

RCS SUMMER/FALL BAND GUIDANCE UPDATED 7/29/2020

Introduction

As we reopen schools, we have two goals: 1). We want to make sure that our students, and by extension their peers and families, are as safe as possible. 2). We want to give our students the opportunity to have a meaningful and valuable experience in band. We will be following the guidelines below that have been mandated for all Rutherford County schools. All information below is from the [RCS Summer/Fall Arts, Extracurriculars, & Athletics Guidance](#). As we move forward, we will continue to adjust as necessary and communicate any changes as quickly as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please email directors@blackmanband.com.

Brenda Monson and Jonathan Wright

In order to maintain a safe environment for students, visitors, families, and staff, the following guidelines are required to be followed in order to operate on RCS property. Please note these guidelines are subject to change based on public health agency recommendations. Additionally, these guidelines incorporate the TSSAA & TMSAA guidelines and regulations issued July 21, 2020. **All efforts are being made to provide for the safety and well-being of all participants and staff; however, all participants must acknowledge that there is risk in participating in these activities during the COVID-19 outbreak. These activities are optional for students and any student who cannot/will not comply with the below requirements may be excused. Additionally, no student shall be disciplined for declining to participate in these activities if they have a concern for health/safety.**

All coaches, directors, and/or sponsors **MUST** complete the National Federation of State High School Association training on COVID-19: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>. Administrators are highly encouraged to review the training as well.

FOR ALL ACTIVITIES – MASKS ARE REQUIRED WHEN NOT ENGAGED IN ACTIVE GAMEPLAY

MUSIC AND THE ARTS

GENERAL

The below guidelines apply to all music and arts programs/activities – both curricular and extracurricular-- unless specifically addressed under the heading for that activity, if present.

SPECTATORS

- **No spectators may attend practices or rehearsals.** Only participating students, directors, and staff directors directly involved in the activity itself may attend.

SCREENING

- **Temperature checks are required for all participants, including students and staff, prior to practices.** Anyone whose temperature measures 100.4 or greater must be sent home immediately and may not return to participation until the steps outlined in RCS Administrative Procedure 1-4(c) are met.
- **No person may participate in a practice without first completing appropriate COVID-19 screening.** Persons should not participate while ill. If the answer is “YES” to any of the following questions, the person may not participate until obtaining an evaluation by a medical provider verifying his/her fitness to safely do so. Each student and staff member must be asked these questions before the first practice in which he/she participates, and again on at least a weekly basis. A printed list of the questions should be given to each student and staff with instructions that the questions are continuing throughout the season. If at any time the answer to any question becomes “YES,” the individual should promptly inform the Band Director and should obtain an evaluation by a medical provider before further participation:
 - Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past 7 days?
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Shaking chills
 - Chest pain, pressure, or tightness with exercise
 - Fatigue or difficulty with exercise
 - Racing heart rate
 - Unusual dizziness
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - Unusual rash or painful discoloration of fingers or toes
 - Do you have moderate to severe asthma, a heart condition, diabetes, chronic kidney or liver disease, or take medication or have a medical condition that weakens your immune system?
 - Have you or a family/household member been diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19 infection or been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- **Participants should be offered flexible attendance in order to avoid sick individuals from attending events.** If a group is unable to meet, or a student is unable to attend due to risk, group leaders should consider offering at-home exercises or activities for the student to complete.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AT PRACTICE/REHEARSALS

- **Social distancing of a minimum of six feet must be maintained to the greatest extent possible.** Some activities may require distancing of more than six feet – see specific content areas below.
- **At any time where six feet of social distancing cannot be maintained, face coverings must be worn.** Any individual may opt to wear a face covering at any time even if social distancing is maintained.
- **Hand sanitizer and disinfectants should be liberally provided.** High-touch areas should be disinfected frequently. Hands should be washed with soap and water for twenty seconds frequently.
- **Shared equipment must be disinfected between users, or as frequently as practicable.**
- **No congregating before, during, or after practices.** Students and staff should attend immediately to practice and remain distanced. After practice, students and staff should immediately exit or disperse.

BAND

- **Consider having rehearsals in an outdoor area, in the auditorium, or other large area to aid in distancing, when possible.**
- **While outside, bands can work in group sizes up to the full band.** All participants must remain spaced at least six feet apart on all sides. Four 8x5 steps on all sides (as in a traditional fundamental block) is appropriate spacing.
- **When inside, bands should maintain group sizes that can be spaced at least six feet apart on all sides.**
- **Trombone players should have an extra three feet of space between themselves and the person in front of them (at least nine feet).**
- **Masks are encouraged while not playing and required if player is within six feet of any other person.**
- **Bell coverings are encouraged, especially with indoors.**
- **Water keys should not be emptied inside on the floor.**
- **Sitting/standing in straight lines (rather than curved lines) is recommended, especially when inside.**
- **Band students should have their own instrument, mouthpiece, reeds, and other equipment.** Any students who share instruments between groups should be assigned their own mouthpieces. It is preferable for percussionists to use their own sticks and mallets, if possible.
- **Any school-owned equipment, such as sticks and mallets, music stands, color guard equipment, etc. should be wiped down and disinfected after each use.**
- **Students and instructors are encouraged to follow basic instrument cleaning and maintenance techniques as described in the NFHS cleaning guidelines found here: <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/covid-19-instrument-cleaning-guidelines/>.** Students should have access to necessary cleaning and maintenance tools that are not shared, including cleaning rods, swabs, mouthpiece brushes, etc.
- **Alcohol swabs and/or disinfectant solution should be made available to disinfect mouthpieces and equipment after each use.**
- **Avoid breathing exercises and mouthpiece buzzing.**
- **Indoor playing should occur for no longer than 30 minutes in a single class period to allow for appropriate air exchange between classes.**
- **Practice rooms should be used by only one student at a time for SmartMusic assignments, virtual private lessons, and individual practice.** Disinfectant spray should be used between practice room users.
- **Students are encouraged to have their own water containers.** Any water provided should be single-serving water bottles (rather than community water coolers).
- **Meals:**
 - It is recommended that band camp activities be scheduled so that students eat meals at home and/or can bring their own meals from home.
 - If meals are provided for students, they should be prepackaged, single serving meals (no buffet style servings, pizza, etc.).
 - Contact should be minimized at mealtimes. Consider staggering mealtimes. Six feet of distance should always be maintained between students, either while waiting in a line or while eating. Parents should not serve meals.
- **Private Lessons:**
 - Private lessons must take place virtually using Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
 - Students can utilize practice rooms for the purpose of attending virtual private lessons (one student in a room at a time).
 - Normal RCS procedures for Non-Faculty Staff will be in place - NFS application, board approval, etc.