

# Hoff-Barthelson Music School

## COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Fall 2021

With vaccination rates rising and infection rates falling sharply, we look forward to fully restoring in-person instruction when our Fall 2021 Semester opens on September 9<sup>th</sup>.

At the same time, because HBMS serves a multi-generational population of students ranging from 9 months to over 80 years of age, and because the majority of our young students are not yet eligible for vaccination, the School will continue to follow NYS and CDC guidance for Child Care Agencies, Pre-K–12 schools, and Small Performing Arts Venues.

The safety protocols detailed below, effective as of August 1, 2021, are intended to ensure that **all** students are equally able to benefit safely from the high-quality music learning opportunities – in-person lessons, workshops, recitals, classes, and ensembles – HBMS provides.

- 1) **Following CDC and NYS Guidance:** HBMS follows CDC and NYS guidance for Pre-K-12 Schools and for Childcare Providers in regard to masking and social distancing during instructional activities, as well as NYS guidance for small scale arts and entertainment venues. Our policies will be updated as CDC and NYS guidance evolves.
- 2) **Ventilation and Filtration:** The School will continue to operate and maintain our upgraded ventilation and air-purification systems, including MERV 13 and HEPA filters, window fans, and central HVAC units, to ensure a continuous mix of fresh and filtered air flows through all instructional, office and public spaces.
- 3) **Social Distancing:** Adults who are unvaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown must maintain at least six feet of distance from others at all times. Students under the age of 18 must maintain a minimum of three feet of distance at all times.
- 4) **Face Coverings:** Our universal mask-mandate remains in effect for indoor, in-person activities – including singing and playing woodwinds and brass instruments. Masks are not required for outdoor activities. Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, the School will provide one mask and bell covering, specifically designed for woodwind, brass and voice students, to each such student. The student is responsible for the care and cleaning of their mask; replacement masks and bell coverings will be provided at cost.
- 5) **Vaccination:** As of August 24, 2021, the School has confirmed that all employees — faculty, accompanists and staff — are fully vaccinated. With the exception of activities described in #10, the School will not mandate vaccination for students or visitors until NYS does so for Pre-K-12 schools. In such an event, the School will consider requests for medical and religious exemptions.
- 6) **Health Screenings:** The School will conduct mandatory health screenings based on CDC and NYS guidelines, including a question on vaccination status (with answer choices of “yes” “no” and “prefer not to say”), for all persons engaged in in-person HBMS-sponsored activities, whether on or off campus. In the event the student or visitor is a minor, their parent or guardian is responsible for completing the required screening form. Students experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19, or who may have been exposed but are asymptomatic, are asked to stay home and may request an online lesson in place of their in-person lesson or a make-up lesson on a future date. (The School’s make-up policies are included in all registration materials and the Student Handbook distributed prior to the start of the academic year.)
- 7) **Space Utilization:** The practice of alternating studios between lessons has been discontinued, with the exception of lessons described in #10 below. Passing time following or prior to high-density and/or high-exhalation activities (e.g., orchestral, choral and band rehearsals) will be increased and rooms cleared to allow for adequate air exchange between these and any activities immediately following in a given space. The School may use offsite space for such activities as necessary to comply with these guidelines.

- 8) **Online Learning:** While the School encourages students to return to in-person lessons, classes and ensembles, those students who prefer to continue online lessons until they are able to be vaccinated may do so by alerting our registration team ([registration@hbms.org](mailto:registration@hbms.org) or 914-723-1169) at least one week prior to their first lesson. Students who begin the year studying online may switch to in-person lessons once they are fully vaccinated. The School will also offer a number of hybrid [musicianship classes](#) for students who need to participate from home.
- 9) **Make-Up Policy Amendment:** The following amendment to the School's make-up policy remains in effect, as revised on June 25, 2021, until further notice: During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the School may offer private lessons in-person or online. If a student is not able to attend a private lesson in person due to COVID-19 related concerns (e.g., the student may have been exposed to COVID-19, is asymptomatic, yet must remain home under quarantine) the faculty member may deliver private lesson instruction online. If a faculty member is not able to conduct private lesson instruction in person due to COVID-19 related concerns (e.g., s/he has tested positive for COVID-19, even though fully vaccinated) the faculty member may deliver private lesson instruction online. Lessons offered online but rejected by the student will not be made-up. The School will consider exceptions in cases of hardship on the part of the student (e.g., s/he is ill, does not have access to the necessary technology, has learning disabilities that interfere with online learning, etc.). Requests for exceptions must be submitted by the family/student via email to [studentservices@hbms.org](mailto:studentservices@hbms.org).

Requests for make-up lessons will be honored if a message is left on the School's voice mail system by pressing "0" or by speaking with the Receptionist by 10:00 am the day of the lesson on weekdays. For lessons scheduled before 10:00 am on Saturday, a message must be left on the School's voice mail system by 8:00 am; the School must be notified by 9:00 am for Saturday lessons scheduled at or after 10:00 am.

Requests to substitute an online lesson for an in-person lesson must be submitted by the same procedure at least two hours in advance of the start of the lesson.

10) **Programs Requiring Vaccination:**

The School requires all participants, including faculty, staff and students, in the following activities (available only to students age 12 and above) to be fully vaccinated (2 weeks following their final dose of vaccine) prior to their first in-person session.

- i. In-person lessons for wind, brass, and voice students ages 12 and older
- ii. Festival Orchestra
- iii. Chamber Choir
- iv. Sight Singing – High School
- v. Sight Singing – Advanced Placement
- vi. Flute Club
- vii. Wind Ensemble
- viii. Advanced Jazz Ensemble
- ix. All adult ensembles and classes

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact HBMS Executive Director Ken Cole at 914-902-0721 or [kcole@hbms.org](mailto:kcole@hbms.org).