

As we enter our fall program semester at the the time of releasing this document, we remain concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic conditions, particularly as they impact our younger students below the vaccine age, and especially as we enter the months where outdoor programming becomes less feasible.

Like many of our families and community members the STAGES Youth Theater team shares profound concern about the unpredictability of the COVID-19 virus and its variants (including what we know to be the highly contagious delta variant). **While we had hoped to begin relaxing/adjusting some of the health and safety policies from our recently completed Summer semester, we have decided to maintain – and in some cases, tighten – our Fall plans to create the highest likelihood of being able to conduct our Fall programs on campus, and in-person.**

If at any time STAGES feels it is unsafe to continue with in-person programming, we will make the modifications required to finish the rehearsal and recording of student work in a remote/virtual process. Our team has been exceptional at adapting to the constantly shifting pandemic parameters over the past 18 months, and while it's not something any of us hope to do, we are ready to move online without interruption if needed.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we all move through this pandemic together

We ask that you and your student commit adhering to these mandatory policies while participating in a STAGES program (even if your student is fully vaccinated), as **the health and safety of our students and community remains our top concern.** The following changes are immediately in effect as of today's date (September 10, 2021):

FALL 2021 COVID-19-RELATED POLICIES

Students must comply with all written COVID-19 health/safety instructions, and to comply with reinforcement of these policies by a STAGES staff member during a STAGES program.

- **MASK POLICY**

Everyone participating in or visiting STAGES – including all Students – must wear a suitable, well-fitted, face mask.

- *Indoors:* Mask wearing remains required in all indoor spaces. A mask may be removed only in the case of having a quick drink of water. We do not expect any snacks or meals to take place during our regular Fall programs (which run between 45 and 90 minutes, once or twice a week). Family members must also be masked when attending any sharing presentations during the semester, if it is deemed safe for in-person presentations to take place (if not, STAGES will record sharing presentations and distribute them to family members).

Outdoors: At this time, masks are also required outdoors during STAGES programming. Students (and any family member who needs to interact with a STAGES staff member) should be masked at drop-off and pick-up times.

- No student will ever be encouraged or required by STAGES to remove a mask for any purpose while at STAGES.
- STAGES Staff members (all of whom are fully vaccinated) are also required to wear masks when doing non-student facing (office, design, costume prep) work in private office spaces while students are in the building.

- **SOCIAL DISTANCE**

Students must observe reasonable physical distance as requested by STAGES staff members during their class or rehearsal. No students will be encouraged or required by STAGES to share closer space during a STAGES program.

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- **SCREENINGS**

Brief health screenings continue to be conducted upon arrival each day, including a temperature check and basic symptom questions. Students with a fever of 100+ may not be cleared to attend rehearsal. **Students who feel unwell should not come to STAGES. If a student feels/becomes unwell while at STAGES, the parent/caregiver will be contacted for pick-up.**

- **HAND SANITIZING**

Hand-sanitizer will be required at arrival and dismissal, and at regular intervals throughout each class.

A NOTE ABOUT SINGING

While vaccines and lower transmission have created a more optimistic future for singing together at STAGES, we remind our community that singing carries a high risk of transmitting/receiving COVID-19. Thankfully, there is just one program scheduled for in-person rehearsal at STAGES that will require singing during the school year - students enrolled in this Musical Theater Ensemble will receive program-specific music protocols before the program begins.

Families with questions or concerns about music/singing are asked to send a message to hello@stagesacademy.com

OTHER COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS AT STAGES:

- All STAGES staff members are fully vaccinated.
- Air circulators and air purifiers (with HEPA filters) will be in each STAGES space.
- When weather and daylight permit, STAGES will conduct as much programming outdoors as possible.
- There is only one program taking place at a time at STAGES this fall to keep the number of people in the building to a minimum during class times.
- STAGES is committed to an ongoing rigorous approach to keeping our spaces clean and as disinfected as possible. We are supported in this effort by the Woodfords Congregational Church sexton/custodian.

THANK YOU, FAMILIES!

As the parameters of the pandemic continue to evolve, please note these policies could be updated again.

We are so grateful for your trust and support of your students (and the STAGES team) during this time, and we thank you for playing your part in the months ahead as we all work toward the same goal – to safely provide a creative and social connection for your wonderful young people this school year.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask by email - hello@stagesacademy.com
We welcome your concern or feedback at any time.