center. This may reduce the number of students that can fit in a performing arts classroom. Straight lines should be used as curved setups can affect the aerosol movement in a room.
- Band rooms should be measured to determine the maximum number of students allowed to maintain 6x6 foot distance.

- Students should sit all facing the same direction, back to front to minimize potential exposure.
- Trombones should have an additional three feet of distancing making their space 9x6. The player should be seated three feet in front of the back line, leaving an additional six feet in front of them due to the extended nature of the instrument and slide that can be in extended position.
- Spit valves should not be emptied on the floor. Recommend using an absorbable pad to catch the contents of the spit valve and discard.
- Storage areas should be managed to limit the number of students at a time in the room.
- Instrument cases that are manageable within student backpacks should be stored on the student's person and not stored in the school building.
- Common surfaces should be sanitized before and after rehearsal.
- Teachers should consider using a portable amplifier to keep their voices at a low conversational volume. Students should also ask questions in a low conversational volume with a mask.
- Teachers are assumed to talk the most and as a result should wear the most efficient mask possible that is readily available, which are surgical masks. (N95s are not recommended at this time due to supply chain issues.)
- Students will play their instruments for a maximum of 30 minutes at a time with a 30 minute break in between to reduce the amount of aerosolized particles in the air.

This is a preliminary document and will be adapted as new information becomes available to best minimize risk.

Submitted by

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