

Eve Claar, Athletic Director

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Pioneer Athletic Families:

Balancing the concerns related to the pandemic with the benefits of physical activity, we have conducted outdoor athletic summer training and will open the 2020-2021 fall sports season next week. Football will begin practice on Monday, August 10 followed by all other sports beginning on Wednesday, August 12.

All athletes must be fully registered **before** participation next week. PLEASE SEE **PAGE 4** FOR 3-STEP PROCESS TO REGISTER YOUR STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE. All forms can be submitted online or via email. If you have questions or need additional support, please email Maureen Murrett at murrettm@aaps.k12.mi.us.

The health and safety of our student-athletes and coaches is our top priority. We recognize that participation in physical activity is important to the physical and social emotional well-being of our high school students. We will operate under the guidance provided by the MHSAA. However, for high-risk and moderate-risk sports, AAPS is adding guidance that emphasizes and supersedes that of the MHSAA.

On July 29, the MHSAA posted (mhsaa.com) overall and sport-by-sport guidance that complies with all Executive Orders from Governor Whitmer for fall sports. New competition limits in all fall sports were approved to limit the number of teams and individuals at any one competition site. For now, the concept is for fall competition to take place as locally as possible with no large-scale events, invitationals, or tournaments.

- All low-risk sports to begin practice and competition as scheduled on August 12: golf, tennis, cross country, and swimming. Swimming shall remain outdoors until pools are opened with capacity limitations being followed.
- Moderate-risk sports of soccer, volleyball (pending the opening of school gyms), and field hockey (non-MHSAA) to begin practice as scheduled on August 12, but to delay competition.

High-risk sports of football, cheer and pom will begin on August 10 and will continue under summer guidelines indefinitely.

Under the guidance provided by the MHSAA and informed by the existing - and developing - guidelines/protocols from the health department, all coaches/instructors have participated, and will continue to participate, in training for organizing and leading athletes/participants in athletic training sessions/practices. This training includes written documents that detail the necessary precautions and required guidelines and protocols as detailed by the MHSAA and AAPS.

For AAPS, we shall proceed under the overall and sport-by-sport guidance provided by the MHSAA for **football, soccer, volleyball, swim & dive, field hockey, cheer and pom**, with the following guidance emphasizing and/or superseding that of the MHSAA:

Football: Continue under summer training guidelines indefinitely. Except for helmets, no player pads or equipment are allowed. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. Training sessions shall be limited to 60 participants (including coaches) per training area. There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices. The MHSAA anticipates a decision on competition timelines (to start or delay further) on or by August 20. Following this decision, we will reassess guidance for football.

Soccer: Continue under summer training guidelines indefinitely. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. Training sessions shall be limited to 60 participants (including coaches) per training area. There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices. The MHSAA anticipates a decision on competition timelines (to start or delay further) on or by August 20. Following this decision, we will reassess guidance for soccer.

Volleyball: Continue under summer training guidelines indefinitely. No indoor training. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. Training sessions shall be limited to 60 participants (including coaches) per training area. There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices. The MHSAA anticipates a decision on competition timelines (to start or delay further) on or by August 20. Following this decision, as well as decisions related to opening indoor facilities, we will reassess guidance for volleyball.

Swim & Dive: Continue under summer training guidelines indefinitely. No indoor training. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. Training sessions shall be limited to 30 participants (including coaches) per training area. There shall be no spectators. The MHSAA anticipates a decision on competition timelines (to start or delay further) on or by August 20. Following this decision, as well as decisions related to opening indoor facilities, we will reassess guidance for swim & dive.

Field Hockey: The MHSFHA (state association) has adopted the MHSAA's soccer guidance. Continue under summer training guidelines indefinitely. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. Training sessions shall be limited to 60 participants (including coaches) per training area. There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices. We will wait to hear more from the state association regarding a decision on competition timelines (to start or delay further). Following the next decision of the MHSFHA, we will reassess guidance for field hockey.

Cheer and Pom: Continue under outdoor (only) summer training guidelines indefinitely. All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. There shall be no contact between athletes. Training sessions shall be limited to 30 participants (including coaches). There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices. We will wait to hear more regarding decisions on competition timelines (to start or delay further).

For AAPS, we shall proceed under the overall and sport-by-sport guidance provided by the MHSAA for ***cross country, golf, and tennis***, with the following guidance emphasizing and/or superseding that of the MHSAA:

Cross County: All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. This includes all times before and after training sessions/practices and competitions. Except when engaged in the activity, athletes shall follow all social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements. Coaches, contest management, school administrators, media, spectators, and all staff are required to wear face coverings at all times. No indoor training. Outdoor training sessions/practices shall be limited to 60 participants (including coaches). There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices.

Golf: All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. This includes all times before and after training sessions/practices and competitions. Except when engaged in the activity, athletes shall follow all social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements. Coaches, contest management, school administrators, media, spectators, and all staff are required to wear face coverings at all times. No indoor training. Outdoor training sessions/practices shall be limited to 30 participants (including coaches). There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices.

Tennis: All social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements shall be adhered to. This includes all times before and after training sessions/practices and competitions. Except when engaged in the activity, athletes shall follow all social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements. Coaches, contest management, school administrators, media, spectators, and all staff are required to wear face coverings at all times. No indoor training. Outdoor training sessions/practices shall be limited to 30 participants (including coaches). There shall be no spectators at training sessions/practices.

Additional information:

- The **Michigan Water Polo Association** (MWPA) has moved the boys fall season to spring 2021.
- **Spectator guidance** (from the MHSAA and AAPS) at games/contests will be communicated once limits are finalized by the Governor's office. We will continue to work on guidance for **transportation**, use of **locker rooms** (prohibited at this time), and **concession stands**.

The health and safety of our student athletes and coaches is our top priority. The benefits of physical activity, the care for the social emotional well-being of our high school students, and the risks of participation in athletics will be carefully balanced as we navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to update our parents and student athletes as information becomes available and decisions are made. Until then, we wish everyone a safe start to the 2020-21 fall sports season.

Sincerely,

Eve Claar, CAA
Athletic Director/Assistant Principal