



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

## NEWS RELEASE

### **NFHS Releases Guidelines for Return to High School Marching Band Activities**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: James Weaver

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 29, 2020) —Similar to the guidance released last month for the nationwide reopening of high school athletics and activities, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has announced suggested procedures for a safe return to high school marching band activities.

The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) – a 15-member advisory committee composed of medical doctors, certified athletic trainers, high school coaches and officials, research specialists and state high school association executives – teamed with the nine music educators and administrators on the NFHS Music Committee to produce an eight-page document for state associations to consider when planning a return to marching band participation.

As reopening scenarios vary based on the impact of COVID-19 in individual states, the information found in the guidance document is to be used strictly for consideration and is not a suitable replacement for collaboration with states’ respective Sports Medicine Advisory and Music Committees.

“Marching band is an important activity for millions of students around the United States,” said James Weaver, NFHS director of performing arts and sports and liaison to the NFHS Music Committee.

“As we return to activity, it is essential we find ways to keep our students, directors, adjudicators and spectators safe while engaging in music education and performance.”

Among its “Points of Emphasis,” the document presents well-established social-distancing practices including limiting exposure to respiratory droplets and the use of face coverings by students, directors and adjudicators. Additionally, instituting policies for school closures and canceled events and scheduling contests that reduce travel time are strongly recommended measures.

The return to marching band activities is included under the “Conduct of Conditioning and Rehearsal Sessions” heading of the “Areas to Address” and is detailed in three distinct “phases.” Each phase is broken into four categories – “Pre-Rehearsal/Contest Screening,” “Limitations on Gatherings,” “Facilities Cleaning” and “Hydration” – with recommendations in each category becoming gradually less stringent as the phases progress. Other section headings include information pertinent to preparticipation physical evaluations, mandatory education for AED/CPR and First Aid, contests and athletic training services.

Hygiene-related recommendations, which include washing hands, avoiding hand-to-face contact, frequently disinfecting used items and surfaces, and the wide availability of hand sanitizer are listed in the document’s final sections.

“We are greatly indebted to the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the NFHS Music Committee for their work in formulating this guidance for a safe return of high school marching band activities,” said Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS executive director. “It is important to be clear that this is guidance for individual states to consider as they return to marching band activities this fall. States will utilize the guidance in this document as it best fits their state after consulting with local and state health departments.”

To view the full “Guidance for a Return to High School Marching Band” document, please visit: <https://bit.ly/37dwBuC>.

For additional NFHS Performing Arts COVID-19 Resources, visit: <https://bit.ly/3gZSPVg>.

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The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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