



February 26, 2022

Dear SLCC Families,

We are deeply grateful for your confidence in us as we have successfully navigated the uncharted waters caused by COVID – 19. We appreciate your faithful cooperation in following our Sing Safely Guidelines and are announcing the latest change to those guidelines.

We have always been determined to bring our singers a safe, enjoyable learning experience that includes high quality choral music performances. We remain committed to providing a safe environment while adhering to local, state, and federal guidelines. And, we have always looked forward to returning to normal Choir activities as quickly as possible in a thoughtful, responsible manner that is considerate of all perspectives.

Rapidly declining numbers of cases and hospitalizations in St. Louis County have resulted in the announcement ([see link](#)) that the County mask mandate will be lifted on **Monday, February 28**. Additionally, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced yesterday ([see link](#)) that most counties no longer meet the threshold for indoor mask requirements.

Our ensemble directors and management team all support the decision to make masks optional now that the County mandate has been lifted. Many schools in Missouri have been mask free since August. Recently, the All-State Elementary and High School Honor Choirs sang “mask optional” in their performances for the Missouri Music Educators Association Conference.

In response to official confirmation from Missouri Baptist Hospital that cases are way down ([see Task Force FB page](#)) combined with these governmental shifts, The St. Louis Children’s Choirs will transition to a mask optional environment for students and staff beginning **Monday, February 28**. Singers will be allowed to attend rehearsal without wearing a mask if they choose. We will maintain our strict safety protocols of family pre-attendance health screening, distancing, air filtration, air spraying, and required breaks for fresh air.

**Please be assured that face masks will continue to be welcomed at rehearsals.** We respect each one’s choice based on family circumstances and personal preferences. We anticipate a sense of respect for each other’s decisions, a key component of character development. No one should feel uncomfortable wearing a mask, just as no one should feel uncomfortable not wearing a mask. We know that our entire community will continue to model kindness, inclusion, and acceptance of one another as we implement this long-awaited transition.

Here are the key elements of the new Sing Safely Guidelines:

- Masks will no longer be required as of Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. Any student who would like to wear a mask is welcome to do so.
- Students will not need to wear masks in rehearsal spaces, however, PUCC requests that students **do** wear masks when passing through public areas of the church like the entrance, gathering space, and restrooms.
- SLCC will continue with our sanitizing protocols including air sanitization, regular fresh air breaks, and the airing of the rooms halfway through every rehearsal.
- The quarantine requirements for those who have been exposed to or have tested positive for Covid-19 will still be in effect according to the current CDC and SLCC Sing Safely Guidelines. Students who are unwell should not come to rehearsal.
- March 6<sup>th</sup> concerts: Missouri Baptist University no longer requires masks, however during this time of transition, students, staff, and all audience members are respectfully asked to wear their masks in the lobby and while seated in the auditorium. Masks will be optional for all performers while on stage.
- Currently there is 5 ft. spacing between singers in rehearsals and we plan to gradually adjust the distancing to the American Choral Directors Association recommended spacing of 3 ft. for schools.
- We will continue to diligently monitor the safety of students and staff and will respond as needed. Should it be necessary to reinstitute wearing masks we will do so.

Our directors look forward to having their students share their love of singing with joy, clear diction, full breath, and beautiful facial expression. We thank our families and students for their support as we once again experience the joy, friendship, and connection of seeing each other's smiles and recognizing each other's faces.

With gratitude,



Barbara Berner  
Artistic Director

**CDC Guidelines** <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/a0225-covid-19-update.html>

**St. Louis County** <https://stlouiscountymo.gov/st-louis-county-departments/public-health/dph-news-and-press-releases/dph-covid-19-update-022322/>

**St. Louis Metropolitan Pandemic Task Force Facebook page:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/StLouisMetropolitanPandemicTaskForce>