

Updated 3-17-21

WHSAA SMART START SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES GUIDELINES

On July 1, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) released its Smart Start guidance (hyperlink to guidance: <https://edu.wyoming.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Smart-Start-Guidance.pdf>) for reopening schools this fall. The guidance references activities and asks that school districts follow the guidance provided by the Wyoming High School Activities Association (WHSAA). The following document is WHSAA's Smart Start guidance for conducting activities this fall. It is essential to the physical and mental well-being of high school students to return to physical activity and athletic competition.

The following guidance is organized into three categories: (1) Overall requirements; (2) Event requirements; and (3) National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). The content has been vetted and approved by both the WHSAA and the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH). These guidelines are minimum standards. Schools will still be expected to work with their local health officials in determining if further restrictions need to be addressed in their districts. We also understand the ever-changing conditions that exist during the COVID-19 pandemic and recognize that modifications to these guidelines may be required in the future.

(1) OVERALL REQUIREMENTS

These requirements are the intended minimum standards that all athletics and activities should endeavor to implement:

- **Social Distancing**-Each school district will operate student activities in a way that maximizes social distancing, use of face coverings, and appropriate hygiene measures. Except as provided in the most recent state health orders and directives to which these guidelines are subject, for athletics and activities, face coverings **are required** to be worn at all indoor events. **It is recommended that face coverings be worn at outdoor events when social distancing cannot be maintained.** Players and participants should refrain from wearing face coverings during strenuous activity.
- **Screening**-**It is recommended that athletes, participants, coaches, and officials be screened prior to participating in allowable sanctioned sports.**
- **Sanitizing**-Employ enhanced sanitation and cleaning measures (See Appendix II). Some examples of best practice are no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, sports specific equipment (excluding balls), etc.) between students; all students and coaches should bring their own water bottle, **no sharing**; water filling stations may be utilized but must be cleaned after every practice/contest. Social distancing will need to be maintained.
- **Physical exam**-Students must have passed a physical on or after May 1, 2020.
- **Transportation**-Social distancing in transportation vehicles is encouraged and should be maximized. When social distancing cannot be maintained, face coverings will be required.
- **Health Officer Collaboration**-Each school will notify their county health department regarding any event athletes, coaches, event staff, media, spectators, and vendors if the school learns of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 at an event.
- **Cohorts**-Conduct workouts using cohorts of students, with the same students always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.

- **Spectators**-Different households must physically distance from other households while watching events. Except as provided in the most recent state health orders and directives to which these guidelines are subject, face coverings **must always be worn while in the building**. Schools should consider limiting spectators to immediate family members or parents, if required, to allow social distancing and space.
- **Return to Play**-Any WHSAA activity participant who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional, and has written clearance to return to play by both the county health department and an appropriate health care professional.

(2) EVENT REQUIREMENTS

The WDE's Smart Start plan breaks down recommendations into three tiers. Tier 1 being open, Tier II being a hybrid of open with intermittent closures, and Tier III being schools are closed to students. This document also uses those Tiers.

TIER I

- **Screening**-It is **recommended** each school be responsible to screen their athletes, participants, coaches, and other team personnel.
- **Sanitizing**-Proper sanitizing measures will be utilized for all equipment and facilities of the event (See Appendix II). Hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrance of the facility.
- **Social Distancing**-When six feet of separation cannot be maintained, face coverings are **recommended** for everyone except athletes and participants. Athletes and participants may be required to wear face coverings as well, depending on the activity.

TIER II

- **Positive test**-When a particular school has a positive COVID test, the school moves into Tier II and all Tier I protocols will be utilized, plus the following:
- School districts will work with local health officials to determine the appropriate level of participation in activities.
- If allowed to participate, event guidelines will be determined in conjunction with local health and school officials.

TIER III

- When a particular school is in Tier III, all sports for that school will cease until the school district transitions back to Tier II. Once back in Tier II, school districts will work with local health officials to determine the appropriate level of participation in activities.

(3) NFHS

- The NFHS rules considerations will be utilized to enhance social distancing (See Appendix III).

APPENDIX

- I - WHSAA COVID-19 Screening Tool/Monitoring Form
- II – “Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities”
This document is meant to provide general guidance. Schools will be required to follow current health orders and directives.
- III – NFHS Rules Considerations

In cooperation with the Smart Start Guidance, these guidelines are designed to allow Wyoming high schools the opportunity for a safe return to competition. Compliance to these provisions will aid in furthering the benefits activities affords our students.