



Arts Education in the 2020-21 School Year: Recommendations and Resources

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Introduction: About This Document

- All arts education stakeholders can engage with this document. This includes arts educators, non-arts educators, district staff, school administrators, community teaching artists, arts organizations, out-of-school time partners, funders, families, and students.
- Minnesota school districts and charter schools will create their own plans for the fall locally, and this document is intended to provide ideas for many scenarios, school policies, and local guidelines. This document does not supplant local plans or decision-making. Rather, it provides resources, ideas, and suggestions to support local planning. Arts educators should be involved in planning for arts education in various scenarios for the 2020-2021 school year. Many districts and charter schools are planning for three scenarios for fall:
 - Return all students to school buildings following the most current Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

- Return students to school buildings implementing a hybrid model following the most current CDC and MDH guidelines.
- No students return to school buildings and a distance learning model is implemented.
- In addition to the district and school level planning, this document also aims to provide arts educators with different ideas, options, resources and suggestions as they plan for arts education teaching and learning that will work best in their local context.
- This document will be revised as new research and recommendations are released. However, as the Covid-19 situation is continuously developing, current MDH and CDC health guidelines should always be consulted and followed. In addition, this document can be used in conjunction with other Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) recommendations for various scenarios for the fall.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to continue to work toward equity, develop culturally responsive teaching and learning, and integrate social-emotional learning. This document only touches the surface of these vital aspects of education. Districts, schools, and individuals are encouraged to continue professional learning and building on work already being done in these areas, as well as actively consider how planning and implementation can prioritize these areas in the context of Covid-19. For some resources and ideas regarding equity and culturally responsive teaching and learning, see the MDE [Equity Lens Reflection and Exploration Tool for Learning and Minnesota Education Equity Partnership \(MnEEP\) Supporting Racial Equity in Distance Learning](#); regarding social-emotional learning, [see the MDE Social Emotional Learning \(SEL\) website page](#).

Is Arts Education Required in All Scenarios?¹

Arts instruction is an essential part of a public-school education in Minnesota and should continue in distance learning, hybrid learning, and in-person learning models. Arts education is a right, not a privilege or an extra. The arts are a core, required content area with [academic standards](#) for all students in Minnesota. In addition, Minnesota has [early childhood indicators in the arts](#). The continuity of arts learning for all students ensures that districts and charters are providing a well-rounded education. For information on arts education requirements in Minnesota, [please see this overview of the requirements on the MDE website page](#).

The arts play a unique role in education as they can help the whole child flourish and communities thrive. Quality arts education promotes student engagement, academic achievement, and students' personal and social well-being. Arts education often contributes to social-emotional learning and can be leveraged to bring people together in school communities, two aspects of education that are especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. As schools reconvene this fall, regardless of scenario, the arts can serve as a catalyst for student success and should be considered an essential part of students' educational experience. Fortunately, all arts learning can be modified for each of the possible scenarios to help support students' social, emotional, and academic growth.

¹ Adapted from [Arts Together: Planning Guidance for Arts Educators in Maryland Public Schools](#), Maryland State Department of Education, retrieved June 9, 2020.

In-Person Learning Recommendations² (for in person and hybrid scenarios)

As districts and educators plan for hybrid and in-person scenarios, the following are relevant arts-specific recommendations. Arts educators can support school leaders in planning and establishing schedules and routines for the 2020-2021 school year. As the Covid-19 situation is continuously developing, current Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) health guidelines should always be followed.

An [equity lens](#) should be used actively, in particular concerning access to materials and supplies, instruction, and relationship with students and families. Considerations should be made to provide each child with an equitable experience in the arts, regardless of their situation. Schools and arts programs should assist as necessary to ensure each child is provided with this opportunity.

As part of planning for the coming year, administrators and arts educators should work together to identify the professional learning and supports that will be most impactful for the coming year.

Music

Scheduling

Music classes should follow the frequency of their normal schedule as much as possible. A course continues to be the equivalent of one year of study. Music programs should be staffed to maintain the integrity of the program and to support growth. Once there is a significant interruption or attrition in a band, choir, and /or orchestra program (which is possible in the hybrid or distance learning scenarios) the music-making experiences of ALL students have been changed for years to come.

- Music classes may need to be structured and scheduled differently than in a typical year to accommodate smaller class sizes and social distancing. With all suggestions offered below, administrators should consult their music teachers for input during decision-making. Possibilities include:
 - Full size or smaller classes in-person in the music room; in a combination of in-person classes in the music room and online sessions; or in the general grade-level classroom, with the music teacher coming to the students in-person on a cart.
 - Alternating day schedules to accommodate for fewer students in the room.
 - Consider flexible scheduling adaptations, such as splitting class time in half, to allow as many students to participate as possible.

² Adapted from [Pandemic Recovery Considerations: Re-Entry and Reopening of Schools](#), Missouri School Board Association's Center for School Safety, retrieved June 5, 2020 and [Arts Together: Planning Guidance for Arts Educators in Maryland Public Schools](#), Maryland State Department of Education, retrieved June 9, 2020 (both are regularly updated documents.)

- Consider the use of both smaller and larger spaces:
 - Alternate classroom spaces for smaller groups as needed and per availability.
 - Larger spaces may be made available for large ensemble classes such as auditoriums, recital halls, gymnasiums, lecture halls, or large meeting spaces.
- Converting all lessons and large ensemble rehearsals to small group ensembles, with like instruments/voicing where possible. .
- Careful scheduling consideration should be given to traveling teachers to allow for as little travel as possible, while still providing all students with sustained, quality music education. Time should be provided to disinfect supplies and materials as needed.

Space Management and Maintaining Distance

Aerosol studies are currently underway in the US to determine the safety, constraints, and limitations of making music together. Results are expected to be released mid-summer. The results of these studies should be considered when preparing for in-person music-making of all types. These studies will include singing, humming, playing instruments, movement, and dance. More information regarding these studies:

- [Statement of Work: Aerosol Generation from Musical and Theatrical Performers and Risk of Infectious Disease Transmission](#)
- [Reducing Bioaerosol Emissions and Exposures in the Performing Arts: A Scientific Roadmap for a Safe Return from COVID-19](#)
- [Unprecedented International Coalition led by Performing Arts Organizations to Commission COVID-19 Study](#)

Schools are encouraged to consider this research before making final decisions on music-making parameters or mitigation strategies. Later this summer, music educators can continue to help determine workable solutions for scheduling and space management. Pending further research to be released this summer, the following recommendations may be used for preliminary planning:

- Reorganize space and schedules, and adjust instruction and curriculum, to allow for smaller classes and social distancing that follows current MDH recommendations.
 - Plan and set routines that manage movement and numbers of people to ensure social distancing during transitions such as:
 - retrieving and returning materials, such as instruments and folders, from storage spaces
 - entering and exiting the classroom (use different doors if possible)
 - moving to different rehearsal spaces
 - Music teachers could consider marking designated spots for students in the classroom, such as with painter’s tape, to ensure proper social distancing.
 - Music teachers can modify their classroom layout to include having all performers (instrumental or vocal) facing the same direction.

- Investigate the availability of other spaces for sectionals or group rehearsals where social distancing is achievable.
- Activities that require close contact or potential contact with another person should not occur.
- Avoid shared lockers.
- Teachers will need access to technology to broadcast instruction due to practicing effective social distancing. (large screens to project on, microphones/megaphones, speakers to play accompaniment for students at a reasonable volume, etc.)
- Sharing student work should continue with modifications for digital or physical distancing. Until large group gatherings are deemed safe by local officials, Minnesota arts educators should be supported in creating exhibits, showcases, performances, concerts, etc. that can be delivered in a remote/digital environment and/or maintain physical distance.
 - Consider innovative strategies for fulfilling ensemble performance requirements and rethinking the traditional performance calendar.
 - Use live streaming in combination with or in place of in-person audiences. If possible, supply the community with recorded performances.
 - Produce performances of individual ensembles rather than full program concerts. If program consists of multiple ensembles, consider multiple performances with a reduced number of ensembles.
 - If deemed safe by local officials, consider using alternate performance venues including outdoor spaces, campus activity centers, etc.
 - Limit audience size at performances and assign seating through ticketing (even for free events), if possible, and following current group gathering guidelines
 - Preparation time for performances may increase in this rehearsal environment.
 - Continue community engagement: Utilize websites and social media accounts to encourage digital community engagement.
 - If off-campus/community performances are allowed, consider school transportation policies, as well as plans to meet district and CDC regulations when performing at off-campus events.
- Schools should ensure proper ventilation of music rooms. This may include increasing circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- Rehearsing outdoors is encouraged as much as school and the weather permit.
- Outdoor marching bands should maintain proper social distancing at all times.

Materials, Supplies, and Equipment Management

- Instrument cleaning and hygiene: Use the [COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guidelines](#) by National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation and [Instrument Cleaning Tips](#) by the American String Teacher Association along with current CDC guidelines regarding instrument hygiene and cleaning.
- Students should use only their own materials and avoid sharing where at all possible. Each student should have their own material to use and schools should ensure access for all, including:
 - Folders
 - Music

- Instrumental teachers may consider requiring students to use their own wire music stand if all students have access to one.
- Students should not share instruments where at all possible. If sharing is required, CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting should be followed.
 - Schools should thoroughly explore options to provide students with individual instruments if their financial situation prevents them from providing their own.
 - Instrumental music programs may need to consider modifying at-home practice requirements if large “at home” instruments need to be used at school to avoid any sharing. Music teachers should work with school administrators to troubleshoot any specific storage needs that result from this.
 - General music – Students continue to need their own recorders. Consider providing students their own “kit” of non-pitched percussion instruments. This might include rhythm sticks, egg shaker, small bucket drum, sand blocks, etc. that can be purchased rather inexpensively or made from found objects. Kits could be used in one grade level for several weeks, then disinfected and moved to another grade level.
 - Consider providing percussionists their own sets of mallets and drumsticks that they keep in their own stick bags. Band teachers might consider only using keyboard mallet instruments and snare drums during this time to reduce the amount of exposure to instruments that are traditionally shared. These instruments should be disinfected between classes, and students should not share sticks or mallets in class. Up-to-date guidelines regarding instrument hygiene should be followed if using other percussion instruments.
 - If sharing is necessary, all students should use one shared instrument during a given class period, including percussionists.
 - Instruments should be thoroughly disinfected after each class following the most current guidelines.
 - Consider having students wear disposable plastic gloves where possible.
- Teachers who travel between school buildings should not take instruments or other equipment from one building to another without proper disinfection that follows current guidelines.
- Copyright laws should be adhered to, and music teachers should consult their school administrators for budgetary assistance if additional music needs to be purchased.
- The storage of instruments, folders, and other necessary equipment should be carefully organized by the teacher to maintain social distancing.

Disinfection

- Provide hand-sanitizing stations and set routines for all students to disinfect hands when entering and exiting the music classrooms.
- Instrument cleaning and hygiene: Use the [COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guidelines](#) by National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation and [Instrument Cleaning Tips](#) by

the American String Teacher Association along with current CDC guidelines regarding instrument hygiene and cleaning.

- Schools must ensure that music teachers have access to the proper cleaning supplies such as, but not limited to: instrument-safe isopropyl alcohol, instrument sanitizing spray, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, soap, paper towels and tissues.
- Students should be aware of instrument cleaning procedures and policies related to their instruments.
- Band teachers should implement a designated procedure for emptying spit valves and water during and after class and consider a full disinfection flush of instruments.
- Teachers should demonstrate proper hand washing and cleaning of instruments and equipment so that students can properly clean shared items when appropriate.
- Music teachers should follow the protocol set forth by their school in terms of disinfecting shared equipment between classes, such as:
 - Chairs (music teachers may want to consider having all students who are able stand while in class to avoid the use of chairs as much as possible.)
 - Music stands
 - Large percussion equipment

Teaching and Learning

- Comprehensive, standards-based arts learning is still important. How can different artistic processes (Create, Perform, Respond, Connect) be addressed over time? How can standards be bundled or combined in different ways?
 - Keep in mind that learning expectations in music have already been defined and agreed to. These are the anchor standards and music benchmarks—the “what” of music education—and should not change. Only the delivery of instruction—the “how” of music education—might be different.
 - Performance: It is likely that traditional (live) musical performances such as grade level programs or concerts by bands-choirs-orchestras must be put off until a later time.
 - This may be an opportunity to bring the process of music learning to the front, rather than focusing most heavily on the product. This doesn’t mean the bar of music education is being lowered, the bar has changed. When planning learning objectives, music teachers should keep in mind all music standards, any consider more emphasis on non-performance-based standards in the areas of respond, create, and connect. Music educators can focus on what CAN be done versus what CAN’T.
 - Consider outdoor venues that might be used safely for performances.
 - Music teachers may focus on possibilities for creating music beyond student performance, such as composition, theory, history, rhythm, and notation.
 - Alternative rehearsal techniques such as the use of listening and audiation may be implemented to engage students in ongoing learning.

- Choir teachers may balance learning to sing with learning about singing, exploring the study of vocal health, physiology, and pedagogy.
 - Consider use of humming in choral rehearsals in lieu of singing when needed.
 - Music teachers may consider using recordings of performances to study repertoire.
 - Secure accompaniment and part recordings.
- General music teachers consider the guidelines for movement and dance when preparing activities for their classes.
- Continue to prioritize culturally responsive teaching and learning.
 - Develop learning experiences that engage students in connecting music learning with home, family, and community. How can students use music to document and share stories and diverse perspectives?
 - How can students' voice and choice direct their learning?
 - How can you continue to connect with students and their families in each scenario?
 - How can schools support professional learning in this area?
- Continue to find opportunities for music learning to integrate [social-emotional learning \(SEL\)](#). Attention to SEL is more important than ever in these times of additional stress. According to [CASEL](#), SEL include relationship skills, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision-making. With intention and support, arts educators can support growth in SEL competence for students. For SEL Implementation Guidance [see the MDE website on SEL Implementation Guidance](#).
- It is critical that teachers re-establish relationships with their students and nurture community before jumping into music content, whether in-person or online.
- Music teachers should consider the additional time that disinfection, traffic management, etc. may require when planning class time.
- If a district is set up so that all students can use technology during a distance learning scenario, music teachers might introduce technology apps right away so students are ready to use them if and when needed.

Sources and Additional Resources

General

[COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs](#), Minnesota Department of Health.

[Considerations for Schools](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). May 19, 2020

[Copyright COVID-19 Guidance](#), National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

Keeping Music Education Strong: Updates on Back-to-School Protocols, Funding Realities and Advocacy Response. NAMM Foundation. May 12, 2020 Webinar.

[Online Learning and Copyright for Music Educators](#). NAfME.

[Reducing Bioaerosol Emissions and Exposures in the Performing Arts: A Scientific Roadmap for a Safe Return from COVID19.](#)

[Risk Assessment of a Coronavirus Infection in the Field of Music.](#) University of Music Freiberg. May 19, 2020.

[Statement of Work: Aerosol Generation from Musical and Theatrical Performers and Risk of Infectious Disease Transmission.](#)

[What Will Music Class Look Like – Fall 2020 and Beyond?](#) Nyssa Brown.

Instrumental

[CBDNA COVID-19 Response Committee Report.](#) College Band Directors National Association. May 21, 2020.

[COVID-19 Student Safety and Music Program Continuation Ideas for Consideration,](#) The School Bands Committee of the American Bandmasters Association

[COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guidelines,](#) NFHS, NAFME and the NAMM Foundation

[Instrument Cleaning Tips,](#) American String Teacher Association.

[Guidance for a Return to High School Marching Band,](#) National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC).

[What Now and How? Delivering solutions for instrumental music education during COVID-19.](#) Music For All. Webinar. May 19, 2020.

Choral/Singing

[A Conversation: What Do Science and Data Say About the Near Term Future of Singing?](#) NATS/ACDA/PAMA/Chorus America/Barbershop Harmony Society. Webinar. May 5, 2020.

[COVID-19 Response Committee Report,](#) American Choral Director Association (ACDA), June 15, 2020.

[Rehearsal Guide: Choral Singing in the Time of COVID 19;](#) CHORUS AMERICA; May, 2020

[When Will It Be Safe to Sing Together Again?](#) Alex Marshall. *New York Times*. June 9, 2020.

Visual and Media Arts

Scheduling

- Arts classes should follow the frequency of their normal schedule as much as possible.
- A course continues to be the equivalent of one year of study.
- Visual and media arts programs should be staffed to maintain the integrity of the program and to support growth.

Space Management and Maintaining Distance

- Reorganize space and schedules, and adjust instruction and curriculum, to allow for smaller classes and social distancing that follows current MDH recommendations.
 - Plan and set routines that manage movement and numbers of people to ensure social distancing during transitions such as:
 - Accessing materials and supplies before and after class
 - Studio clean up
 - Entering and exiting the classroom (use different doors if possible)
- Arts classrooms should remain dedicated to teaching and learning in the art form and not re-purposed.
- Tables and desks could be arranged to face in the same direction with students sitting on only one side if possible.
- If visual arts teachers are to travel from one room to another (art on a cart), it is recommended that the cart not enter the room, and that any supplies that enter the classroom stay unless they can be disinfected before entering the next classroom.
- Sharing student work should continue with modifications for digital or physical distancing. Until large group gatherings are deemed safe by local officials, Minnesota arts educators should be supported in creating exhibits, showcases, performances, concerts, etc. that can be delivered in a remote/digital environment and/or maintain physical distance.
- Teachers will need access to adequate technology to support learning from a social distance. e.g.: document cameras, projectors/interactive whiteboards, etc.

Materials, Supplies, and Equipment Management

- Art educators and administrators should collaborate to develop a “minimum, better, best” list of art supplies that can be used in a kit that students can take home or use individually at school. Work with administration to coordinate so that students receive one “education kit” with all materials/supplies for all learning.
 - Needs will be different for elementary, middle, and high schools. Special attention to the needs of each level and building should be taken into consideration, with separate kits developed where necessary.
- If supplies and materials are shared, limit materials in each lesson to reduce what needs to be disinfected.
- Consider having students wear non-latex gloves with materials, supplies, and equipment in class, if feasible.
- If students have individual materials, supplies, and tools provided by the school or from home:
 - Safe storage will need to be provided in the art room or home classroom.
 - If provided by the student, any protocols regarding the disinfection of supplies and materials that travel between home and school should be observed.

- Teachers who travel between school buildings should not take materials, supplies, or tools from one building to another without proper disinfection.
- Clay (regular, modeling, etc.) recommendations:
 - All clay used after December 1, 2019 should be considered contaminated. It can either be dried and fired, fully dried and recycled for use, or thrown away.
 - Any clay issued to students should not be shared.
 - When possible, develop simple hand-building lessons that require no shared supplies, or use disposable supplies/tools such as plastic spoons, craft sticks, straws, etc.

Disinfection

- Provide hand-sanitizing stations and set routines for all students to disinfect hands as well as media, tools, and equipment.
- Schools must ensure that teachers have access to the proper cleaning supplies such as, but not limited to: art tool-safe isopropyl alcohol, art tool sanitizing spray, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, soap, hot water, paper towels, and tissues.
- Teachers should demonstrate proper hand washing and cleaning of tools, equipment and media so that students can properly clean shared items when appropriate.
- Build in time and extra support staff if possible to disinfect classroom surfaces, media, tools or equipment between classes.
 - Computer labs may need to be sanitized between each rotation of students. Electronic-friendly sanitizer wipes could make the process streamlined.
- Possible disinfection techniques:
 - Have containers of liquid disinfectant that tools can be placed in until used again.
 - Use aerosol disinfectants (per district recommendations and rules) with proper ventilation.
 - It is possible UV light could be used for shared materials, tools, or equipment that can't be washed quickly or exposed to liquids. UV light damages human skin and so should only be used on objects or surfaces.
 - Consider the use of HEPA air purifiers. In addition, there is some indication that the virus does not survive as well in humidity, so humidifier could be considered, relying on the most recent research.

Teaching and Learning

- Comprehensive, standards-based arts learning is still important. How can different artistic processes (Create, Present, Respond, Connect) be addressed over time in each scenario? Learning expectations in the arts have already been defined and agreed to. These are the anchor standards and benchmarks—the “what” of arts education— and should not change. Only the delivery of instruction—the “how” of arts education—might be different.
- Continue to prioritize culturally responsive teaching and learning.

- Develop learning experiences that engage students in connecting music learning with home, family, and community. How can students use music to document and share stories and diverse perspectives?
- How can students' voice and choice direct their learning?
- How can you continue to connect with students and their families in each scenario?
- How can schools support professional learning in this area?
- Continue to find opportunities for arts learning to integrate [social-emotional learning \(SEL\)](#). Attention to SEL is more important than ever in these times of additional stress. According to [CASEL](#), SEL competencies include relationship skills, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision-making. With intention and support, arts educators can support growth in SEL competence for students. [For SEL Implementation Guidance refer to the MDE SEL webpage](#).
- It is critical that teachers re-establish relationships with their students and nurture community before jumping into arts content, whether in-person or online.
- If multiple activity stations are used, allow for personal choice with no rotation between stations during class.

Additional Resources

[COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs](#), Minnesota Department of Health.

[Copyright COVID-19 Guidance](#), National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

[Preparing for the 2020-21 School Year](#), including “Tips for Returning to the Visual Arts and Design Classroom” and “Tips for Teaching Visual Arts/Design in a Distance Learning Environment”, National Art Education Association (retrieved June 9, 2020).

Theatre and Dance

Scheduling

- Arts classes should follow the frequency of their normal schedule as much as possible.
- A course continues to be the equivalent of one year of study.
- Dance and Theater arts programs should be staffed to maintain the integrity of the program and to support growth.

Space Management and Maintaining Distance

- Reorganize space and schedules, and adjust instruction and curriculum, to allow for smaller classes and social distancing that follows current MDH recommendations. For more strenuous activities that might increase heartrate and breathing, increase the social distancing.
 - Plan and set routines that manage movement and numbers of people to ensure social distancing during transitions such as:

- accessing theater or other storage before and after class
 - entering and exiting the classroom (use different doors if possible)
 - dressing room usage
 - moving to different rehearsal spaces
- Use markings on classroom or performance space floors and walls where possible to help ensure social distancing throughout class.
 - Activities that require close contact or potential contact with another person should not be included. Provide lessons that include no contact activities and no or limited equipment.
- Arts classrooms should remain dedicated to teaching and learning in the art form and not re-purposed.
 - Encourage underdressing of dancewear or for students to wear clothes suitable for movement to restrict the need to use dressing room facilities.
 - Avoid shared lockers.
 - Sharing student work should continue with modifications for digital or physical distancing. Until large group gatherings are deemed safe by local officials, Minnesota arts educators should be supported in creating exhibits, showcases, performances, concerts, etc. that can be delivered in a remote/digital environment and/or maintain physical distance.
 - Teachers will need access to technology to broadcast instruction due to practicing effective social distancing (large screens to project on, microphones/megaphones, speakers to music and sound for students at a reasonable volume, etc.)

Material and Equipment Management

- Shared props and costumes are discouraged. Schools should ensure students have access to their own props, costumes or any other equipment. This may include found objects that can be used for props, and adapting found clothing for costumes, or focusing on activities that do not require props and costumes. If shared, disinfect items after each use.
- Consider limiting access to technology for playing music during dance learning to teachers only.
- Teachers who travel between school buildings should not take materials or equipment from one building to another without proper disinfection.

Disinfection

- Schools must ensure that teachers have access to the proper cleaning supplies such as, but not limited to: isopropyl alcohol, sanitizing spray, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, soap, paper towels and tissues.
- Provide hand-sanitizing stations and set routines for all students to disinfect hands as well as materials and equipment.
- If used, disinfect ballet barres regularly. It is recommended that dance and performance space floors are cleaned with a disposable floor mop system regularly, after every class session if possible. In addition to the between-class cleanings, it is recommended that these floors are cleaned and disinfected nightly using a designated mop and appropriate sanitation solutions which protect the integrity of dance flooring.

- For more information see [COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs](#), Minnesota Department of Health.

Teaching and Learning

- Comprehensive, standards-based arts learning is still important. How can different artistic processes (Create, Perform, Respond, Connect) be addressed over time in each scenario? Learning expectations in the arts have already been defined and agreed to. These are the anchor standards and benchmarks—the “what” of arts education— and should not change. Only the delivery of instruction—the “how” of arts education—might be different.
- Continue to prioritize culturally responsive teaching and learning.
 - Develop learning experiences that engage students in connecting dance or theater learning with home, family, and community. How can students use dance or theater to document and share stories and diverse perspectives?
 - How can students’ voice and choice direct their learning?
 - How can you continue to connect with students and their families in each scenario?
 - How can schools support professional learning in this area?
- Continue to find opportunities for arts learning to integrate [social-emotional learning \(SEL\)](#). Attention to SEL is more important than ever in these times of additional stress. According to [CASEL](#), SEL competencies include relationship skills, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision-making. With intention and support, arts educators can support growth in SEL competence for students. [For SEL Implementation Guidance, refer to the MDE SEL webpage.](#)
- It is critical that teachers re-establish relationships with their students and nurture community before jumping into theater or dance content, whether in-person or online.

Additional Resources

[COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs](#), Minnesota Department of Health.

[Return to Dancing and Training Considerations Due to-COVID-19](#), Task Force on Dance Health, Dance-USA.

Distance Learning Recommendations (for distance and hybrid scenarios)

As districts and educators plan for hybrid and distance learning scenarios, the following are relevant arts-specific suggestions and resources. The Minnesota Department of Education defines distance learning as “students have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interactions with their licensed teachers.” MDE has provided a resources to help districts set up and implement distance learning. This resource builds on those resources.

An [equity lens](#) should be used actively, in particular concerning access to conditions that allow for distance learning, access to materials and supplies, instruction, assessment and grading, and relationship with students

and families. Considerations should be made to provide each child with an equitable experience in the arts, regardless of their situation. Schools and arts programs should assist with this to ensure each child is provided with this opportunity.

For districts and schools where distance learning includes online or digital learning, arts educators will need access to educational technology that supports them in the technological needs of distance learning. These may include but are not limited to:

- learning management systems
- video and audio recording tools for creating educational content
- productivity tools such as Google Suite
- screencasting tools
- and various instructional and assessment management tools

Fundamentals of Distance Learning

Distance learning, whether it involves technology or not, is still new for most teachers. But many of the best practices for instruction and assessment still apply, as teachers have already found during the spring of 2020. As teachers build on their learning and success from the spring, consider the following fundamentals for distance learning, which are based on best practices in online teaching as well as teachers' experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic:

Relationships

- Social-emotional and mental health supports are both critical now, both for students and teachers. See MDH's [Supporting Mental Well-being during COVID-19](#) for some tips and resources.
- **How can you intentionally build relationships?**
 - As educators know, relationship building and maintenance don't often happen by accident. Thus, it's important for teachers to find ways to plan for this as a component of their work during distance learning.
 - Setting up systems for checking in and communicating with students and families can help you and other school staff to monitor their changing needs. How can you manage and organize individualized contact? This may not be daily depending on the number of students you have, but should be consistent and regular.
- **Tier support for students:** Not all students will need the same level of connections and support. Identify those that need extra communication. The students who need additional support may change over time. So, assessing student needs regularly will aid in adjusting levels of support. Continue to use the support systems created in your school.

Communication

- **Communicate in multiple ways.** Many educators are finding success using calls and videos to supplement written explanations, to help all learners stay clear and engaged. Use special education

adaptations of chunking, bulleting, and color coding for written communications. Adapt communication based on student responses and feedback.

- **Individualized feedback makes an impact:** Some arts educators teach many students. How might you be able to provide students feedback on assignments and works in progress? How could other students provide feedback, and what feedback protocols can help structure and guide that feedback?
- **Plan for your time and create boundaries:** If you let it, distance learning can take over your life. Carve out and set aside time to rest, recharge, and take care of yourself. One tip is to let students know when they can expect to hear from you and get responses (ie, within 24 hours of an email.)

Clarity

- **Continue to focus on core learning objectives and standards:** Beginning with the end in mind is as important now as ever.
 - **Comprehensive, standards-based arts learning is still important.** How can different artistic processes (Create, Present/Perform, Respond, Connect) be addressed over time in each scenario? How can standards be bundled or layered? Learning expectations in the arts have already been defined and agreed to. These are the anchor standards and benchmarks—the “what” of arts education— and should not change. Only the delivery of instruction—the “how” of arts education— will be different. How can you be flexible with how students meet learning objectives?
 - **Keep it hands-on and rigorous:** What learning experiences and assessments can you develop to get students away from screens or worksheets and learning in their environments?
 - **Assess learning:** How can you continue to assess progress using formative assessment?
 - Remember that different students have different distance learning situations. Build in as much communications with students and families as is possible in order to support each student’s situation.
- **Keep it simple:** Try not to overwhelm yourself or your students. This can be a challenge with so many resources, priorities, and opportunities!
 - **Work smarter, not harder:** Lots of arts content exists publicly. Don’t feel pressured to create content like videos if the content you need already works, unless you need to or want to for a specific reason. This could free up more of your time to spend on individual feedback and communication with students.
 - **Revise and retool lessons and assessments:** How can you use lessons and assessments that you had already planned on using?
 - **Break it down:** Break larger projects down into smaller steps so that students can be successful. Bulleting or numbering and differentiating steps can help.
 - As much as possible, continue to build in routines and consistency for students and families.
 - **Celebrate the successes,** small and large—both for the amazing work you are doing, as well as your students!

Resources Supporting Arts Educators

Perpich Center for Arts Education

The Perpich Center for Arts Education is a state agency dedicated to supporting arts education across Minnesota. Perpich specialists in dance, music, theater and visual/media arts have developed [extensive resources](#) to support distance learning. They also continue to be available as resources for teachers as they plan arts curriculum, instruction and assessments, including for distance learning. They are available by email, phone, and video conferencing:

Dance - [Mary Harding](mailto:mary.harding@pcae.k12.mn.us): (mary.harding@pcae.k12.mn.us) — 763-279-4281

Music - [Dr. Wendy Barden](mailto:wendy.barden@pcae.k12.mn.us): (wendy.barden@pcae.k12.mn.us) — 763-279-4285

Theater - [Dr. Stephanie Walseth](mailto:stephanie.walseth@pcae.k12.mn.us): (stephanie.walseth@pcae.k12.mn.us) — 763-279-4181

Visual/Media Arts - [Jeremy Holien](mailto:jeremy.holien@pcae.k12.mn.us): (jeremy.holien@pcae.k12.mn.us) — 763-279-4185

Additional Resources Regarding Arts Education and COVID-19

[Art Educators of Minnesota \(AEM\) resource list](#)

[National Art Education Association \(NAEA\) Remote Learning Toolkit](#)

[Minnesota Music Educators Association \(MMEA\) Distance Learning Resources](#)

[National Association for Music Education \(NAfME\) Virtual Learning Resources](#)

[National Dance Education Organization \(NDEO\) Resources](#)

[Minnesota Educational Theater Association \(META\) Distance Learning Resources](#)

For questions regarding this document or arts education in Minnesota, contact mde.academic-standards@state.mn.us.