Safe Return to School Reopening Plan
2021-2022
The Mississippi School of the Arts (MSA) has created a plan aligned with Center for Disease Control for the possibility that this virus may be in our community for months to come. The operations of our campus for operation must be done with great care. This plan is built in alignment with successful strategies adopted in the 2020-2021 academic year at the MSA.

**Leadership Team**
Suzanne Hirsch, Executive Director  
Avery Peagler, Principal  
Nicholas Bridge, School Finance Officer  
Patrick Brown, Technology Coordinator  
Suzanne Noble, Director of Residence Life  
Cindy King, Director of Food Services  
Sandra Sudie Palomarez, Director of Facilities  
Jennifer Jackson, Director of Advancement

**School Opening**
MSA plans to begin move in on August 1 for seniors and August 2 for juniors. Unless directed by authorities prior to the start of school, MSA will open on a traditional model with in-person classes. If there are major adjustments required by the CDC or needed to accommodate an outbreak, a hybrid model will be adopted for two-week periods until it is safe to return to full operations. Hybrid would alternate juniors and seniors every two weeks on campus with virtual instruction the weeks they are off campus. This option can only be utilized if allowed by the protocols created for hybrid/virtual learning from the Mississippi Department of Education.

**MSA will continue monitoring of CDC and educational institutions guidance will be conducted and the plan of action will be modified as needed.**

**Vaccination**
Free vaccinations are available with most insurance plans at area pharmacies in Brookhaven and near students’ homes. To find a location through the Mississippi State Department of Health, please visit: [https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420,976.html](https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420,976.html)

For information regarding the effectiveness or health concerns surrounding vaccines, please visit: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/effectiveness.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/effectiveness.html)

Covid-19 vaccines are not required for students or staff. However, MSA strongly encourages individuals to get vaccinated. Vaccinated individuals will not have to quarantine if identified as a close contact, but only self-monitor for symptoms.

All employees or students with a vaccine for COVID-19 are requested to submit a copy of the card to the nurse for the file. This information will be kept confidential and all privacy laws will be followed in the implementation of this plan.

*Updated 8/13/2021*
Daily Symptom Checks

All employees and students should self-assess for possible COVID-19 symptoms each day. A list of symptoms is below:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Daily temporal fever and basic symptom checks will be administered to all students. Anyone who has fever will be immediately isolated for further evaluation.

Employees and students who have symptoms are asked to stay home and not come back until they are free of fever (100.0°F or greater), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 48 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).

Face Coverings

For at least the first nine weeks, masks will be required by all staff and students in public/common areas when indoors, changing classes, and classrooms where directed. They are not required for exercise or physical activity, but distancing should be utilized as much as possible. Masks are not required in student assigned dormitory rooms. Performing arts classes will be making modifications individually for what works best for their students. Teachers will communicate with their students regarding these protocols.

Audiences and guests will be required to wear masks while on campus.

Physical Distancing

Dividers will be utilized at desk areas where people must pass – security, Principal’s office, residence life, and cafeteria.

Many MSA classes are smaller in size allowing for distancing. Class sizes will be kept under 20 people as much as possible.

Residence hall assignments will limit roommates to two per room as much as possible.

Updated 8/13/2021
The fitness center and art room in the SLC will be limited to no more than 4 people at a time. All equipment/surfaces must be wiped down by the user before departing the space.

Visitation for students will take place on the first and second floor and common areas on campus for at least the first nine weeks of school. No room to room visits except those who live on the floor.

Elevators should have no more than 4 people at one time. Masks are required.

**Sanitization**
MSA has sanitizer stations in every building, classroom, and floor of the residence hall in addition to the cafeteria and the nurse’s station. Restrooms are continuously stocked with soap at the sinks and paper towels. Disinfectant spray is utilized daily for all doorknobs, light fixtures, keyboards, and desks on campus.

MSA has handwashing posters throughout the campus at sinks.

Students will receive training at orientation and weekly check ins about cleaning procedures in rooms/common areas; handwashing; habits regarding high touch areas. No equipment, props, costumes, supplies should be shared without first wiping them down.

Bathrooms must be cleaned with disinfectant at a minimum twice per week. Students should store their toothbrushes in separate places to avoid cross contamination. Microwaves must be wiped immediately after use.

**Mental Health**
The school psychologist will be available for weekly small groups (either online or in person). When these efforts are inadequate, communication will be provided to the parents for further resources available to the family.

**What would cause MSA to transition to a Virtual Model of operations?**
If more than 1/3 of a specified group (class, arts discipline, floor) on campus becomes ill with COVID-19 that group may be expected to quarantine with remote learning for 7 days with a negative test to return or 10 days without a test. If a significant number of students or staff are diagnosed with COVID-19, the school may transition to virtual operation for a period of time as needed for the safety of students and staff.

MSA does not have a virtual learning option for the 2021-2022 school year. It will only be utilized due to quarantine or illness with medical documentation. This is not an option for students to learn at home due to transportation issues, have a job, take care of others, or travel. The rigor of courses at MSA demands student focus. Students can use the virtual set up to keep up with classes when they are absent, but unexcused absences will not allow for make up work or tests to be done. It is imperative that families understand that virtual learning is not something we will go in/out of throughout the year. It is only reserved for documented medical issues.

**What happens if someone is diagnosed with COVID-19?**
Students and staff will be isolated upon identification of symptoms until tested. The Kings Daughters Medical Center will be contacted for assessment. Upon determination of results, the patient will either be isolated or sent home until fever free for at least 48 hours (In other illnesses, students must be fever free for 24 hours).

*Updated 8/13/2021*
Within privacy laws and confidentiality, public health notices will be issued. There may be a recommendation for testing for those in direct contact with a positive COVID-19 patient.

Upon removal of ill students or staff, disinfection protocols will be increased. Prevention protocols will continue to be followed.

Vaccinated staff or students who are identified through contact tracing will not be required to quarantine, only monitored for symptoms for 7 days. All unvaccinated will be required to quarantine for 7 days and may return with a negative test. If not tested, quarantine for 10 days.

*Updates to this plan will be made as needed. All new communications and plan modifications will be updated on the MSA website, social media accounts, by mail, handouts, email, and instant message.*