

Winter 2021 High-Risk Sports Return-to-Play Protocols

This addendum is specifically designed to address local concerns regarding the high risk winter season.

- **On-court/on-field practice length will not exceed 90 minutes in duration.** This is intentionally designed as a precautionary step to preserve the health and avoid injury to the high percentage of two and/or three-sport athletes that will be going without a break from early February through the end of June. This 90 minutes is exclusive of any film, weight room, or meeting time. Total contact with the athletes will not exceed two hours.
- Varsity and JV will not share the same practice space to ensure safety and to minimize risk when possible.
- Practices will not start until 3:15 p.m.
- We will utilize three facilities daily. The available time slots are as follows which will be broken down into 90 minute sessions:
 - **HS Main Gym: 3:00 – 8:00 p.m.**
 - **MS Gym: 3:00-8:00 p.m.**
 - **HS Fitness Center: 3:00- 8:00 p.m.**
- There will be no locker room access. Lobby bathrooms will be available for use.
- Athletes will be required to use hand sanitizer prior to practice. They should be given time to re-apply during the practice. We will have several bottles available in each facility and at the end of practice.
- All athletes will have their temperature checked, must pass COVID-19 screening questions regarding symptoms or new exposure and logged daily into a spreadsheet to be shared with John and James.
- Masks are mandated at all times.
- Med kits will include extra masks, hand sanitizer, and thermometers.
- Equipment is not to be shared, if possible. All equipment should be wiped down once an individual is done using it. This includes all resistance/fitness equipment.
- Balls should be cycled at least once during practice. All individuals should have their own ball as much as possible.

Additional Saratoga County DOH Considerations/Guidelines

These guidelines will be inclusive of the aforementioned guidelines for the Stillwater Central School District

Minimum requirements for high-risk K-12 school sports

- Effective February 1, 2021, and until otherwise indicated, student-athletes are permitted to participate in K-12 sponsored higher-risk school sports, provided that the requirements below are met. Districts/ schools can choose to enact stricter requirements. The Saratoga County Health Department (LHD) and NYSDOH monitor and evaluate COVID-19 data daily and if indicated, the ability for K-12 higher risk sports to occur may be suspended.
- Each school district's Board of Education or non-public school's Board of Directors (or other appropriate person/entity) must approve the district/school's participation in each specific higher-risk sport.
- Each school superintendent/school leader must oversee the creation of a sport-specific preparedness plan that delineates:
 - Athletic Director (Mike Kinney) will be responsible for communicating the plan to student-athletes, coaches, parents, trainers, referees/officials, etc.
 - Athletic Director (Mike Kinney) will serve as a point of contact, should any cases be identified. The coordinator must facilitate and assist with case investigation and contact elicitation and notification in conjunction with the School Covid-19 Liaison (Patricia Morris).
 - A daily system to ensure that no one associated with the practice or competition is ill, including referees/officials and spectators. This may involve a culture change for some teams – the message should not be to play through an illness, but to stay home to protect others. Temperatures should be taken prior to practices and games/contests.
- Coaches will log daily all attending players and coaches in a shared document with the athletic director (Mike Kinney) and assistant building principal (Clint Froschauer).
- Practice times will be staggered to allow for a 10-minute transition to avoid congregation and allow for cleaning and disinfection.
- Separate teams/levels will not practice together to avoid added exposure. Game Day roster sizes will be limited:
 - Boys/Girls Basketball: 12
 - Traditional Cheer:15
 - Wrestling:15
- Sharing of water bottles, towels, snacks will not be permitted, and the use of dedicated personal equipment encouraged. When not avoidable, shared objects and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

- Frequently touched surfaces on the field, court, or play surface will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily, or between uses as much as possible with an approved solution and micro-fiber cloth.
- Indoor facilities will be held in a well-ventilated space. No spectators will be allowed at contests or practices.
- Locker room use will not be permitted.
- Carpooling will be limited to occupants of the same household.
- Each team and level will travel on their own bus to avoid extended exposure.
- Congregate dining will not be permitted. Teams will not stop to eat on the way home and there will be no eating on the bus to or from the contests.
- Coaches will have several hand washing/disinfecting breaks during practices. They will encourage continued disinfecting during games.
- Physical contact among individuals (e.g., handshakes, high-fives) will not be permitted.
- Overnight travel will not be permitted.
- Each sport-specific preparedness plan must be approved by the district/school's medical director.
- Each parent/guardian, student-athlete, coach, manager, referee/official must sign an agreement that a condition of ongoing participation includes full cooperation with case investigations and contact elicitation and adherence to isolation and quarantine orders.
- Each parent/guardian must sign a district/school developed COVID-19 informed consent. While the content of the informed consent must be determined by the district/school in consultation with their medical director.

Factors to be considered include but are not limited to:

- Participation in the sport may expose the student-athlete to COVID-19.
 - Symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can spread the virus.
 - Masking, distancing, and other mitigation measures reduce, but do not eliminate risk.
 - At present, it cannot be predicted who will become severely ill if infected.
 - COVID-19 can lead to serious medical conditions and death for people of all ages.
 - The long-term effects of COVID-19 are, at present, unknown; even people with mild cases may experience long-term complications.
 - There is a significant risk of transmission to those in the home of infected student-athletes.
 - Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk of serious disease.
- Each district/school establishes and disseminates its own confidential phone number and email address to allow athletes, parents or others to report alleged failures to adhere to the obligations reflected in these requirements and/or those in NYS' Interim Guidance For Sports And Recreation During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency.
 - **Stillwater parents and student-athletes can confidentially report any covid-19 concerns regarding athletics to the following email: covidconcerns@scsd.org or by calling 518-373-6167**
- Contact information will be made available to all student athletes, parents and families.
 - Sport-specific preparedness plans, once approved by the school medical director, do not need to be submitted to NYSDOH or SCPHS.
 - A physical with sports clearance and 30 day questionnaire must be on file in the health office. A physical exam is acceptable if it was done in 2018-2019, 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 per NYSED guidance. Any athlete or staff participating in interscholastic sports that tested positive or was presumed positive for COVID-19 must have special clearance before returning to practice. A special clearance form is attached and available in the health office. Exams will not be done in school and must be done through the participants' personal health care provider.
 - Each district/school should keep a log of any complaints and when indicated, report the complaint to NYS.
 - Cloth face coverings/masks that conform to recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must be worn whenever possible by all student-athletes, coaches, managers, referees/officials, spectators, individuals dropping off or picking up student-athletes, etc.
 - It is important that the cloth face covering/mask fits the individual well and is worn over the nose and below the chin at all times when in use.
 - If the cloth face covering/mask is removed for a break, the individual should remain at least 6 feet away from all other individuals.
 - Cloth face coverings must be washed daily in hot water and not reused until cleaned.
 - Coaches, managers, and other school employees will monitor proper use of cloth face coverings/masks and correct improper use, when indicated.
 - The AAP has indicated that cloth face coverings have been shown to be well tolerated by the majority of individuals who wear them for exercise but acknowledges that the coverings may need to be removed under certain circumstances.
 - District/school medical directors should review AAP guidance and other scientific literature for recommendations regarding specific sports where a cloth face covering/mask could pose a hazard and address those in their sport-specific preparedness plans.
 - Boards of Education and Boards of Directors should, in consultation with the district/school medical directors, consider this information when approving individual sports. Individuals with a medical condition that would be complicated by wearing a cloth face covering/mask can apply to the district/school medical director for an exemption by providing appropriate documentation that the condition will be present throughout the length of the sports season.
 - Vaccination status does not alter any requirements.
 - Each district/school agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the county, its directors, officers, employees and agents from and against any and all claims, actions or liabilities of any nature that may be asserted against them by third parties in connection with participation in higher-risk school sports.

- All other guidance in NYS's Interim Guidance For Sports And Recreation During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency must be followed wherever games and practices are held.

Community COVID-19 Metrics

- The 7-day rolling average percent positivity in the county, as calculated by NYSDOH, must be at or below 4.0%. If the 7- day rolling average percent positivity is above 4.0%, then activities must be restricted to individual or distanced group training or organized no/low-contact group training.³
- The region's hospital capacity (percent of hospital beds available) is above 15%, as calculated by NYSDOH.
- The region's rate of hospital admissions must not be unacceptably high or require additional interventions to control the rate of growth, as determined by NYSDOH.
- The absence of other epidemiological data, information or factors as determined or identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) or SCPHS that impact COVID19 control or mitigation.

Ongoing Requirements

- If school is closed for in-person education due to an increase in COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in-person education is resumed; however, this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction.
- Travel will not be permitted outside of Section 2, but is subject to change based on local, county and state guidance.
- Monitoring and enforcement of New York Forward requirements are expected to be performed by districts/schools, as limited public health resources are focused on vaccination efforts, case investigation and contact tracing. Districts/schools must investigate complaints of non-compliance and report findings to the school district's Board of Education or non-public school's Board of Directors or their designee.
- Failure to comply will result in approval for the given district's/school's team being rescinded.

Additional Recommendations

- When and where feasible, districts/schools may consider weekly COVID-19 testing for each student-athlete, coach, manager, referee/official, or other individual associated with the higher-risk sport, unless the individual has documentation of a positive COVID-19 test within the previous 90 days.
 - Testing could be arranged or conducted by the district/school.
 - The district/school must report patient-specific results (positive or negative) to the LHD where the individual resides.
 - The 'home' team should be responsible for arranging for and reporting of results from officials/referees.
- Med kits will include additional cloth masks for players/coaches/officials.
- Student/Athletes and Parent/Guardians will be required to sign the Stillwater Central School District Covid-19 Informed Consent Form before participation will be allowed.
- Participation in multi-team events or tournaments is prohibited.
- If percent positivity hits 4.1 percent or above, the school can elect to participate in testing pilot program, in which 20% of the population involved in high risk sports will be randomly tested two times a week. If they choose not to participate, they would not be eligible to return until (the positivity rate) is 4.0 or below.
- If an athlete choose not to take a test they will no longer be eligible to participate.