

August 2, 2020



CMEA

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Dear Music Parents,

The California Music Educators Association (CMEA) greatly appreciates and respects the leadership of California during these unprecedented and challenging times. Music educators and students across California are anxiously awaiting creative solutions to the unprecedented challenges faced in the reopening of schools for the 2020 - 2021 year.

CMEA is concerned with the CDPH and CAL OSHA guidance document that school districts are reviewing and using to make decisions regarding music instruction. The Covid-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs, published on July 17, 2020, provides important information, but does not reflect the current preliminary results and guidance from the International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study, a major study currently underway by scientists at the University of Colorado and University of Maryland. The study is examining aerosol dispersion rates produced by wind instrumentalists, vocalists, and actors, and how quickly those aerosol rates accumulate in a space. Preliminary results were released on July 10 and additional preliminary results for singing, theatre, and band with full guidance will be available in August.

As a result of the CDPH and CAL OSHA document, music programs are being eliminated, thus denying access to music instruction for students and disrupting the continuity of their learning. The document's statement "Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets such as band and choir practice and performances are not permitted." is sending a message to administrators that band and choir cannot be taught.

Stakeholders and school administrators need language that clearly identifies how music can be taught safely. The wording on page 12, Classroom Space, is misleading in light of the emerging research. Bullets seven and eight should be changed for these reasons:

1. The International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study has provided preliminary guidance regarding allowing singing and the playing of band instruments in school.
2. The action of singing and playing music, not the class (choir, band), should be driving the guidance language as music can be taught in well-ventilated spaces or outdoors, with appropriate mitigation techniques.
3. High quality music instruction addresses all aspects of the new California Arts Standards: Music Standards, of which rehearsal and performance are a portion of the learning expectations. Rehearsal and performance learning expectations can be accomplished safely through innovative approaches

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Your assistance is requested in moving forward our recommendations to the California Departments of Public Health and Industrial Relations and district and school administrators based upon the preliminary recommendations stated by the International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study. <https://www.nfhs.org/media/4029971/preliminary-recommendations-from-international-performing-arts-aerosol-study.pdf>

The rehearsal space recommendations from International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study are:

- Outdoor rehearsals are permitted using individual mitigation techniques described in the preliminary guidance document.
 - Outdoor gazebo style tents with open sides and a high-pitched ceiling with mitigations.
 - Indoors with elevated outdoor air exchange rate from HVAC.
 - Indoors with typical outdoor air exchange rate from HVAC plus recirculation air through MERV 13 filters or addition of appropriately sized HEPA air purifiers.
 - Indoors with outdoor air exchange rate from open windows supplemented with appropriately sized HEPA air purifiers when airflow is reduced under certain outdoor wind conditions.

CMEA requests that CDPH and CAL OSHA publish, as soon as possible, an update to the July 17, 2020 “Covid-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs” with the requested revisions to page 12 to halt the elimination of music education courses. Should you have questions regarding these recommendations and our request, I can be contacted via email, adelao@calmusiced.com.

Thank you for your time, consideration and help with this significant issue. The health of our students, teachers, staff and their families is indeed the first priority; however, Music and Arts education are critical not only to the academic success of our students but also their social and emotional health. Now more than ever, students need a well-rounded education, including quality instruction in the Arts. Should you have questions or comments regarding our recommendations I can be reached

“Science will get us out of this. The Arts will get us through this” - Mo Willems

Sincerely,



Armalyn De La O, President