

March 4, 2021

VSSNA Town Hall #16

A Strong and Healthy Start: Safety and Health Guidance for Music Education (Rev. Feb. 17, 2021)

Winter Sports Programs for the 2020-2021 School Year Interscholastic Games, Meets and Competitions (Rev. February 9, 2021)

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Logistics: Mixing Cohorts

- The current Strong & Healthy start guidance focuses on **NOT** mixing cohorts (elementary schools)...
- If musical ensemble members (i.e. band members from more than one cohort) are six feet apart, with facial mask and instrument is masked, etc. - is this acceptable?

PPE: Masks (this may have been addressed by the previous question)

- The guidance for music education is clear for high school and middle school.
- Can you help me understand how singing in elementary school will work. Surgical masks and 6 feet for the younger students?

PPE: Masks

- Please speak to the 3-ply, disposable, procedure masks prepared with slits vs. cloth masks with slits that are manufactured for music purposes

PPE: Masks

- “Well-fitting” masks have been the key to limiting the spread of this virus --
- Please comment on the difference if students masks are not well-fitting

PPE: Masks

- “Well-fitting” masks have been the key to limiting the spread of this virus -- KN95 masks are “re-usable” for an extended period of time (placed in paper bag for at least 48 hours between use).
- Will the introduction of the slit for instrumentalists alter this?

PPE: Procedure Mask or KN95 (this is a long one - continued on next slide)

- The guidance states masks need to be a procedure mask or a K95. Our teacher showed me the masks he had ordered and used in the fall. They seem just as safe, if not safer as they are thick 2 ply for the band one, almost 4 ply really, and with the velcro closure more secure around the instruments. The chorus mask is 100% polypropylene inside and 100% cotton outside. Wanted to know if these are okay to use as they are better options than what is in the guidance (links below).

<https://www.sing-safe.com/the-science>

<https://www.swbandproducts.com/double-layer-performance-face-mask-for-brass-and-wind-players-with-optional-performance-slit-3-pack.html#tab1>

PPE: Procedure Mask or KN95 (continued from previous slide)

- If you have ever cut a procedure or K95 mask, fibers go everywhere and the slit continues to tear too big an opening as the instrument is removed and put back through while playing the piece of music. It also eliminates the added step of covering the mask with a slit in it with another mask because it has the velcro closure. Most of the air is going into the instrument anyway where there is an additional bell cover so the mask isn't really filtering any air when playing.

PPE: Masks

- In the NFHS study, they suggest that the blue procedure masks can be used as an alternative bell cover. This is not included in the guidance from the AOE.
- Is it ok to use the disposable procedure masks as bell covers for the smaller brass and woodwind instruments and if so, can they be reused and for how long?

<https://www.nfhs.org/media/4294910/third-aerosol-report.pdf>

PPE: Masks

- Our music teacher has stated that it would be hard for flute players to use a procedure or KN95 mask due to the positioning of the instrument. He has found an alternative 3-layer cloth mask with a flap designed specifically for the flute (I included the link below).
- We are wondering if this would be an acceptable alternative only for flute players?

<https://www.musicarts.com/protec-flutepiccolo-mask-one-size-fits-most-main0494676>

PPE: Masks

- The music guidance requires that each band/choir student wear a disposable procedure mask or a KN95 mask. It states that the procedure masks are single use only and the KN95s can be used for "an extended period of time." What is meant by "extended period of time"? Is there any way that the procedure masks can be reused more than once?

NOTED with the question above: I imagine that these can't be reused for choir students as I believe they will be saturated after 30 mins of singing but can the ones with the slits cut in them from band students be reused?

Logistics: Pods/Cohorts

- My 6th grade is divided by a two teams which is then divided by 4 classrooms on each team. We have been keeping a classroom together as a POD since the start of school. Music students are sprinkled among the 4 classrooms on the team. With the updated guidance my question is could music/band kids from the 4 classrooms on the same team come together and create a new pod for their band/music. It would be a 30 minute block once a day.

Logistics: Music Outside (singing/playing instruments)

- The guidance for music education still encourages singing and playing of instruments to occur outside as weather permits.
- Is there a temperature cutoff below which this should not occur?

Logistics: Music Outside

- Can Performances or Rehearsals (with PPE and distancing) be longer than 30 minutes if they are outside. Thinking specifically about live streaming a concert outside toward the end of the year.

Logistics: Timing Between Lessons

- If a rehearsal is more than 30 minutes, can a break be taken and then resume for another 30 minutes.
- If there are back to back classes, how long does there need to be between classes in a music room?

Logistics: Physical Distancing

- If all students are to return to school 5 days per week, will the distancing requirements change? Is there evidence to support this?
- How can the 7th/8th graders and high schoolers safely approach this safely (and logistically) while maintaining the 6ft distance in the building?
- Are there published studies that will allow us to loosen this guidance for this age group?

Logistics: Physical Distancing

- The Governor's directive indicated the ban on social gathering's outside of your household would be lifted when our community numbers decrease. In school transmission has been historically low even when community numbers were high.
- Now that 75% of our most vulnerable population have been vaccinated when can our children see their family in another household without having to quarantine from school?

Music Guidance v. Sports Guidance

- A student questioned administration about how sports can intermingle and play but how musicians cannot.
- The administration told the student that they are clubs and the rules, parental approval and space use are different.
- If there is a “Select Choir Club” or “Pep Band Club”, can they operate in a similar fashion?

Sports: Graduated Return-to-Play

- How can we use the Graduated Return-to-Play guidelines for students who have COVID and are not "student/athletes" but need to take PE in school. Right now we just get students back in school after the appropriate time period post-infectious status with no guidance from the PCPs about return to general PC.
- Will the PCPs complete the "Medical Clearance for Graduated Return-to-Play After COVID 19 Infection" for any child who has symptomatic COVID or any student who has Moderate or Severe COVID?

Sports: Cardiac Screening Algorithm

- Would it be possible to go over the evidence for return to play after COVID?
- Can you define what moderate symptoms are for the return to play evaluations?

Sports: High Intensity Sports definition

- How is "high intensity sports" to be defined in this algorithm?
- If a child <12 years old engages in high intensity sports such as gymnastics or travel hockey should the pathway under Moderate symptoms? Age >/+12, high intensity sports or physical activity be followed? *(Without a definition of high intensity sports, this is a bit unclear)*