



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

MSHSL Fine Arts

Debate, Music, One Act Play, Speech, Visual Arts

FINE ARTS COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS/REQUIREMENTS

MSHSL Fine Arts / Category 2 Activities:

According to the MSHSL Official Handbook, Bylaw 205.00

Definition - Category II Activities: Those League-sponsored activities in which a member school does not have a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments.

Fine Arts Activities

- 1) Speech activities including One Act Play when a school schedules no interscholastic contests and participates only in the League-sponsored tournament series.
- 2) Music Activities.
- 3) Visual Arts Activities.

Note that the resumption of all activities and athletics are subject to change based on the most current information, directives from state government and health department officials, and member school feedback.

- All aspects of activities including meetings, practices, competitions, transportation and facility usage must align with the requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education plan for return to learning, must follow the requirements from the Minnesota Department of Health and must include the required actions identified in the Governor's Executive Orders.
- The first week of practice/rehearsal should focus on implementing effective protocols and routines for pre- participation screenings, effective social distancing, compliance with all health recommendations, establishment of pod limits of 25 or less, and additional actions that mitigate the spread of disease and enhance safety of students and coaches.
- Activity programs must follow the identified protocols for students or coaches who have tested positive, are experiencing symptoms consistent with a COVID-19 diagnosis or have had exposure to an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, practices are limited to virtual contact only.



PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

In accordance with governmental directives, the MSHSL will offer certain activities subject to compliance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines. The Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Education and the MSHSL have developed guidance and requirements related to youth sports, use of school facilities and modifications of MSHSL activities designed to keep participants safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Even with these measures, the MSHSL cannot guarantee that student-athletes or other individuals participating in organized athletic activities ("Participants") will not be exposed to COVID-19. Participants and their parents/legal guardians should consider the risks before participating in any MSHSL activities. It is a shared responsibility to protect everyone from COVID-19 and Participants should follow MDH/CDC guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure, including but not limited to the following:

- Stay home as much as possible;
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people if you are in public places;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water. Wash for at least 20 seconds;
- Always wash your hands after being in a public place;
- Always wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol;
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw used tissues in the trash;
- Wear face coverings/masks that cover your nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of your face.

In recognizing the serious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the positive impact that participation in MSHSL fine arts activities and athletics has on student participants, it is imperative that student-athletes and families know and understand the following:

1. Participating in MSHSL activities is **voluntary**.
2. While participating in MSHSL activities, all laws as well as MSHSL and school rules, guidelines, and protocols related to COVID-19 must be followed.
3. Participant acknowledges the contagious nature of COVID-19, and the Participant understands that there is risk of injury and/or illness from participating in MSHSL activities, including the risk to have direct or indirect contact with individuals who have been exposed to and/or diagnosed with COVID-19.
4. Participant agrees that if he/she is exposed to, or infected by, COVID-19 during the period of participation, they will immediately cease participation and follow Minnesota Department of Health protocols for schools and activities and MSHSL guidelines for notification and return to participation.
5. Participant has signed a separate Eligibility Statement connected to general participation in MSHSL athletics/activities and agrees that the terms of that statement are wholly incorporated into this document and that the terms of this document are incorporated into the Eligibility Statement.

Additional information regarding Activity Participation and COVID can be found at:

- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf,
- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf
- www.mshsl.org
- www.nfhs.org

General COVID Safety:

1. Educate students about physical distancing, handwashing and sanitizer use, and other immune system protocols.
2. Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not be allowed to take part in practices/rehearsals and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
3. Individually or as a team, participants should confirm that they are symptom free. These confirmations can be aligned with the CDC's "Coronavirus Self-Checker" or current MDH recommendations.
4. A record should be kept of all individuals present at practices and competitions (contact tracing).
5. Avoid grouping of students at start and end of practice/rehearsal and during transitions. Staggered start times for practices and team meetings are recommended, when possible and when space does not allow students to come and go from separate areas.
6. Practices/rehearsals should be conducted in "pods" – following current MDH Return-to-Play guidelines. Pods are small groups of students always practicing together. This will ensure limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
7. Whenever possible, students should maintain the recommended six feet of distancing between individuals and should not be in contact with each other. In addition, there is to be no sharing of equipment to the extent that it is possible.
8. Team celebrations or congratulations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing. Customary post-competition handshakes with opponents and judges should be suspended.

Debate

Considerations and Recommendations:

- Participants and coaches are required to wear masks for all indoor and in-person practices or competitions.
- Consider virtual options for practice and competition whenever possible.
- Consider moving practice outdoors when possible and practical.
- Consider use of HEPA filters in practice and competition spaces.
- Students should be socially distanced; plexiglass barriers should be used if available.
- Stated above, “For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, practices are limited to virtual contact only.” Note: This includes debate partners.

Additional Resources:

- [NFHS Aerosol Study](#)
- [NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources](#)

Music

Considerations and Recommendations:

- Participants and coaches are required to wear masks when not performing.
- Consider virtual options for practices, contests and when performing in non-contest situations (not for judge's ratings, but commentary).
- Consider moving practices outdoors when possible and practical.
- Consider use of HEPA filters in practice spaces.
- Students should be socially distanced whenever possible; plexiglass barriers should be used if available.
- Stated above, "For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, contact with participants is limited to virtual contact only."
- Consult the NFHS aerosol study for tips and guidance on droplet control (see "additional resources").
- Please use nylon or other approved coverings of instruments.
- Please limit the use of paper musical scores.
- For both instrumental and vocal, consider "sectionals" where the group is broken down into pod-like numbers.
- Limit the user of risers to allow for proper physical distancing, especially in large group situations.
- Thirty-minute rehearsals, allowing for air exchange for 30 minutes.

Additional Resources:

- [NFHS Aerosol Study](#)
- [NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [MDH Music Activities and Performances Information](#)

One Act Play

Considerations and Recommendations:

- Participants and coaches are required to wear masks for in-person rehearsals.
- Consider virtual options for rehearsals when possible.
- Consider moving practices outdoors when possible and practical.
- Consider use of HEPA filters in practice spaces.
- Students should be socially distanced for in-person rehearsals whenever possible; plexiglass barriers should be used if available.
- When selecting a play, directors should consider versatile material and social distancing ability. Creativity in structure and format is encouraged.
- Consider possible video or streaming when selecting a play and securing rights to the play. While we hope to have in-person performances for section tournaments, we will explore virtual options if in-person performance is not possible.

Additional Resources:

- [NFHS Aerosol Study](#)
- [EDTA Recommendations for Reopening School Theatre Programs](#)
- [NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources](#)
- Publishers' websites

Speech

Considerations and Recommendations:

- Note: Recommendations below are current for Fall 2020. Updates may occur in 2021 as more is known regarding COVID-19 rates, and MDH and MDE recommendations.
- Participants and coaches are required to wear masks for all indoor and in-person practices or competitions.
- Consider virtual options for practice and competition whenever possible.
- Consider moving practices outdoors when possible and practical.
- Consider use of HEPA filters in practice spaces.
- Students should be socially distanced; plexiglass barriers should be used if available.
- Stated above, “For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, practices are limited to virtual contact only.” Note: This includes Speech duos.

Additional Resources:

- [NFHS Aerosol Study](#)
- [NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources](#)

Visual Arts

Considerations and Recommendations:

- Participants and coaches are required to wear masks for all indoor and in-person competitions.
- Consider virtual options for developing works and competitions whenever possible.
- Consider moving portions of Section competitions/festivals outdoors when possible and practical.
- Consider use of HEPA filters in working areas and competition spaces.
- Students should be socially distanced; plexiglass barriers should be used if available.
- Stated above, “For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, contact with participants is limited to virtual contact only.”

Additional Information:

League staff and Advisory Committees will monitor the first months of the school year with attention to the success/feasibility of in-person events. League staff will research COVID-19-related best practices from other state and national organizations, while Advisory Committees will have the opportunity to share recommendations regarding section and state competitions with the MSHSL Board of Directors.

Providing an in-person section and state tournament is a priority, however, in the absence of this possibility a virtual competition or other culminating event will be considered.