



Athletics Health and Safety Plan

The decision to resume sports related activities, including conditioning, practices, and games, is at the discretion of Richland School District (RSD) and its governing body. This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

RSD will take into consideration the necessary precautions and recommendations from federal, state, and local governments, CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), as well as the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). RSD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing. As new information and treatments become available, these recommendations will be adjusted as needed in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, student athletes, and spectators.

Recommendations for **ALL PHASES** for Junior and Senior High Athletics:

1. Student athletes, coaches, and staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check to assess for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap). Hand sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Student athletes are permitted to wear face coverings when not engaged in sporting activity, unless doing so jeopardizes health. Staff members are also permitted to wear face coverings.
4. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
5. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
6. Educate student athletes, coaches, and staff on health and safety protocols. Anyone who is sick must stay home.
7. A plan will be in place if a student athlete or employee gets sick.
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
9. Student athletes and staff members are recommended to provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.
10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed or determined by local/state governments.
11. Identify staff members and student athletes who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions.
12. Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry. See resources for link to this information.

Classification of Sports

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples: football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts).

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football.

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer.

Three-Phase Return to Athletic Participation

Phase 1 (PA State Red)

Team activities may include: no in-person gatherings allowed, student athletes and coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.), student athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Student athletes and coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.).
- Student athletes may participate in home workouts including strength and conditioning.
- Student athletes and coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Phase 2 (PA State Yellow)

Team activities may include: team meetings, open gym, kick around, weight training/conditioning, running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, sideline cheer, and other similar activities.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than 25 individuals (including coaches and spectators) per scheduled field/court.
- Facility may not exceed 50% of total occupancy otherwise permitted by state/local regulations.
- Social distancing should be applied during practices, in locker rooms, and gathering areas.
- During down time, student athletes and coaches should not congregate.

Physical Activity:

- Lower risk sports practices may begin.
- Modified practices may begin for moderate and high risk sports (practices must remain non-contact and include social distancing where applicable, activity should focus on individual skill development).

Phase 3 (PA State Green) after July 1st (or sooner if PIAA allows)

Team activities may include: low/moderate sports may resume, high risk sports (football, wrestling, and cheerleading stunting) may begin full person to person contact and competition.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than 250 individuals (including coaches and spectators) per scheduled field/court.
- Facility may not exceed 50% of total occupancy otherwise permitted by state/local regulations.
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered.
- Sport complexes with multiple fields/courts may operate simultaneous games/practices on fields within a complex only if social distancing can be maintained.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, moderate, and high risk practices and competitions may begin (as per state, local, and PIAA Guidelines) if student athletes have acclimated appropriately to return to sport.
- Follow guidelines to acclimate student-athletes to return to full contact activity.
 - Low risk sports may resume normal activity.
 - Moderate risk sports may resume normal activity as long as they have acclimated accordingly.
 - High risk sports may continue acclimating to normal sport activity.

Screenings

It is recommended families being responsible to complete temperature checks and self-screening daily prior to arrival at a sponsored activity. All student athletes, coaches, and staff members reporting for team meetings, weight training/conditioning, practices/open gyms and games/competitions will need to be screened prior to participating as necessary. Anyone who refuses to get screened will not be permitted to participate or remain at the venue. Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student athlete or staff member develops COVID-19.

RSD's screenings may consist of, but are not limited to:

- Symptom questionnaire
 - Anyone being screened will be asked if they have any symptoms of COVID-19. If they do have symptom(s), questions will be asked to clarify if this is abnormal for them or a new occurrence (i.e. seasonal allergies). Symptoms include: fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea
- Temperature checks
 - Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F and above will need to go home.

- Close contact questions
 - Everyone will be asked if they have had close contact to anyone that has tested positive. Close contact is defined as being within 6ft for more than 15 consecutive minutes, without PPE equipment, of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- The symptom questionnaire and close contact questions will be completed electronically through Google Forms.
- Those exhibiting a fever, report symptoms, or have had close contact with a COVID-19 patient will not meet the criteria to participate in team meetings, weight training/condition, practices/open gyms and games/competitions and will need to be isolated until they can be picked up or sent home.
- Screens will be performed by the athletic trainer, athletic director, administrators, school nurse, or coaches. Those who will perform screens will be asked to sign an accountability agreement. Student athletes will not be permitted to do screenings.
- Once school has started, the screening measures put in place at the beginning of the school day are permitted to carry over to after school activities. Student-athletes should not need to be re-screened before practices/games during that same day.

Social Distancing

- Social distancing should be encouraged when feasible, 6ft at a minimum.
- Gatherings should be conducted within state/local guidelines.
- Consider spacing in the cafeterias, classrooms, weight room, athletic training room, locker rooms, etc.
- Virtual team meetings should take place when possible.
- When at practice or in competition, any unnecessary contact should be avoided, such as handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, or elbow bumps.
- Student athletes should sit every other seat on a bench and should avoid using a dugout when possible. They should consciously stay 6ft apart when not participation in a drill/activity requiring closer contact.

Acclimating to Sport Activity

- Considering the length of time the student athletes have been physically distanced from team activity, de-training is of concern. Coaches should create a safe and appropriate plan to acclimate their student athletes to activity to prevent musculoskeletal injury. Samples of such plans will be provided to coaches as needed.

Hydration

- Student athletes are encouraged to bring their own water bottle to weight training/conditioning, practices/open gyms and games/competitions; no water bottles should be shared.
- Hydration stations can be used but must be sanitized after each practice/during half time of games when feasible. The coolers will be cleaned thoroughly after the game. Hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol) should be used before filling up water bottles when feasible.
- During games, if shared water bottles are used, they must be sanitized before and after the game. RSD will use disposable cups when feasible.
- District water bottle filling stations should be used to decrease unnecessary contact.

Practices/Open Gyms

- Anyone coming for practice/open gyms will need to pass the screening criteria by RSD.
- Equipment should be cleaned periodically before, during, and after practices when feasible.
- Student athletes should take personal equipment and clothing home to be washed and sanitized.
- Student athletes should not share personal equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, etc.)
- Hand sanitizer should be used periodically during practices, as resources allow.

Weight Room Use

- Anyone coming to the weight room will need to pass the screening criteria by RSD.
- Everyone entering the weight room should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, as resources allow.
- Those who need a spotter should utilize two spotters on each side of the bar instead of one standing behind the student athlete.
- Follow local and state guidelines to determine the amount of students permitted in the weight room at a time. It is recommended to designate smaller groups to work out at a time. These small groups should remain consistent and groups should not be mixed to limit the exposure risks.
- At the end of the work out, all equipment should be cleaned and sanitized.

Games/Competitions

Home events:

- Student athletes and staff members will follow the same guidelines for a practice/open gym during home events.
- Officials and other individuals in close contact with the student athletes may be screened if in the yellow phase.
- RSD is not responsible for the screening of visiting teams.

Away Events:

- Once school has started, the screening measures put in place at the beginning of the school day are permitted to carry over to after school activities. Student-athletes should not need to be re-screened before practices/games during that same day.
- The screening that has taken place at the beginning of the school day will be signed off on and available to take with team to event if needed. Depending on other school districts' policies, it is possible that the student athletes, coaches, and staff will need to be rescreened at the event.

All tiers may be permitted at practices and open gyms when in green phase. If in the yellow phase, tier 1 and tier 2 may be the only individuals permitted at games/competitions.

- Tier 1 (Essential): Athletes, coaches, medical staff, officials, security
- Tier 2 (Preferred): Media
- Tier 3: (Non-essential): Spectators, vendors

ImPACT Testing

- Student athletes will need screened prior to entering the computer lab, anyone that does not pass the screening requirements will need to be rescheduled.
- Social distancing should be implemented when considering groups being tested.
- Computer equipment will need to be cleaned and sanitized following testing

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

RSD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose student athletes to unnecessary or potential high-risk exposure.

COVID-19 Illness Occurrence

If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, STAY AT HOME. Should a student athlete, coach, or staff member become ill during practice or game they should immediately be removed from the venue.

- It is recommended that a face mask/face covering be applied if not already on.
- Efforts will be made to isolate the individual from others until the student athlete/staff member leaves the event.
- The parent or guardian of the ill individual will be notified and asked to come pick them up.
- It will be recommended they contact an appropriate healthcare professional and consider getting a COVID-19 test.
- In the event a student athlete or staff member is tested positive, contact tracing should be initiated.
- Student athletes should be monitored for symptoms of myocarditis.
 - Myocarditis is an inflammation of the heart muscle (myocardium) that can occur after a viral infection of any kind and is linked to COVID-19. Myocarditis can affect your heart muscle and your heart's electrical system, reducing your heart's ability to pump and causing rapid or abnormal heart rhythms. Myocarditis can lead to sudden cardiac death.
 - Signs and symptoms of myocarditis include, but are not limited to: chest pain, fatigue, shortness of breath, heart arrhythmia, body aches, fever, joint pain, and fluid retention with swelling of the legs, ankles and feet.
 - If signs and symptoms of myocarditis are present, the student athlete will be required to seek additional cardiac evaluation to be cleared to return to participation.

In the event anyone shows any signs and symptoms of the following they will need to seek emergency medical attention, 911 should be called. Symptoms include, but are not limited to: difficulty breathing, persistent pain or pressure in their chest, new confusion (not related to any possibility of head injury), inability to stay awake, or bluish lips or face

Returning to activity after a positive COVID-19 Test

Those testing positive should provide a written clearance for return to work/activity from their medical provider before being permitted to continue participation. RSD requires this clearance to be from a medical doctor, MD/DO.

Facilities Cleaning

- Daily cleaning/sanitation schedules should be implemented for all athletic facilities including the Sports Center, Ramnasium, Herlinger field, fieldhouse(athletic training room, weight room, wrestling room), softball field, baseball fields, and all locker rooms when feasible.
- When feasible, prior to individuals entering the facilities, hard surfaces may be wiped down and sanitized; including chairs, bleachers, benches, tables, etc.
- Facility and surface cleaning should be done by the maintenance staff. RSD will have routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces including doorknobs, light switches, faucets, toilet handles, counters, desks, tables, phones, keyboards, touchscreens, tables, etc.

Hygiene

Everyone should continue to practice good hygiene. If you are sick, STAY HOME.

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before any event
- Use hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol) before, during, and after events as resources allow.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Consider using face coverings while in public or using mass transit, unless doing so jeopardizes health.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Student athletes, coaches, and staff members are permitted to use masks when indoors.
- Face masks/coverings will not be required to be worn by student athletes participating in practice/competition. However, they may choose to wear one if they would prefer. They may also wear them if they are on the sidelines or not actively participating.
- Spectators are permitted to wear face mask or face coverings while in attendance at RSD athletic events.
- Wearing gloves has not been shown to decrease transmission of the virus. Recommendation is for frequent handwashing and avoidance of touching the face over gloves.
- No one who has a medical condition that prevents them from utilizing a face mask will be required to do so.

Education

Student athletes and staff will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, emails, and social media):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms.
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.).
- No handshakes/celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this document.
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, CDC, NFHS, and PIAA.

Transportation

- Additional transportation vehicles may be necessary to reduce the number of athletes on a bus/van. This will be up to the discretion of the RSD administration.
- Social distancing and proper hygiene should be practiced upon boarding and exiting the bus/van.
- Preparations may be made for limited stops when en route (such as, prepackaged meals)
- If a student athlete, coach, or staff member comes to a practice or game separate from the team they will need to be screened prior to joining the team. If they fail to meet the screening criteria they will need to go home.

Concessions

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

Resources

1. Baggish, A., Drezner, J., Kim, J., Martinez, M. and Prutkin, J., 2020. *The Resurgence Of Sport In The Wake Of COVID-19: Cardiac Considerations In Competitive Athletes* [online] Available at: <<https://blogs.bmj.com/bjasm/2020/04/24/the-resurgence-of-sport-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-cardiac-considerations-in-competitive-athletes/>> [Accessed 24 April 2020].
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3. Cdc.gov. 2020. *Interim U.S. Guidance For Risk Assessment And Work Restrictions For Healthcare Personnel With Potential Exposure To COVID-19*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>> [Accessed 29 May 2020].
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5. Department of Health. 2020. *Contact Tracing*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Contact-Tracing.aspx>> [Accessed 15 June 2020].
6. Department of Health. 2020. *COVID-19 Symptoms And Testing*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Symptoms-Testing.aspx>> [Accessed 15 June 2020].
7. Governor Tom Wolf. 2020. *COVID-19 Guidance For Businesses In The Restaurant Industry*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>> [Accessed 27 May 2020].
8. Governor Tom Wolf. 2020. *COVID-19 Guidance For Sports*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>> [Accessed 10 June 2020].
9. Governor Tom Wolf. 2020. *Process To Reopen Pennsylvania*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].
10. Helder, D. and Cardim, N., 2020. *Return To Play After Covid-19: A Sport Cardiologist's View*. [online] Available at: <<https://bjasm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/early/2020/05/21/bjsports-2020-102482.full.pdf>> [Accessed 21 April 2020].
11. Nata.org. 2020. *COVID-19 Return-to-Sport Considerations For Secondary School Athletic Trainers* [online] Available at: <https://www.nata.org/sites/default/files/covid_19_return-to-sport_considerations_for_secondary_school_ats_1.pdf> [Accessed 1 May 2020].
12. Nfhs.org. 2020. *Guidance For Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities*. [online] Available at: <https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf> [Accessed 19 May 2020].
13. Schellhorn, P., Klingel, K. and Burgstahler, C., 2020. *Return To Sports After COVID-19 Infection*. [online] Available at: <<https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/advance-article/doi/10.1093/eurheartj/ehaa448/5841105>> [Accessed 20 May 2020].
14. Upmc.com. 2020. *UPMC Sports Medicine Playbook: Return To Sports During COVID-19 Minimum Guidelines*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/sports-medicine/documents/return-to-play-high-school-athlete-guidelines-pdf?la=en>> [Accessed 1 June 2020].