

December 3, 2021

Dear Charter Arts Community:

We hope that you were able to enjoy a relaxing Thanksgiving break! Now that we are back and in the midst of the holidays and our December performance season, we wanted to provide some important updates regarding masking and our process for notifying families of close contacts. Hopefully these changes improve and streamline our communication efforts as we anticipate a possible increase in cases in the coming weeks.

On November 30, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the mask order will remain in place pending further consideration of the Court. The Supreme Court will not hear arguments on the matter until December 8, 2021, so the mask order will remain in place until *at least* that date. Governor Wolf announced that the Commonwealth's K-12 school mask requirement is anticipated to end on January 17, 2022.

At this time, Charter Arts will continue to require universal mask-wearing in school as recommended by the CDC, PDE and the PA Department of Health until further notice. Masking in school settings is an effective way of minimizing the spread of COVID-19, particularly in settings where individuals and students are not vaccinated. Without universal masking in schools, there is a risk of increased disease spread and outbreaks that may necessitate temporary school closures and disrupt in-person learning. As we have done throughout this pandemic, our Charter Arts Administrative Team, School Nurse, and Trainer will continue to stay in close communication with the Bethlehem Health Bureau and will continue to review and update our Health and Safety plans accordingly as needed.

Additionally, effective immediately, our Charter Arts School Nurse and Trainer will update their communication and notification procedures for our community based upon recommendations from the Bethlehem Health Bureau as follows:

- If you need to report positive test results, please do so using [THIS](#) Covid Reporting Form, which can also be found on our Covid Dashboard. When you submit information via this Reporting Form, our School Nurse (nurse@charterarts.org) or Trainer (athletictrainer@charterarts.org) will follow-up with you directly during school hours (between 7:00am-3:30pm). If you submit information into the form after 3:00pm, you will not be contacted until the next day. Until you hear directly from the Charter Arts School Nurse or Trainer, please keep your child at home if they are awaiting test results, confirmed positive, or have any COVID symptoms.
- If your child tests positive for Covid, please notify Charter Arts via the form above ASAP. It is the responsibility of the family to report this result to the school so that we may begin contact tracing.
- Contact tracing will occur during school hours (between 7:00am and 3:30pm), and you may receive a call or email during this time if your child has been identified as a close contact.
- **If your child is identified as a close contact and Charter Arts has proof of your child's vaccination already on file**, the parent/guardian will receive a text message via Alert Solutions informing you the date your child was exposed Covid-19. Your child does not need to be quarantined unless they develop Covid-like symptoms. It is recommended that your child be tested within 3-5 days of the date of exposure.

Mission Statement

The Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts provides a unique environment that fosters a creative, rigorous academic approach to learning and a development of talents in the arts. Built on passion, discipline and a commitment to excellence, this integrative educational experience inspires all students to believe in who they are and in what they can accomplish.

- **If your child is identified as a close contact and Charter Arts does NOT have proof of a current vaccination on file in the Health Office**, the parent/guardian will receive a phone call, text, and email via Alert Solutions. The phone call and text will alert you to the email. The email will provide you with a letter outlining dates for the quarantine period and next steps. Should you have any questions, you can communicate directly with our School Nurse or Trainer.
- Alerts may come to your phone outside of school hours, depending on the circumstances. To ensure you receive our communications, please make sure that the following email addresses are currently being accepted into your inbox: athletictrainer@charterarts.org, nurse@charterarts.org, or noreply@lvpa.org.
- Weekly positive case counts will continue to be posted to our Covid Dashboard for the full school community on Fridays by 5pm.
- During this time, we ask that you continue to be patient with our School Nurse and Trainer as they work diligently to contact trace and communicate with families, students, and teachers as the contact tracing process is intensive and time consuming.

Important Reminders and Resources:

- If your child is experiencing symptoms, please keep them at home. You can check [HERE](#) for the CDC's list of COVID symptoms to watch.
- If your child needs to quarantine, please follow the quarantine instructions [HERE](#).
- [THIS](#) important document from PDE outlines the difference between quarantine and isolation.
- [THIS](#) website by PDE and the PA Department of Health outline the criteria for quarantining as follows:
 - **An individual who is not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and is identified as a close contact* of a case must be quarantined.**
 - **Persons who meet the following criteria do NOT need to quarantine:**
 - Someone who has been [fully vaccinated](#) and shows no symptoms of COVID-19. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested three to five days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms, and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative. **OR:**
 - Someone who has had COVID-19 illness within the previous three months, **and**
 - Has recovered, **and**
 - Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).
 - ** In the K-12 indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting where mask use can be observed (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), the "close contact" definition excludes students who were within three to six feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) if both the infected student and exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception **does not apply** to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.*

If your student has been identified as a close contact or tests positive and needs to be quarantined, please encourage them to check their Google Classrooms daily as all of their assignments will be posted regularly. Work Collection forms will be sent to students if they will be absent for three or more days, and this communication will come from your child's school counselor. Students are required to complete all assignments while out and will be given assignment extensions accordingly.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and patience. Have a great weekend!

The Administrative Team