



HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RETURN TO ATHLETICS PLAN
FALL 2020

ADDISON G. DAVIS, SUPERINTENDENT



Hillsborough County
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Preparing Students for Life

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY	1
INTRODUCTION	2
SUMMER PARTICIPATION PLAN	3-6
Phase I – Strength, Conditioning & Fitness	3-4
Phase II – Return to Activity	5
Phase III – Workouts for Conditioning & Sport Specific Skill Development	6
2020 FALL PRACTICES BEGIN	7
Safety Protocols for Fall 2020 Athletic Practices	7
FALL SPORTS CONTESTS BEGIN	8
Spectator Procedures for Fall 2020 Contests	9-11
Virtual Viewing of Contests	12
MARCHING BAND AND GUARD PROCEDURES	13
MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS	14
POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE IN STUDENT-ATHLETE	15
Contact Tracing & Potential Exposure	15
Return to Play	16





Hillsborough County

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Preparing Students for Life

SCHOOL BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY



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ADDISON DAVIS, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

LANNES ROBINSON, DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

INTRODUCTION

The health and safety of our students and our student-athletes is of the highest priority. We understand many of our students are ready to return to their activities, but this must be done with the highest regard to their health and safety.

Making decisions about returning to conditioning, practice and activities is no easy task. Our district takes the recommendations of three authoritative bodies in order to make the best decisions possible for our students, coaches, and community.

Under the direction of the School Board, our district created a Fall Sports Task Force. The Task Force was crucial in developing a comprehensive list of concerns the district would need to address in order to safely return to athletics. Those concerns include:

- ▶ Handling of confirmed COVID-19 cases within a school or team;
- ▶ Sanitizing and disinfecting;
- ▶ Social distancing;
- ▶ Use of facial coverings during practice & activities;
- ▶ Limiting crowds;
- ▶ Use of locker rooms and equipment;
- ▶ Pre/post game handshakes;
- ▶ Equity of sports.

Additionally our district requested and received guidance from the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC). Members of SMAC include health care providers and school administrators who advise the HCPS Athletics Department on health related issues. SMAC also recommends procedures and protocols, reviews athletic processes for safety purposes, and develops safety guidelines for the Athletics Department.

Lastly, our district always takes the recommendations of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) under advisement.

By gathering the recommendations, advice and guidelines from these three groups, our district developed the Fall 2020 Return to Athletics Plan for a safe and successful return to activities.

Respectfully,

Addison G. Davis
Superintendent of Schools

SUMMER PARTICIPATION PLAN

In order to return to activity as cautiously as possible, our district created a Summer Participation Plan that allowed students to return to activity in phases:

PHASE I Return to Activity | June 15 – June 28

PHASE II Return to Activity | June 29 – August 7

PHASE III Return to Activity | August 10 – August 21

This phased implementation approach included athletics, band, JROTC, and color guard. With the start of the final phase of the Summer Participation Plan, all established safety precautions were in place. The safety precautions, implemented by Phase, are outlined below:

PHASE I – STRENGTH, CONDITIONING & FITNESS

With guidance from the Florida High School Athletics Association (FHSAA) our district began Phase I of the Summer Participation Plan on June 15. The focus of this phase was to allow our student-athletes to begin conditioning and strength training. Student-athletes used no equipment and were outside during the duration of activity. The following safety protocols were strictly enforced:

- ▶ Signage was posted prominently indicating no one should attend or participate in practice if they had symptoms or had been in contact with anyone with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis within the past 14 days;
- ▶ No one with a cough, cold, or fever was allowed to participate;
- ▶ Social distancing with 6 feet of spacing was mandated;
- ▶ 15 minutes was scheduled between groups to allow for disinfecting;
- ▶ Equipment was cleaned prior to each session and student-athletes sanitized after each use.
- ▶ No back spotters for weightlifting were allowed (side-spotting only);
- ▶ No spectators;
- ▶ Coaches were responsible for tracking attendance for the purpose of noting potential COVID-19 cases;
- ▶ Groups of 10 max;
- ▶ All student-athletes brought their own water bottle – no water fountains or water cows in use;
- ▶ Locker rooms not available or open;
- ▶ One identified restroom was available with one individual allowed inside at a time.

COVID-19 STUDENT-ATHLETE MONITORING FORM

Before each workout, students were asked a series of questions. Their answers were recorded on a COVID-19 Student-Athlete Monitoring Form. If the answer to any of the questions was yes, the student-athlete was not allowed to participate for a 14-day period. The forms were turned into the Assistant Principal and will be kept on file for 4 years.

Hillsborough County Public Schools
COVID-19 Student-Athlete Monitoring Form

Revised 8/31/2020

		Circle Yes/No Below											
Date:													
Time:													
Team:												Close contact or care for someone with COVID-19	
Student-Athlete's Name		Fever/Chills		Cough		Sore Throat		Shortness of Breath		Recent Loss of Taste or Smell			
1		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
3		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
4		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
5		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
6		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
7		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
8		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
9		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
10		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
11		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
12		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
13		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
14		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
15		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
16		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
17		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
18		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
19		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
20		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Student-athletes must answer the questions above before being allowed to workout/practice.
If the answer is yes to any of the questions, the student-athlete must follow the established HCPS guidelines.



PHASE II – RETURN TO ACTIVITY

With guidance from the FHSAA our district began Phase II of the Summer Participation Plan on June 29. As with Phase I, no sport-specific equipment was permitted. However, more student-athletes could participate in a group and the weight rooms were open for use. The following safety protocols were strictly enforced during Phase II:

- ▶ Athletic facilities only were able to be utilized by student-athletes (stadiums, practice field, track, baseball/softball field, tennis court, weight room, gymnasium);
- ▶ Groups of 40 people maximum, including students and coaches, with social distancing;
- ▶ Groups consisted of the same individuals for each session to limit exposure;
- ▶ All student-athletes brought their own water and towel;
- ▶ Locker rooms not available or open;
- ▶ One restroom available.

Process for Disinfecting Weight Rooms and Equipment

- ▶ Performed daily at the conclusion of training day;
- ▶ The disinfecting process must be performed daily at the conclusion of the last workout session;
- ▶ Before disinfecting, all equipment and touch-point surfaces must be cleaned using the normal cleaning process (no bleach);
- ▶ After cleaning, use the 2-gallon hand pump sprayer to spray the entire room with the provided disinfectant solution. Spray enough to leave a visible sheen on surfaces and equipment so that disinfectant solution remains wet on the surfaces and equipment for 10 minutes to air dry;
- ▶ This is a *No Wipe* process;
- ▶ If any weight room equipment has been relocated outside for training areas, the relocated equipment must be returned to the weight room for the daily disinfecting process.

Process for Sanitizing Weight Rooms and Equipment

- ▶ Performed Continuously and Simultaneously During Training Sessions;
- ▶ During usage of the weight room and outside training area, utilize the disinfectant solution as a sanitizer to clean weights, weight equipment, training equipment, and all touch-point surfaces;
- ▶ Utilize disinfectant solution spray bottles and disposable paper towels to sanitize weights, weight equipment, training equipment, and all touch-point surfaces between sets/ reps;
- ▶ The use of reusable rags is prohibited;
- ▶ Disinfectant spray bottles and disposable paper towels must be located throughout the weight room and outside training area for easy access to execute the process.

PHASE III

WORKOUTS FOR CONDITIONING & SPORT SPECIFIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT

With guidance from the FHSAA our district began Phase III of the Summer Participation Plan on August 10. At this time, our student-athletes were allowed to use sport-specific equipment and schools made locker rooms available. The following safety protocols were strictly enforced during Phase III:

- ▶ All athletic facilities, including locker rooms and the trainer's office are open;
- ▶ Equipment can be used (including balls, nets, etc. but not helmets and shoulder pads);
- ▶ Whole group participation is allowed;
- ▶ The use of water coolers and water cows are allowed (student-athletes still encouraged to bring their own water bottles and towels);
- ▶ Restrooms in the locker rooms available.

Locker Room Procedures for Student-Athlete Utilization

- ▶ No more than 10 people in the locker room at a time;
- ▶ No one other than coaches, staff and student-athletes from home school permitted in locker room. No parents, college coaches, vendors, etc. are permitted;
- ▶ Only one athletic team can utilize the locker room at a time;
- ▶ Multiple sport locker rooms must be divided into sections for each sport;
- ▶ Student-athletes must utilize the locker room strictly for changing and equipping themselves for practice. Change and exit. No standing around, socializing or lying down;
- ▶ Facial coverings must be properly worn while in a locker room;
- ▶ Student-athletes and coaches should maintain a 6 foot distance while in the locker room
- ▶ Sharing lockers is not permitted;
- ▶ Student-athletes must take all personal and school issued practice equipment home daily for cleaning, sanitizing and/or disinfecting;
- ▶ At the conclusion of each practice, the locker room must be disinfected with the disinfectant provided by the District Safety Office.

2020 FALL PRACTICES BEGIN

According to the Florida High School Sports Association (FHSA) the first allowable date to begin fall sports is August 24, 2020. On this date, the following sports will begin practice:

- ▶ Cross Country
- ▶ Football
- ▶ Golf
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Volleyball

SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR FALL 2020 ATHLETIC PRACTICES

All cleansing and sanitation practices used during the Summer Participation Plan will continue to be utilized when fall practices begin. This includes procedures for the weight rooms and locker rooms.

Coaches will continue to ask athletes questions from the Monitoring Form and turn the form in to their assistant principal. That Monitoring Form will help assist in contact tracing should a positive COVID-19 case occur. The following safety protocols will be in place for athletic practices:

- ▶ Athletes will social distance when feasible;
- ▶ Daily cleaning procedures for athletic equipment and locker rooms remain in effect;
- ▶ Coaches are responsible for tracking attendance for the purpose of noting potential COVID-19 cases;
- ▶ All athletic facilities including locker rooms and the athletic trainer's office will be open;
- ▶ The use of water coolers and water cows are allowed;
- ▶ Restrooms in the locker rooms can be used with no more than ten people in the space at a time;
- ▶ Handshakes and high fives are not permitted.



FALL SPORTS CONTESTS BEGIN

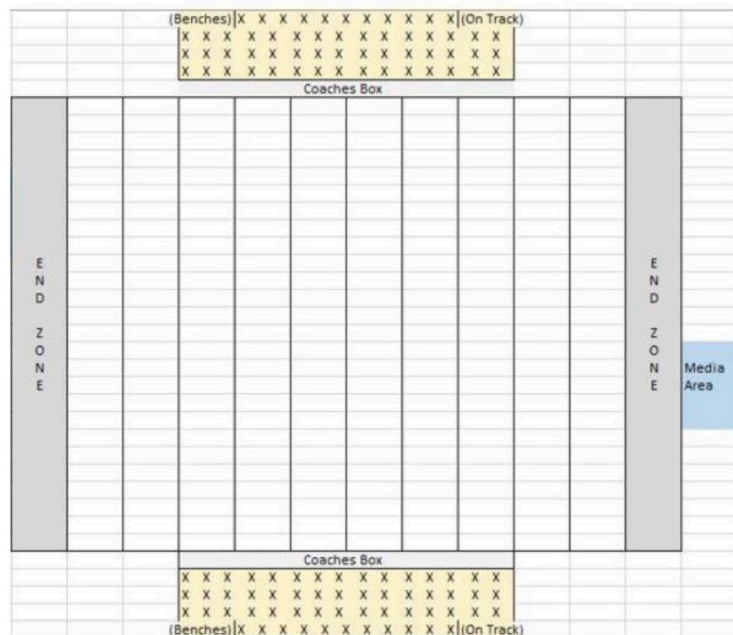
Fall sports competitions will begin September 8, 2020 for Varsity and Junior Varsity athletics. However, fall competitions will look much different this year because of the extra safety protocols in place. Athletes participating in competitions are not required to wear face coverings, however they are always voluntary for any athlete. Athletes on the sidelines or bench must wear a face covering and socially distance when feasible. Only home cheerleaders and band will be in attendance to perform but must maintain social distancing. There will be no pre-game or post-game handshakes permitted.

In 2020, despite the challenges that we face with COVID-19, Hillsborough County Public Schools is offering a full athletic program. Our Fall, Winter and Spring sports are as follows:

FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Cross-Country	Basketball	Baseball
Football	Soccer	Softball
Volleyball	Wrestling	Flag Football
Golf	Cheerleading	Track
Swimming		Lacrosse
		Tennis

Each “X” is for a student-athlete on the sideline or the bench. The media must stay in an area off one end zone opposite of the band for the duration of the contest. In previous years, media was allowed to roam the sidelines but because of COVID-19 precautions, that will not be the case this year.

Athlete Sideline Spacing & Media Area



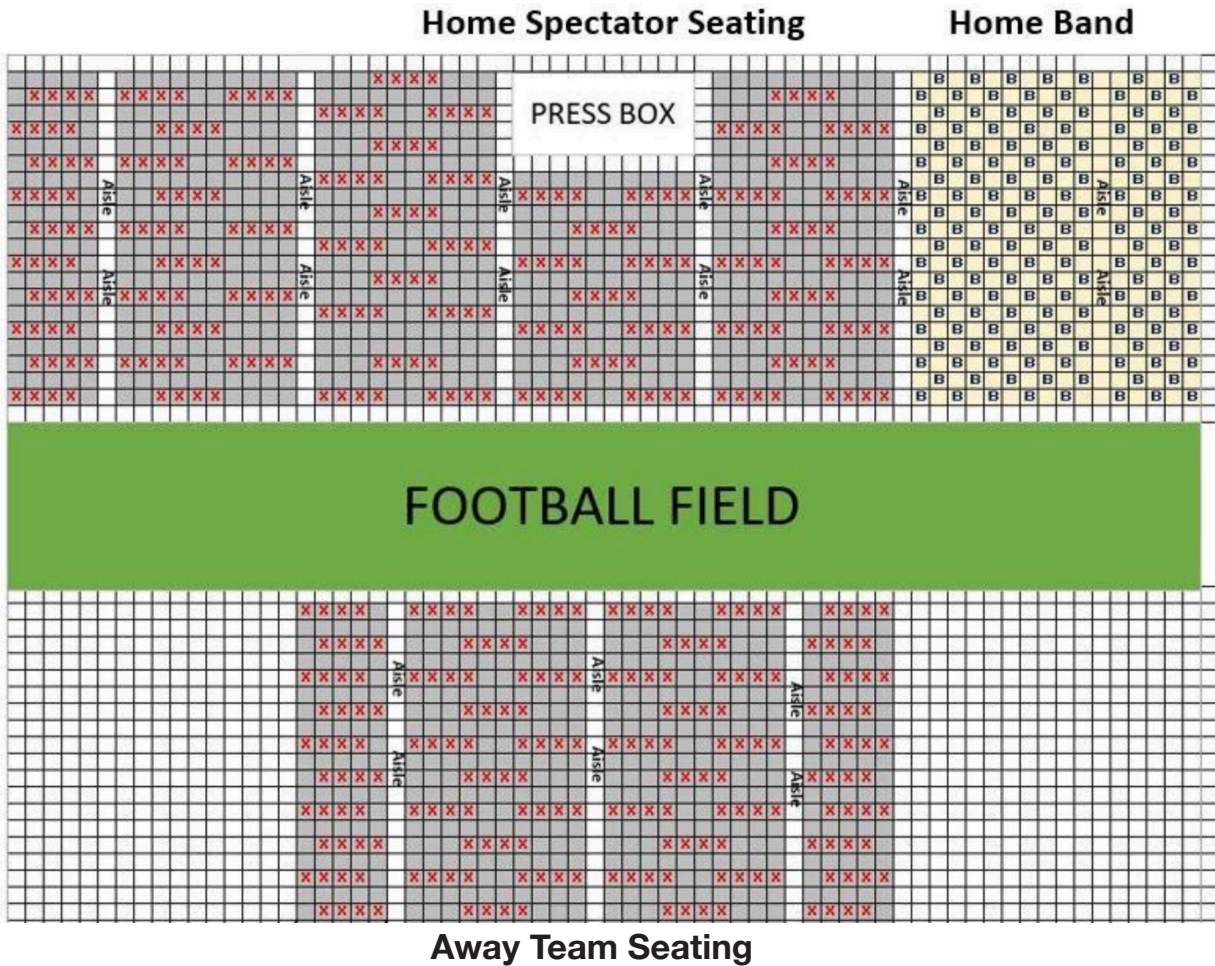
SPECTATOR PROCEDURES FOR FALL 2020 CONTESTS

2020 has caused many changes to what the world knows as normal. One specific change will be with the spectator experience. In an effort to help control interactions and limit the spread of COVID-19, HCPS will alter spectator procedures to allow for spectators as long as safety precautions are followed. HCPS values the hard work of the student-athletes and wants to provide an opportunity for the skill sets of all student-athletes to be put on display. However, due to the current concerns related to the pandemic, limitations must be in place to maintain a safe environment for student-athletes as well as spectators.

- ▶ Masks are required when on HCPS property;
- ▶ Each participant will have the opportunity to identify four spectators to attend home games. These spectators must still purchase their ticket;
- ▶ The participant must submit the names of four spectators before the deadline:
 - For football, the deadline is the Wednesday before the game
 - For volleyball, the deadline is the day before the game
- ▶ Participant's spectator pods will be required to sit together;
- ▶ All home facilities (bleachers, stands, gyms) will be clearly marked to adhere to social distancing; (please see example on the following page)
- ▶ Tickets will be sold online via the school's web page. Tickets are required at the gate in a digital form. Authenticity of the ticket will take place at the gate and admission will be granted. Only names provided by the participant will be allowed to purchase tickets;
- ▶ All spectators will go through security measures at all events;
- ▶ Booster Club cards and Admin passes will be accepted.



PLANT CITY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STADIUM



The above diagram shows Plant City High School’s Football stadium. The darker grey areas are for home and away seating. Each “X” marks the spot where a spectator is permitted to sit. The spectators are grouped in their pods of four and socially distanced from another group. The pale yellow area shows where the home band will be seated. Each “B” represents a member of the band, socially distanced from another member. Only the home band will be in attendance at sporting events.

EAST BAY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM SEATING FOR VOLLEYBALL GAMES



The above diagram shows East Bay High School's gymnasium during a volleyball game. Spectators sit in pods of four, socially distanced from other spectators. Spectators are seated in every other row, keeping half the rows vacant. The athletes will sit, socially distanced, on benches on the opposite side of the court from spectators.

VIRTUAL VIEWING OF CONTESTS

To ensure that our community has access to events, we have partnered with NFHS Network to stream each of our contests live. Cameras have been installed at each school stadium and inside each gym so friends and family members who can't make the game will not miss a single play. All football games and volleyball matches will be streamed.

ANNUAL PASS


\$69⁰⁰

MONTHLY PASS

\$9⁹⁹/MONTH

To subscribe, visit www.NFHSnetwork.com – Search for your school, subscribe and follow.

Schools advertise the NFHS Network independently. Below is an example from Bloomingdale High School of a flyer sent to all families.



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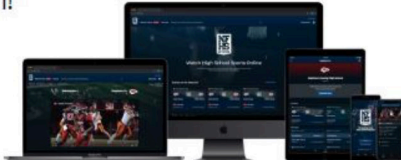
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MARCHING BAND AND GUARD PROCEDURES

Full Marching Band will be permitted to begin practicing on August 24, along with all of our student-athletes. The Marching Band will only attend home games during the fall sports season. Every Marching Band member will have the opportunity to receive four spectator tickets per contest or competition. The recipients of those four spectator tickets will have the opportunity to purchase tickets to the event via the school's website.

The Marching Band and Color Guard must also adhere to the following guidelines and procedures:

- ▶ Marching Band must socially distance at least 6 feet. Some instruments, for example trombones, will need 9 feet;
- ▶ High School Marching Bands/Pep Bands should have a presence at all home football games. High School Bands will not be attending any away games during the fall season;
- ▶ Halftime Marching Band field shows are optional and not required. If on the field, instruments should be pointed to the sidelines/press box and never in the direction of another student ;
- ▶ Marching Band uniforms may be worn on Homecoming and Senior Awards nights. Uniforms must be cleaned after each wearing and collected by dry cleaners the next Monday after the game. Any game where uniforms are not worn, the band's attire should be in an "official Marching Band shirt" (preferably polo) with coordinating matching long pants;
- ▶ Masks are required during the time participants are not performing on the field or in the stands. This includes 3rd Quarter break;
- ▶ National Anthem singers need to perform on the track and not inside the press box;
- ▶ Students should not share instruments including mallets/sticks unless they are sanitized between use;
- ▶ Avoid sharing music folios in the stands;
- ▶ Refer to the following link for cleaning of instruments after use - <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/covid-19-instrument-cleaning-guidelines>.



MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS

Our middle school athletic practices and competitions will begin in the 2nd Quarter during the 2020-2021 school year. There will be no practices or competitions taking place in the 1st Quarter to allow time for middle school students to acclimate to the everyday routine of school. However, a schedule has been created to make certain all middle school sports have the opportunity to compete.

The following chart identifies when each middle school sport will begin its season for the 2020-2021 school year.

SPORT	FIRST PRACTICE	FIRST GAME
Track	October 12, 2020	October 29, 2020
Flag Football	October 19, 2020	November 2, 2020
Volleyball	October 19, 2020	November 2, 2020
Soccer	January 19, 2021	February 1, 2021
Basketball	March 8, 2021	March 29, 2021

Game procedures are in the process of being developed for middle school contests. They will mirror high school contests to ensure consistency. As we launch, our district will continue to follow the guidelines from the Florida Department of Health and will remain fluid while we monitor COVID-19 cases close to the 2nd Quarter of school.

We understand the physical and mental benefits of the athletic programs at our middle schools, but believe it is important to allow our younger athletes to return to school before joining in athletics.

Hillsborough County Public Schools is also in the process of adding athletic programs at three of our K-8 schools: Lutz, Maniscalco and Pizzo.

POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE IN STUDENT-ATHLETE

Any student or coach who is sick, or exhibiting symptoms, should not participate in any activities. If an athlete tests positive, all team members and staff who were exposed to the athlete in close contact should be quarantined for 14 days. Our district's contact tracing team, along with guidance from the Department of Health, will help identify the individuals that need to be quarantined.

The student-athlete who tested positive must:

- ▶ Quarantine a minimum of 10 days from positive test date;
- ▶ Must have completed quarantine and experienced 24 hours fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications and demonstrate improvement in symptoms to begin graduated return to play;
- ▶ Must have physician clearance to begin graduated return to play

CONTACT TRACING & POTENTIAL EXPOSURE

- ▶ All team members and staff who were exposed to COVID-19 positive athlete should be quarantined for 14 days;
- ▶ The need for a full 14 day self-quarantine is due to the 2-13 day incubation period when a person can develop viral shedding and potential symptoms;
- ▶ Close contact is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes;
- ▶ If an athlete is symptomatic and awaiting test results, they will be treated as a positive COVID-19 case until results return.



RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES

Athletes who received a positive test result may begin a graduated return to play no sooner than ten days following a positive test result, having been 24 hours without a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and have been cleared by a physician as outlined in the FHSA, SMAC recommendations.

Our district has created Return to Play guidelines, broken into stages. Each stage should take a minimum of 24 hours. Student-athletes who begin to experience symptoms during a stage should immediately rest until symptoms resolve and may reattempt the stage the following day.

The graduated return to play should be completed under the supervision of a medical provider, such as the school's Certified Athletic Trainer.

RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2A	STAGE 2B	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Light Activity	Frequency increases	Duration increases	Increase intensity	Resume normal training progression	Return to full competition
EXERCISE ALLOWED	Walking, light jogging, stationary bicycle. No resistance training	Simple movements and activities such as drills	Progression to more complex training activities	Normal non-contact training activities	Normal training progressions, no competition	Return to full competition
% HEART RATE MAX	<70%	<80%	<80%	<80%	Normal progressions	Return to full competition
DURATION	<15 minutes	<30 minutes	<45 minutes	<60 minutes	Normal progressions	Return to full competition





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