



Last week a document was released by National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) titled Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education. This document is intended to provide guidance related to music classes for schools and school districts as they bring students back to school.

Although TMEA was not involved in the creation of this document, TMEA, in collaboration with TN-ACDA, is compelled to respond to the information in the document. We believe the volume of guidance given to classroom and choral singing included in the NAfME statement was disproportionate to the volume of guidance regarding instrumental music, resulting in a lack of comparable recommendations and advocacy for those engaged in classroom and choral singing.

TMEA and TN-ACDA believe the following:

- We believe that music education remains essential at all grade levels.
- We understand that indoor group singing pre-COVID is not advisable; however, we are committed to supporting research that explores innovative ways to continue indoor singing in some form until a vaccine is available.
- We believe in a safe, measured, and gradual return to ensemble singing. Research should, and will, guide our way. As such, TMEA and ACDA are contributing members to the international consortium that is sponsoring The University of Colorado study, which is studying the effects of COVID-19 aerosol transmission in performing arts performance settings. We encourage all to await the results and recommendations of this study before making decisions about the upcoming year.
- We believe that school districts should engage their music educators as experts in their fields when creating their return to instruction and deciding how students will receive their very important music curricula.

Several notable studies have been undertaken to more accurately assess the severity and possible mitigation of COVID transmission in performing arts settings. The results of several of these studies are forthcoming (estimated mid-July), and schools are urged to more fully consider the results of these studies in decision-making for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Let us all hope that these results will further guide decision making.

The decision-making process in your school and district needs to INCLUDE the expertise of our music teachers! Make sure you “get in the room” where these decisions are being made.

Here are some resources that can help you with these conversations with decision makers:

- * [ACDA COVID-19 Response Committee Report](#) (check out the linked lesson plans!)
- * [Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Framework](#)
- * [TCVPAS Fact Sheet](#)
- * [Arts Education is Essential Statement](#)
- * [NAfME/NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources](#)
- * [NAfME COVID-19 Resources](#)