



August 15, 2021

Happy end of summer, Charter Arts Families!

I hope that you are enjoying your remaining days of summer! Everyone here at Charter Arts is busy preparing for the arrival of our students for in person learning 5 days a week ... and we are EXCITED to have you all back together again under one roof!

#### A few important dates to remember:

- **New Student Orientation will be held on August 26-27, 2021 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm each day (doors will open at 8:30 am).** Students, please remember to pack your own lunch each day!
- **The first day of school will be Monday, August 30, 2021! We can't wait to see you!**
- **Welcome Back to Charter Arts night will be held on Wednesday, September 8th at 6pm.**  
Parents/Guardians will be able to tour the school and briefly meet our administrative team, various support staff, and allow you to meet your child's teachers to put a face to the name. **We will require an RSVP for this Welcome Back night so that we can have an accurate headcount for the event - [link forthcoming](#).** In order to keep our Charter Arts teachers and families safe, we ask that you send one representative per household so that we can socially distance as much as possible during the event. Specific questions about your child's needs, their classes, and course/departmental curriculum will need to be addressed separately by email or conference as they will not be addressed at this particular event.
- **We will also be hosting a New Parent/Family Mixer prior to our Welcome Back event on the 8th from 5-6pm. This event will also require an RSVP - [link forthcoming](#).**

#### Employee Updates

As we took some time this summer to reflect on our own strengths and areas of growth as an organization, we have made some internal changes and updates that we are excited to share with you! While you may see some new faces among our employees, you will also see that some of our employees have accepted and transitioned into other positions within our school, and we are excited that they are choosing to advance their careers with us! [CLICK HERE](#) to find an updated list of employee updates for this coming school year.

#### Health and Safety COVID Updates

The number one thing that you can do to help ensure the safety of our community is to get vaccinated. If your child has already gotten their vaccination, please submit your child's COVID vaccine card or record to [nurse@charterarts.org](mailto:nurse@charterarts.org) if you have not already done so. While we are actively monitoring case counts and positivity rates in our local communities as outlined below, we also need to factor in vaccination rates within our building. At this time, we have been able to confirm that approximately 55% of our students have already been

**vaccinated.** Our Nurse will continue monitoring our building vaccination rate. The more people we have vaccinated, the better chance we have to mitigate the spread of the virus within our building!

At Charter Arts, we will be utilizing a tiered approach to determine when masks will be optional and required within the school setting. As outlined below, we will analyze multiple data sources and continue to follow recommendations from the CDC and our health partners at St. Luke’s and the Bethlehem Health Bureau.

**To that end, we still have two weeks to go, and a final decision about masking will be made closer to the first day of school based on these various criteria. Masks will be required for New Student Orientation and may be required to start the year and/or be required off and on throughout the year based on various criteria (outlined below) to ensure the safety of our students, employees, and community.** We thank you in advance for continuing to be supportive of our efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and the Delta and other variants within our building to the maximum extent possible. We are excited to be back at Charter Arts in person 5 days a week, and we need to take every precaution to stay healthy so that we can continue to remain open and provide in person learning for our students.

We plan to implement other mitigation strategies, including handwashing, building sanitation, and distancing (to the maximum extent possible) and will require that students, employees, and visitors utilize [THIS](#) self-screener checklist daily prior to entering the building.

Below you will see data (as of August 13, 2021), which can also be found on the [PA DOH website](#). This data is updated every Friday. The counties represented below include rates based on where our students currently reside. Charter Arts is located in Northampton County, and the majority of our students come from Northampton and Lehigh Counties. Therefore, data from these two counties will be weighted more heavily in our decision making process.

County Name <i>*updated 8.13.21</i>	Incidence rate (most recent 7 days) per 100,000 residents	PCR percent positivity rate (most recent 7 days)
Berks	51.3	6.60%
Bucks	67.3	4.5%
Carbon	76.3	5.2%
Lackawanna	52.5	4.7%
Lancaster	85.2	8.0%
Lehigh	103.2	7.9%
Monroe	112.8	9.8%
Montgomery	68.2	4.3%
Northampton	137.6	9.2%
Pike	64.5	8.4%
Schuylkill	78.5	9.4%

**Charter Arts' Decision Making Criteria and Color Coding<sup>^</sup>**

0-9.99 Case Counts per 100k residents = **LOW** transmission  
 10-49.9 Case Counts per 100k = **MODERATE** transmission  
 Under 5% Positivity = **LOW** transmission  
 5-7.99% Positivity = **MODERATE** transmission  
 Building vaccination rate\*  
 Building student/staff case counts\*

LOW/MODERATE case counts and percent positivity =  
**MASKS OPTIONAL** for ALL but still Recommended

50-99.9 Case Counts per 100k = **SUBSTANTIAL** transmission  
 Between 8-9.9% Positivity = **SUBSTANTIAL** transmission  
 Building vaccination rate\*  
 Building student/staff case counts\*

SUBSTANTIAL level case counts and percent positivity =  
**MASKS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** for ALL;  
**REQUIRED** for Employees when with students,  
 unvaccinated individuals, and anyone that doesn't provide  
 proof of vaccination

100+ Case Counts per 100k = **HIGH** transmission  
 10%+ Positivity = **HIGH** transmission  
 Building vaccination rate\*  
 Building student/staff case counts\*

HIGH level case counts and percent positivity =  
**MASKS REQUIRED** for ALL indoors

<sup>^</sup>[CDC Level of Community Transmission](#) table data referenced

\*Data will be reviewed as student/employee vaccinations continue and if/when cases are present in our school building. The more of our community that is vaccinated, the better! If case counts rise within our building, universal masking may be implemented to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

We look forward to seeing you soon and will share additional updates with you soon!  
 Please continue to monitor our school website and social media accounts for additional information and updates.

Best,



Carise Comstock, Ed.D.  
 Superintendent & CEO



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