



Welcome Back to RSC

2020-2021 Fall Reopening Plan

(Updated 9/30/20)



Introduction to Our Fall Semester Plans

RSC will welcome students back for the fall semester **on Monday, September 14th, 2020**. Due to COVID-19, this back-to-school season will be different than in past years: **RSC will begin the year on a hybrid model**, providing lessons in-person and virtually to accommodate individual needs and comfort levels. Your faculty member will contact you with their preference. Should you desire a different method of teaching, please let your teacher and the RSC office know. We are here to help, and we are dedicated to supporting students through this transition.

Our faculty, staff, and administrators have worked tirelessly to prepare for this new year, dedicating resources, research, and thought to the process. We have also worked closely with Environmental Health & Engineering (EH&E), an environmental consulting firm which has guided 40+ schools and universities in their efforts to reopen. We feel confident that the changes we have made will allow us to provide students with the highest-quality music education while prioritizing health and safety.

Please read below to understand the full details of our reopening plan. We hope this document provides a clear explanation of how we plan to operate and gives parents/guardians, students, and employees the resources they need to resolve any questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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Top Ten Community Must-Dos

1. The number of students and faculty allowed in each room will be limited based on social distancing calculations provided by Environmental Health and Engineering (EH&E). These social distancing capacity numbers will be displayed on a sign outside the door of each room.
2. Masks are required at all times for all individuals at The Rivers School Conservatory: faculty, staff, students, families and any guests attending an event at RSC.

Masks will be provided to all RSC faculty, and one mask will be provided to each student at the start of the school year. All individuals are expected to bring a mask to campus daily, whether it is one provided by RSC or another that meets the requirements specified below.

Any individual who does not follow this rule may be asked to leave campus.
3. Parents/guardians should remain in their cars when dropping off and picking up students, unless asked specifically by the student's teacher to sit in on a lesson.

There will be no parent waiting room available.
4. Only one person will be allowed in the restroom at a time. Remember to wash your hands as often as possible and after restroom use.
5. Only one person may use the elevator at a time.
6. All individuals are expected to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or to utilize the portable hand-sanitizer stations available in all entrances/hallways and bathrooms.
7. Intensive cleaning will happen on a nightly basis and a walk through cleaning person will wipe down high touch areas including door knobs, chairs, stands, and bathrooms daily.

Piano students are expected to wipe down the keys before and after their lessons with provided disinfectant wipes.

Faculty will wipe down instruction areas, bows etc. in between lessons with disinfectant wipes provided by RSC.
8. Student entry into Bradley Hall will be staggered. There will be no gathering, grouping or congregating inside or outside any of the buildings being used for RSC purposes at any time.
9. The RSC staff will be the COVID-19 contact persons. There will be a staff person in the office on Saturdays from 9 am. to 1 pm.
10. All families and faculty must complete a community pledge prior to the start of the year, agreeing to a daily health screening process (additional information below).



Program-Specific Information

Lessons

- Private lessons may take place either in-person or virtually, depending upon the comfort level of the faculty member and student.
Wind, brass, and voice private lessons may take place only in a virtual format.
- Windows will be open in teaching rooms whenever possible.
- Bradley Hall 114 and 115 will be closed.

Orchestra and Ensembles

- All Rivers Youth Orchestra (RYO) groups will meet in smaller chamber orchestras or sectionals in large spaces. Players will wear a mask during the entirety of rehearsal.
- Rehearsals may take place in spaces outside of Bradley Hall, on The Rivers School campus, for maximal social distancing.
- RYO rehearsal rooms will be set up ahead of time with the floors marked for stand placement, spaced 6 feet apart. Stands will be brought from home and will not be shared. Students will not have stand partners.
- Snacks will not be distributed during RYO rehearsals, but students may bring their own snacks.
- If there are breaks during orchestra rehearsal, they will take place outdoors only.
- Students will each carry their own stand, music, and instrument, as needed, spaced 6 feet apart.
- Students may not share instruments. Students should take instruments home following rehearsal.
- RSC jazz ensembles will rehearse either on campus or remotely using Soundjack.

Workshops

- Seating during in-person workshops will follow social distancing guidelines with a distance of 6 feet between individuals.
- Parents/guardians may not attend in-person workshops to reduce the number of attendees.
- For those who prefer to participate remotely, RSC will continue to offer this option via Zoom.

Recitals

- Students will have the opportunity to perform in small in-person recitals with a limited audience size. Only one family guest per performer may attend. All other family members and friends may view remotely via livestream and recording. Seating during in-person recitals will follow social distancing guidelines with a distance of 6 feet between individuals.
- For those who prefer to perform remotely, RSC will continue to offer this option via Zoom.



General Policies and Procedures

Daily Health Screening by Parents/Guardians/Faculty/Staff

While we will not be requiring parents/guardians to present a daily attestation of their child's health status via an external app, our community pledge, which each student and parent/guardian will sign prior to the start of the school year, represents a commitment to daily health screening to be done at home before bringing or sending children to RSC. Before the beginning of the year, we will require all families to attest to performing a symptom screening and a temperature check on their child before the start of each day. We will send frequent reminders of the commitment each family makes to the health of the entire community by screening their child(ren) each day and agreeing to follow the protocols should their child present with symptoms. Our expectation is that any child who is presenting with any cold or flu-like symptoms will stay home and participate in RSC programs remotely. RSC faculty and staff will also be expected to complete the community pledge.

We will not be utilizing preemptive testing for COVID-19 across our community, nor will we use temperature screening on campus each day. These determinations were developed through our work with EH&E, as well as through discussion with medical personnel advising our committees. The DESE guidelines discourage temperature checking as well, as the results are too inconclusive and inconsistent to be of real value. However, should the testing procedures become more effective and efficient, we will revisit this policy; for the time being, we will not be utilizing widespread testing on campus.

Mask Requirements at RSC

Both cloth and disposable face coverings are meant to protect other people from being infected by asymptomatic carriers.

Face masks should be double layer, and no bandanas or other single layer face coverings are recommended.

- Face masks/face coverings are mandatory for everyone on campus.
- Face masks should not be shared nor borrowed.
- Acceptable face masks/face coverings should be at least 2 layers but preferably 3.
- Please refer to [Massachusetts guidance](#) for proper mask usage.
 - Face masks must:
 - a. Cover the nose and mouth.
 - b. Fit securely and comfortably against the side of the face.
 - c. Be secured with ties or ear loops.
 - d. Allow for breathing without restriction.
 - e. Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change of shape.
- [Non-acceptable](#) mask/face coverings include the following:



- N95 mask (used by healthcare providers)
- Masks with Exhalation Valves or Vents
- Bandanas
- Gators
- Scarves
- Individuals are required to wear a mask/face covering during the duration of their stay on campus with very limited exceptions, such as:
 - While eating or drinking (with > 6 feet social distancing)
 - During mask breaks outdoors (with > 6 feet social distancing)
 - On a case by case basis for those for whom it is not possible to wear a mask due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- Mask breaks will be available to students in designated areas and times during the day.
- Students, faculty, and staff should come to RSC with a face mask and a plastic bag to hold dirty cloth masks.
- Students, faculty, and staff are expected to properly discard disposable masks in the trash bin once they have become soiled or wet.
- **Any and all masks or face coverings found on the floor will be disposed of.**
- Students, faculty, and staff should wash their hands before removing a mask and before putting a new mask on. Hand sanitizer may be used instead.

Community members must continue to maintain 6 feet between themselves and others even while wearing a face mask. Masks are no substitute for social distancing.

Facilities Management of Ventilation

Rivers understands the importance of appropriate ventilation in all indoor spaces and has worked with its consultants (EH&E as well as Dario Designs, 20/20 Mechanical Engineers, and Wozny/Barbar and Associates) and HVAC service vendors to meet and often exceed standards for ventilation in campus buildings. Specifically, EH&E assessed and made recommendations for upgrading our HVAC systems in accordance with guidelines set by CDC and ASHRAE where appropriate. The enhancements can be characterized in three categories -- Ventilation Adjustments, Filtration Changes, and Air Purification Initiatives. Rivers is investing heavily in each of these areas. Several of the school's newer buildings have been found to have ventilation systems that far exceed building code requirements. In some cases, even where the design basis provides ample ventilation, Rivers has opted to enhance that functionality.

In the case of Blackwell House, HEPA filter-equipped air purification units have been purchased for every room. In the case of Bradley Hall, MERV-13 HVAC filters are being installed based on guidance from both professional associations and our consultants. MERV-13 filters have a finer level of filtering and are recommended for filtering out even particles in the size range generated by breathing, coughing, and sneezing, which can transfer the virus.



Social Distancing

In addition to mask-wearing, social distancing is one of the most effective ways to decrease the risk of spreading the virus.

- Students, faculty, and staff must maintain a distance of at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people and each other while at RSC.
- Students, faculty, and staff should not gather in groups.
- Students, faculty, and staff should stay out of crowded areas and avoid any large gatherings on and off campus.
- Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Sickness Policy

Student Illness During RSC Hours

If, during the teaching day, a student presents with any of these symptoms:

- Fever greater than 100.0 F
- Chills
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste/smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (along with other symptoms)
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Fatigue (when in combination with other symptoms)
- Congestion/Runny nose (not due to known cause such as allergies)

The student will be asked to leave the lesson or class and taken by their teacher to a room designated the isolation room. Their parent or guardian will be called to pick them up as soon as possible.

Students with any COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home with the expectation that they will be evaluated by their primary care provider for further assessment. The student's medical provider will either rule out COVID-19 by providing an alternate diagnosis OR may recommend that the student be tested for COVID-19.



If a student's medical provider cannot determine that the symptom(s) is something other than COVID-19, then the student would need to either receive a negative COVID-19 test OR be quarantined at home for 14 days prior to returning to RSC. **Only PCR test results (not rapid antigen) will be accepted.** Parents/guardians are expected to communicate with the RSC office and submit any and all paperwork to the office for approval **prior** to a return to RSC.

Faculty/Staff Illness

Any faculty/staff that present with COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave campus immediately and contact their PCP. Faculty/staff are required to communicate any findings with the RSC office.

Rental of RSC Facilities

- Space rentals at RSC will not be available until further notice. Use of our facilities will be limited to those in our community.

Vendors

- The school's regular vendors (plumber, electrician, HVAC, etc.) are required to follow all of our policies including a health attestation, mask wearing, and social distancing.