



**BASD COVID-19
Return to Play (RTP)
Proposed First Edition
June 12, 2020**



**Bellefonte Area School District
Athletic Department
Return to Play/Resocialization Plan**

The Bellefonte Area School District (BASD) Athletic Department constantly strives to keep all students, spectators, game personnel, coaches and student-athletes safe during practices and competitions. While researchers are searching and aiming to develop a vaccine, the reality is that the COVID-19 will remain a threat to our public health until one is proven effective.

With no real possibility of stopping the spread, there are ways to limit one's risk of being infected and spreading the virus. This document will use several credible scientific resources and attempt to explain, simplify and mainstream the recommendations. Sources will include but is not limited to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS), the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Administration (PIAA).

RATIONAL: The Coronavirus (COVID 19) is a viral infection that affects the upper respiratory systems of humans and is easily and primarily spread from person to person through either respiratory droplets or possibly from an infected surface and touching your mouth, nose, and/or eyes. Persons infected with the virus can range from asymptomatic to mild to severe including death.

Signs and Symptoms: "may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19." (Symptoms of Coronavirus)

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States in early March 2020 forcing shutdowns of schools and athletics among many other businesses. During this time, people were urged to stay at home to decrease the chances of exposure and the spreading of this previously unknown form of this virus strand of the coronavirus family. While the COVID-19 virus can infect persons of all ages, the most affected age group are: the elderly and those with underlying health conditions or weakened immune systems. Children are often asymptomatic therefore unknowingly passing the virus to others. However, there are a few reported cases of children who do become ill, some suffering severe effects including death.

Understand that while these guidelines below are scientific, no one can guarantee prevention of illness or

injury during athletics/extracurricular participation. This document does not supersede any state or federal guidelines in place for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Appreciate, as the medical and scientific community learns more about COVID-19, these guidelines are subject to change. BASD and its faculty/staff and Drayer Physical Therapy and its staff are not liable for anyone who contracts COVID-19 while practicing, playing or participating in any manner.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORT - the National Federation of High School sports have issued the following classifications of sports.

- “Higher 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: Wrestling, football, boys’ lacrosse, competitive cheer, dance
- 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 OR sports that use equipment that can’t be cleaned between participants.
 - Examples: Basketball, volleyball*, baseball*, softball*, soccer, water polo, gymnastics* (if equipment can’t be sufficiently cleaned between competitors), ice hockey, field hockey, tennis*, swimming relays, pole vault*, high jump*, long jump*, girls lacrosse, crew with two or more rowers in shell, 7 on 7 football
 - *Could potentially be considered “Lower Risk” with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants
- Lower Risk: Sports that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors.
 - Examples: Individual running events, throwing events (javelin, shot put, discus), individual swimming, golf, weightlifting, alpine skiing, sideline cheer, single sculling, cross country running (with staggered starts)” (National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) and Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)).

**Higher/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Lower Risk category with non-contact modifications. Teams activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain physical distancing.

RETURN TO PLAY:

1. Identify high risk individuals to take extra precautions:
 - A.) Student Athletes: identified by pre-participation physicals and self-reporting
 1. For non-mandatory practices when athletic trainers are not on-site, students must self-report any high-risk pre-existing conditions to coaches.
 2. As per the most recent medical evidence recommendations, any student who has previously tested positive for COVID-19 should consult his/her physician for cardiac testing consideration.
 - B.) Staff: identified by self-reporting as needed to the Athletic Director. Athletic Director will inform Athletic Training staff.
2. Education and Updates
 - A.) Students, Parents and Community

1. Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19
 2. BASD Interscholastic Athletics Return to Play/Resocialization recommendations will be publicized via the athletic website for review.
- B.) Coaches and other staff:
1. The athletic training staff or athletic director will conduct a virtual education session for all coaches, staff, and volunteers.
 2. This training must be completed prior to Phase 2 of BASD's acclimatization phases for off-season workouts/activities.
 3. Any coach or volunteer who does not complete the training is not permitted to attend organized workouts/activities until the training is complete.
- C.) The athletic training staff will provide updated information to all as needed:
1. As the medical and scientific community learn more about the disease.
 2. As state and/or federal medical guidelines are changed/updated.
- D.) The athletic training staff, school nurses, athletic director and/or BASD administration will monitor and communicate developments regarding:
- Outbreaks in the community.
 - Updates to BASD policies and procedures concerning COVID-19.
 - PIAA, CDC, Dept. of Education and NFHS guidelines.
3. COVID-19 health screenings:
- A.) Student athletes, coaches, and staff will have to self-report daily.
1. Self-reporting screenings have to be completed by each student-athlete, coach, and staff daily before mandatory and non-mandatory practices.
- B.) COVID-19 specific questions to be asked:
1. Do you have a new onset cough or shortness of breath?
 2. Have you had a fever or felt febrile (having or showing signs of a fever)?
 3. Have you had known exposure to a COVID-19-positive individual?
- C.) Anyone with a self-reported temperature or any self-reporting questions with a positive response will be considered a positive screen. (COVID-19 Screening Form, Appendix 1) That individual should not report to practice and the parent may be contacted.
4. Personal Protective Equipment
- A.) Masks
1. Coaches, instructors, and staff must always wear a mask/face cover unless medically unable.
 2. Cloth face coverings are adequate (surgical or N95 masks, while also acceptable, are not necessary).
 3. The garment should cover both the nose and mouth and allow for unlabored breathing
 4. Students are strongly encouraged to wear a mask when feasible - ex. prior to and during screening, arrival at practice, departure from practice, etc.
 - a. Students are required to wear a mask/face covering when entering the Athletic Training room (because it's a medical facility).
 - b. Students are required to wear a mask after a positive COVID-19 screen.
- B.) Gloves are not recommended as they have not been shown to decrease transmission of the virus.
5. Physical distancing should be practiced when possible (a minimum of 6 feet is best practice)
- A.) Participants should sit at least every other seat on the bench, avoid dugouts when feasible,

and consciously stand six feet apart when not participating in a drill, competition, or activity that requires closer contact.

- B.) Virtual team meetings should take place when possible.
- C.) There should be no unnecessary contact such as hugging, handshakes, high fives, fist bumps or elbow bumps.
- D.) Large social gatherings and mixing of groups during practices is discouraged.
- E.) Staggered arrival and departure times should be used for different teams and smaller groups within teams when possible. Example: One practice ends at Noon; the next group should not report till 12:15 PM. Each coach needs to be responsible for starting and ending practices on time.
- F.) Staff should be limited to essential personnel only - spectators are not permitted.
- G.) The number of students and staff in areas such as cafeterias, classrooms, weight rooms, locker rooms and athletic training facilities should be limited.
- H.) Essential students and staff only at practices.
 1. This includes athletes, medical staff, coaches and appropriate BASD administration.

6. Hygiene

- A.) Wash hands often for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
- B.) Use hand sanitizer, when available, if access to soap and water are not available
- C.) Avoid touching your face.
- D.) Clean your personal equipment daily and do not store in a common area.
- E.) Student-athletes are encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home.

7. Sanitization

- A.) All equipment will be cleaned between each individual use by coaches or designated individuals in accordance with appropriate phases listed below.
- B.) Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment by the individual utilizing the equipment.
- C.) When possible, athletes should not share gear.
- D.) Each athlete must have his/her own water bottle or hydration container that is never to be shared.
- E.) Increase ventilation, such as opening doors and windows, when it is feasible and safe to do so.
- F.) Daily cleaning of all facilities by BASD housekeeping - coaches and athletes will be responsible for equipment cleaning throughout practices.
- G.) All treatment tables and medical equipment in the athletic training facilities will be cleaned between patients by the athletic trainers.

8. Illness Protocol

- A.) Should an individual athlete, coach, or staff screen positive or become ill, he/she will be immediately removed from the group, masked, if not already, and isolated.
- B.) If reported to coach or staff, they are to be immediately notify Athletic Trainer or Athletic Director.
- C.) A parent/guardian will be notified immediately by the Athletic Trainer or Athletic Director.
- D.) It is recommended that a positive screened individual should see his/her primary care physician to either:
 1. Be tested for COVID-19.

2. Obtain a written note from the physician that COVID-19 testing is not warranted and he/she may immediately return to socialization.
 3. If a negative test is obtained or a student is released from a physician, a negative screening is required for an athlete to return to practice.
- E.) If the individual tests positive for COVID-19, contact tracing will be initiated:
1. The Athletic Trainers and Athletic Director will do the contact tracing and notify the school nurse and necessary administration of results.
 2. The tracing will identify those individuals who would have been within six feet of the sick individual for more than 15 minutes while the person was symptomatic or within the 48 hours prior to becoming symptomatic.
 3. Those identified through contact tracing are recommended to seek medical advice, are not permitted on BASD property for 14 days and should be closely monitored for the development of symptoms.
- F.) The COVID-19 positive individuals may return to BASD property and activities:
1. 72 hours after resolution of symptoms, including but not limited to: fever (without the use of fever reducing medications), cough, shortness of breath.
 2. AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 3. AND have a written release from a physician that includes:
 - a. A cardiac screening with at minimum EKG at the discretion of the treating physician.
 - b. Permission to return to full physical activity. *(There is currently more research being done and likely new cardiac recommendations coming out within the next six weeks or so and this may or may not change.)*
9. Student-athlete is required to complete and submit of BASD Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases including COVID-19 to Head Coach before they are permitted to participate in off-season workouts. (Appendix 2) Coaches will turn in paperwork to Athletic Director.

ACCLIMATION PHASES FOR OFF-SEASON WORKOUTS/ACTIVITIES FROM JULY 1 THROUGH AUGUST 9, 2020

Many student-athletes are deconditioned from the quarantine period and therefore it is recommended coaches and staff consider a longer than usual acclimatization period in preparation for the season.

1. PHASE ONE: (Red Phase)

- A.) At least 14 days of isolated conditioning, done at home and as directed by the coach.
- B.) This may be completed prior to July 1, 2020.

2. PHASE TWO: (Yellow/Green Phase)

- A.) No groups of more than 10 individuals at a time per indoor facility.
- B.) No groups of more than 25 individuals at a time per outdoor facility.
- C.) Coaches should coordinate with other teams to ensure staggered arrive and departure times to increase physical distancing.
 1. this should also include staggered times for arrival and departure of the smaller groups within teams (10 indoor and 25 outdoor).
- D.) Coaches are required to take daily attendance for contact tracing purposes.
- E.) Teams should be broken into groups of no more than 10 student-athletes for indoor. These groups should remain constant for the next 2 weeks including coaching and staff members assigned to work with each group. Group documentation is required for contact tracing purposes.

- F.) During this period, student-athletes are permitted to participate in non-contact workouts in their small groups.
- G.) Students are permitted to arrive prepared to practice as locker room facilities will not be available.
- H.) Select restrooms will be available, if needed.
- I.) Masks should be worn by student-athletes when feasible, but not during physical activities ex – prior to and during screening, arrival to practice, departure from practice, etc.
- J.) Masks/facial shield should be worn by the coach, athletic staff at all times inside and physical distancing should be maintained at all possible times.
- K.) Masks/facial shield are optional but recommended for the coaches when outside but if not worn physical distancing must be maintained at all times.
- L.) Spectators are not permitted at practices.
- M.) Multisport athletes are not permitted to participate in multiple sport practices. Coaches should encourage multisport athletes to focus on skill development from home as well as participate in virtual team meetings.
- N.) Team meetings/film sessions must be virtual.

3. **PHASE THREE:** (Yellow/Green Phase)

- A.) No groups of more than 25 individuals at a time per indoor facility.
- B.) No groups of more than 50 individuals at a time per outdoor facility.
- C.) Coaches should coordinate with other teams to ensure staggered arrival and departure times to increase physical distancing.
 1. this should also include staggered times for the arrival and departure of the smaller groups within teams (25 indoors and 50 outdoor).
- D.) Coaches are required to take daily attendance for contact tracing purposes.
- E.) Groups of 10 may be merged into groups of no more than 25 students who can practice full contact (within PIAA guidelines of starting dates). Group documentation is required for contact tracing purposes.
- F.) Students are permitted to arrive ready to practice as locker room facilities will not be available.
- G.) Select restroom facilities will be available, if needed.
- H.) Masks should be worn by students when feasible, but not during physical activity - ex. prior to and during screening, arrival at practice, departure from practice, etc.
- I.) Masks/face shields should be worn by the coach, athletic staff at all times inside and physical distancing should be maintained at all possible times.
- J.) Masks/face shields are optional but recommended for the coaches when outside but if not worn physical distancing must be maintained at all times.
- K.) Physical distancing should be maintained at all possible times.
- L.) Spectators are not permitted at practices.
- M.) Multisport athletes are not permitted to participate in multiple sport practices. Coaches should encourage multisport athletes to focus on skill development from home as well as participate in virtual team meetings.
- N.) Team meetings/film sessions must be virtual.

PHASE FOUR: (Green Phase)

- A.) After the six-week period is complete AND the disease load in the community is declining
- B.) Teams may then combine to the total group for full practices (within PIAA guidelines for

- off-season workouts).
- C.) Coaches are required to take daily attendance for contact tracing purposes.
 - D.) Coaches should coordinate with other teams to stagger arrival and departure times when possible
 - E.) Students will have access to locker rooms.
 - F.) Masks should be worn by students when feasible, but not during physical activity - ex. prior to and during screening, arrival at practice, departure from practice, etc.
 - G.) Masks/face shield should be worn by the coach, athletic staff at all times inside and physical distancing should be maintained at all possible times.
 - H.) Masks/face shields are optional but recommended for the coaches when outside but if not worn physical distancing must be maintained at all times.
 - I.) Physical distancing should be maintained at all possible times.
 - J.) Spectators are not permitted.
 - K.) Team meetings/film sessions may be held in person if physical distancing guidelines are followed.

Additional:

- Coaches will be responsible for the implementation and adherence of these guidelines and must constantly emphasize the importance of personal responsibility, hygiene, and physical distance.
- Dual sport athletes - only participate in one sport at this time. Should not be an issue as it is more conditioning.
- Travel - those coaches and student-athletes that travel outside the green counties or the state of Pennsylvania are asked to report their travel locations and times.

Future considerations:

- Overnight events –
- Athletic Travel – # per bus; pre-screenings
- Hosting competitions -
- Concession Stands -

REFERENCES

- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (2020, June 5). *Process to Reopen Pennsylvania*. Retrieved June 6, 2020 from <https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>
- National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) and Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC). (2020, April). *Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities*. Retrieved June 3, 2020 from https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf
- Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2020, June 3). *Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of K-12 Schools, Volume 1*. Retrieved June 4, 2020 from <https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Safe%20Schools/COVID/GuidanceDocuments/Pre-K%20to%2012%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>
- Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Administration (PIAA) (2020, June 5) Press Release, June 5, 2020. Retrieved June 5, 2020 from <http://www.piaa.org/assets/web/documents/PIAA%20Press%20Release%20-%20Return%20to%20Play%20-%20June%205,%202020.pdf>
- “Symptoms of Coronavirus.” (2020, May 13). *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved June 6, 2020 from www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html.

APPENDIX

Google Form –

BASD Self-Reporting Monitoring Screening

This form is an assessment tool to determine recent exposure to, and symptoms of, COVID-19 to evaluate each coaches, student-athletes, and staff eligibility to come or to return to school. In accordance with the RTP guidelines, all staff, coaches, and student-athletes are required to self-screen daily prior to coming to schools. By coming to campus, you are acknowledging that you are free of all items listed in the self-screening outlined below.

* Required

Email address *

Your email

Please provide your last name. *

Your answer

Please provide your first name. *

Your answer

Prior to coming to school, please evaluate your exposure to COVID-19. Current symptoms include: Cough, Fever of 100.4 F or greater, Chills, Shortness of breath, Muscle pain, Sore throat, Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Loss of taste, or Loss of smell. Have you experienced these symptoms in the last 24 hours? *

YES

NO

Next

If yes, the screen will show...

BASD Self-Reporting Monitoring Screening

Seek medical attention, if necessary.

All coaches, staff, and student-athletes who answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, STOP! Do not come to school. Contact your medical provider. Any staff, coaches, and student-athlete who is currently diagnosed with COVID-19, is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has had direct contact with a person with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis is not permitted to come onto campus and provide a doctor's note clearing them of the COVID-19 Virus.

Back
Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

If no, the screen will show...

BASD Self-Reporting Monitoring Screening

We will see you soon.

All faculty, staff, students, and visitors who answered "No" are able to report to school. If any of the above symptoms develop or worsen after you are already at school, you should inform the trainer and return to your home. PLEASE contact your medical provider. Thank you!!

Back
Submit



**Bellefonte Area School District
Participation Waiver for Communicable
Diseases Including COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a myriad of challenges concerning this contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. Some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the BASD will take necessary precautions and comply with guidelines from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA, to reduce the risks to students, coaches/directors/instructors, and their families. As knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, BASD reserves the right to adjust and implement precautionary methods as necessary to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators. Some precautionary methods in the BASD Interscholastic Athletics Return to Play Recommendations. Guidelines include but may not be limited to:

1. Health screenings prior to any practice, event, or team meeting with participation in the activities being limited and/or prohibited where an individual displays positive responses or symptoms.
2. Encourage social distancing and promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, using hand sanitizer, etc.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
5. Require Athletes and Coaches to provide their own water bottle for hydration.
6. While a mask is not required to be worn at all times, students should bring a face covering each day as it will be required if the student has a positive screen and/or requires evaluation/treatment in one of our medical facilities (athletic training room).
7. Parents/Guardians are responsible for reporting conditions making their son/daughter considered high risk for COVID-19 (high risk conditions are listed on the CDC website and also mentioned below).

By signing this form, the undersigned voluntarily agree to the following Waiver and Release of Liability. The undersigned agree to release and discharge all claims for ourselves, our heirs, and as a parent or legal guardian for the student named below, against the BASD, its Board of Directors, successors, assigns, officers, agents, employees, contracted athletic trainers and volunteers and will hold them harmless from any and all liability or demands for personal injury, psychological injury, sickness, death, or claims resulting from personal injury or property damage, of any nature whatsoever which may be incurred by the Student or the undersigned relating to or as a result of the student-athlete’s participation in athletic programs, events, and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The undersigned acknowledge that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may include a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. The undersigned further acknowledge that they are aware of the risks associated with COVID-19 and that certain vulnerable individuals may have greater health risks associated with exposure to COVID-19, including individuals with serious underlying health conditions such as, but not limited to: high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, asthma, and those whose immune systems that are compromised by chemotherapy for cancer, and other conditions requiring such therapy. While particular recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risks associated with participating in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk of serious illness, medical complications and possible death does exist.

We knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of others, and assume full responsibility for student-athlete’s participation in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic. We willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by the BASD to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. We certify that the student-athlete is in good physical condition or believe student-athlete to be in good physical condition and allow participation in this sport at our own risk.

This form must be signed prior to your son/daughter’s participation in any off-season/in-season activities with

BASD. Sport: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

*Parents/Guardians may view a full copy of the BASD Interscholastic Athletics and Extracurricular Return to Play Recommendations BASD athletics website.