



## **The Connecticut Interscholastic Conference**

### **2020-2021 Winter Sports Plan**

**Approved 1-14-2021**

*This plan is a fluid document and will be updated as more data, health metrics, and sport specific information become available.*

This document is aligned with the [most recent guidance \(1-8-2021\) from the Connecticut State Department of Public Health \(DPH\)](#) and was reviewed by the CSMS Sports Medicine Committee.

In alignment with DPH guidance for sports, the CIAC winter season may begin no sooner than January 19, 2020, unless determined otherwise. The risk level of sports (low, moderate, high) that will be able to play will be based on DPH guidance. The CIAC's low risk winter sport is swimming. CIAC's moderate risk winter sports are basketball, ice hockey, gymnastics, and indoor track. CIAC's high risk winter sports are wrestling, competitive cheer, and competitive dance. CIAC's risk classifications align with DPH's and the NFHS.

Per DPH (1-8-21), "For moderate and lower risk sports (basketball, ice hockey, gymnastics, indoor track), practices should begin no earlier than January 19, 2021. This includes any team activities that involve group aerobic conditioning, sport-specific non-contact skill development drills, team practices, and/or intra-squad scrimmages." Per CIAC, assuming community metrics continue an appropriate downward trend and athletic activities are not impacting in-person learning, interscholastic in-state competitions may begin no earlier than February 8, 2021.

"For higher risk sports (competitive cheer, competitive dance, wrestling), DPH does not recommend any activities beyond small group conditioning and non-contact skill building for the duration of the winter season." (DPH, 1-8-21)

"In addition, DPH recommends against the operation of traditional large, multi-school indoor track meets for the winter season, as well as any athletic activities involving out-of-state facilities, teams, or athletes at least through the months of January and February. We would like to re-visit the question of out-of-state athletic activities after February at a later date." (DPH, 1-8-21)

In alignment with DPH requirements (1-8-21) for low to moderate risk indoor sports, "All participants, coaches, and officials will utilize a mask that completely covers the nose and mouth, and that is worn directly on the face, at all times including during active play. The latest guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that youth athletes wear cloth face coverings when they are on the sidelines, in the locker room, and traveling as well as during group training and active competition (except in pools or while using certain gymnastics apparatus)." While the CSMS Sports Medicine Committee does not have any data to confirm the necessity or effectiveness of wearing masks while actively competing in interscholastic competition, it recognizes DPH's position and supports the CIAC continuing with winter sports under DPH's mask requirements.


Mask breaks will be instituted in the sports of basketball and ice hockey. In basketball, a one-minute mask break will occur at the first stoppage of play at or after the 4-minute mark of each period. In ice hockey, a one-minute mask break will occur at the first stoppage of play at or after the 4-minute, 8-minute, and 12-minute mark of each period. During a mask break, players will maintain greater than 6 feet of distance and may get water. Mask breaks should not be used as a time out with coaches offering instruction. Additionally, a game official has discretion to stop the game at any point during the contest to address mask concerns. Such concerns may include but are not limited to: a player's mask comes off during play; a player's mask is observed to have slipped below the player's nose; the official is experiencing an issue with his/her own mask, etc.

Players and officials should have multiple masks available during a game. A mask may need to be replaced due to a strap breaking or excessive sweat and moisture buildup. Players and officials are encouraged to change masks as needed during timeouts, mask breaks, or game stoppages so that they can maintain wearing a dry, close-fitting mask that covers their nose and mouth.

In alignment with DPH guidance for sports published on November 9, 2020, the low risk sport of sideline cheer (no stunting, lifts, or tumbling) and exhibition dance (no lifts, stunting, or tumbling) may continue provided participants wear masks and formations maintain 6 feet of distance between athletes.

In determining the status of interscholastic athletic opportunities for the state or an individual school district, the CIAC will reference the State Department of Education’s Indicators for Consideration of Learning Models (<https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/CT-School-Reopening/ddy2-ijgu/>) and the State Department of Public Health’s Average Daily Rate of COVID-19 Cases Among Persons Living in Community Settings per 100,000 Population By Town (<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Data-Tracker>).







Leading Indicator	MORE In-Person Learning	Re-assess strategies to determine appropriate balance of in-person and remote learning (hybrid learning)	LESS In-Person Learning
<b>Number of new cases of COVID-19</b> (14-day average of new cases per 100,000 population per day)	< 10 new cases per 100,000 per day	10 to < 25 cases per 100,000 per day	25+ cases per 100,000 per day

**Reduce Person-Density in School Buildings** 

Secondary Indicators	MORE In-Person Learning	Re-assess strategies to determine appropriate balance of in-person and remote learning (hybrid learning)	LESS In-Person Learning
<b>Percent positivity rate</b> (# of positive tests/ # of total tests, 14-day average)	Secondary Indicators trending down to flat	<u>Direction of Change:</u> Secondary Indicators trending flat to upward	Secondary Indicators trending upward
<b>Number of new COVID-19 hospitalizations per 100,000 population</b> (14-day average)	No statistically significant changes to Secondary Indicators	<u>Speed of Change:</u> Any statistically significant changes upward to Secondary Indicators	Consistent, statistically significant changes upward to Secondary Indicators
<b>COVID-like and Influenza-like Illness (CLI and ILI) Syndromic Surveillance</b>			

\* Originally adapted from: the Harvard Global Health Institute’s publication *The Path to Zero and Schools: Achieving Pandemic Resilient Teaching and Learning Spaces*, July 2020 and revised in consideration of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance document *Indicators for Dynamic School Decision-Making*, updated September 15, 2020

# CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH TOWN-LEVEL COVID RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

	<b>Yellow</b> 5-9 cases per 100k per day	<b>Orange</b> 10-14 cases per 100k per day	<b>Red</b> 15+ cases per 100k per day
 <p>DPH Response</p>	Outreach to Local Health Department	Weekly calls with Local Officials	Issue Public Health Alert
	<b>ENCOURAGE TESTING FOR ASYMPTOMATIC RESIDENTS</b>		
 <p>Individuals</p>	Masks, distancing, extra precautions for high risk	Avoid larger events, limit time with non-family members	Limit trips outside home, avoid gatherings with non-family members
	<b>HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS SHOULD STAY HOME, STAY SAFE</b>		
 <p>Communities</p>	Scale up public awareness, social media	Scale back public events	Cancel public events and limit community gathering points; Reverse 9-1-1
	<b>Scale up public awareness, social media</b>		
 <p>Organized Group Activities</p>	Move activities outdoors where possible	Limit group sizes; Postpone indoor activities where mask wearing or social distancing cannot be maintained	Postpone all indoor activities; Postpone outdoor activities where mask wearing or social distancing cannot be maintained
	<b>Limit group sizes; Postpone indoor activities where mask wearing or social distancing cannot be maintained</b>		
 <p>Pre K-12 Schools</p>	Re-Enforce and monitor safety measures with staff, students and families	Maximize spacing, mask wearing, ventilation and hygiene to support in-person learning	In collaboration with Local Health Department and Superintendent, consider more distance learning above 25
	<b>Maximize spacing, mask wearing, ventilation and hygiene to support in-person learning</b>		
 <p>Business &amp; Sector Rules</p>	Phase 3 with enhanced enforcement	Phase 3 with enhanced enforcement	Municipal option to revert to Phase 2
	<b>REMINDE STAFF TO ASSESS THEIR SYMPTOMS DAILY AND NOT REPORT TO WORK IF THEY ARE ILL</b>		

**CT DPH would like to remind everyone of the 3 W's:  
Wear your mask, Wash your hands, and Watch your distance!**



In consideration of the State Department of Education's Indicators for Consideration of Learning Models (<https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/CT-School-Reopening/ddy2-ijgu/>), the CIAC will proceed with offering appropriate risk categories of interscholastic sports in accordance with direction from the DPH, Governor's office, and CSMS Sport Medicine Committee.

In consideration of the State Department of Public Health's Average Daily Rate of COVID-19 Cases Among Persons Living in Community Settings per 100,000 Population By Town (<https://casci.ac/6211>), schools located in towns color coded as "grey", "yellow", or "orange" may proceed with offering winter interscholastic sports as recommended in this guidance. The CIAC, in consultation with the CSMS Sports Medicine Committee, strongly encourages schools located in towns color coded as "red" to review the COVID climate in that district, with that district's school doctor and local DPH, in consideration of the appropriateness to continue with game competitions. The principal or her/his designee of schools located in towns color coded as "red" must notify their league commissioner and the CIAC whether they choose to continue with game competition. Any member school that elects to suspend game competition may continue low risk non-contact sport specific skill work and conditioning provided that such activity has been approved by school administration, in consultation with local DPH.

The CIAC's rationale for these recommendations is based on its belief that maintaining a safe level of in-person instruction is the primary goal of our member schools and association. While prioritizing considerations that will sustain conditions for in-person learning, the CIAC strongly affirms that the value of structured physical activity is widely supported in research, especially when isolation experiences are increased. As such, when safe, the CIAC will provide the best conference and/or regional sport experiences possible to our member schools. When conference and/or regional play is not supported by COVID metrics, the CIAC will seek to allow member schools to continue engaging their students in low risk school specific activities. Furthermore, when necessary to address spiking COVID metrics, the CIAC will suspend all interscholastic activities for the safety of our students and school communities.

*The CIAC emphasizes that this plan is fluid and in a perpetual state of evaluation. COVID health metrics and data in Connecticut will continue to be closely monitored and the appropriateness of holding youth sport and/or interscholastic athletic contests can change at any time. The CIAC will continue to consult with our stakeholders and will adjust offerings as appropriate, including the suspension of interscholastic athletics, should the health metrics direct that action.*

### **Informed Consent and Educational Materials**

A template for districts to provide informed consent and educational materials to parents can be found in Appendix III.

### **Quarantine Requirements**

Per DPH (1-8-21), "Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published new risk-based guidance and procedures for shortening the required quarantine period for individuals identified as close contacts of a known COVID-19 case. As a result, DPH has revised its guidance as well to include options for reducing quarantine periods in some situations from the traditional 14 days. However, both CDC and DPH have made clear that the ability to end quarantine prior to 14 days is conditioned on a person's ability to continue with daily COVID-19 symptom screening, continuous mask use when outside of the home, as well as avoiding gatherings with people who are not in their immediate household, who are over 65 years old, or who have medical conditions that place them at increased risk for COVID-19. This would preclude gathering with other athletes for engagement in team sports prior to completion of a full 14-day quarantine period."

The following guidance and protocols issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education and State Department of Public Health may be referenced when responding to specific COVID scenarios that may occur with school reopening for the 2020-2021 school year. That guidance and protocols can be found at: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/Addendum-5-Interim-Guidance-for-Responding-to-COVID-19-Scenarios-in-CT-School-Districts.pdf>. If a student tests positive for COVID 19, the school/district must be notified immediately and local DPH must be contacted. The local DPH will direct the appropriate process.

For clarification, it is DPH's position that a return to athletics should include the full 14-day quarantine period. This means that a student-athlete may return to in-person instruction after a shorter quarantine period (i.e., 10 days), however, must wait the full 14-days prior to returning to athletics.

**Guidance On Return-to-Play after COVID-19 Infection (\*Please note the following guidance was developed in consultation with the CSMS Sports Medicine Committee and is informed by AAP COVID-19 Interim Guidelines. While this guidance references a potential gradual return after 10-days, the DPH updated guidance to CIAC requires a 14-day period prior to any return of a COVID-19 quarantined student to athletics.)**

The following recommendations are informed by the AAP COVID-19 Interim Guidelines:

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-interim-guidance-return-to-sports/>

#### **Returning to play after COVID positive test:**

COVID 19 can affect the heart and lungs of the person infected. One uncommon but serious complication of COVID 19 is a heart condition called myocarditis. Myocarditis is an inflammation of the heart muscle (myocardium). Myocarditis can affect the heart muscle and the heart's electrical system, reducing the heart's ability to pump and causing rapid, abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) which can cause cardiac arrest. Exercise can increase the likelihood of permanent heart damage in myocarditis, and also increase the possibility of arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death. Student athletes who have tested positive for COVID 19 should follow the guideline noted below to decrease risk of developing complications from COVID 19 infection.

#### **What to do if a participant had COVID-19 or has it during the season?**

In a covid19 positive child who is either **asymptomatic** or **mildly symptomatic** (<4 days of fever >100.4°F, short duration of myalgia, chills, and lethargy) should not exercise until they are cleared by a licensed medical provider. The licensed medical provider will perform a history with emphasis on cardiopulmonary symptoms and complete physical examination. If this evaluation is normal, no further testing is warranted. The patient may then begin a gradual return to play after 10 days have passed from date of the positive test result and at least 24 hours without symptoms off-fever reducing medications. If the licensed medical provider identifies any new or concerning history or physical examination findings at this visit, appropriate further testing or consultation should be ordered and participation will not be allowed until that testing is completed and found to be normal. Written documentation of medical clearance for return to sport should be provided by the medical provider.

Children with **moderate** symptoms of COVID-19 (≥4 days of fever >100.4°F, myalgia, chills, or lethargy or were in a hospital not an intensive care unit), should not exercise until they are cleared by a licensed medical provider. In addition to a history and complete physical exam appropriate additional testing should be ordered as determined by examination. Consultation or referral to a cardiologist is recommended and they may request further, more extensive, testing. If cardiac evaluation is normal, gradual return to physical activity may be allowed after 10 days have passed from the date of the positive test result, and at least 10 days of symptom resolution has occurred off fever-reducing medicine. Written documentation of medical clearance for return to sport should be provided by the medical provider.

For patients with **severe** COVID-19 symptoms (ICU stay and/or on a ventilator) or **multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C)**, it is recommended they be restricted from exercise for a minimum of 3 months. The student athlete should be evaluated by a licensed medical provider for a history and complete physical examination. In addition, they should be referred to a cardiologist prior to resuming training or competition. In addition to the initial evaluation and work-up student athletes should have a coordinated evaluation at the time of returning to play for final clearance. Written documentation of medical clearance for return to sport should be provided by the medical provider.

A graduated return-to-play protocol can begin once an athlete has been cleared by a licensed medical provider (cardiologist for **moderate** to **severe** COVID-19 symptoms) and feels well when performing normal activities of daily living. The progression should be performed over the course of a 7-day minimum. Consideration for extending the

progression should be given to student athletes who experienced **moderate** COVID-19 symptoms as outlined above. If the student athlete experiences any symptoms of chest pain, palpitations, syncope, shortness of breath or exercise intolerance, during this return to play protocol, they should stop exercise and inform their medical provider.

**The following progression was adapted from Elliott N, et al, infographic, *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 2020:**

**Stage 1: Day 1 and Day 2 - (2 Days Minimum) - 15 minutes or less:** Light activity (walking, jogging, stationary bike), intensity no greater than 70% of maximum heart rate. NO resistance training.

**Stage 2: Day 3 - (1 Day Minimum) - 30 minutes or less:** Add simple movement activities (eg. running drills) - intensity no greater than 80% of maximum heart rate.

**Stage 3: Day 4 - (1 Day Minimum) - 45 minutes or less-** Progress to more complex training - intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate. May add light resistance training.

**Stage 4: Day 5 and Day 6 - (2 Days Minimum) - 60 minutes -**Normal training activity - intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate.

**Stage 5: Day 7 - Return to full activity/participation (i.e., - Contests/competitions).**

**The following schedule identifies start dates and contest dates for each winter sport.**

A list of CIAC staff responsible for winter sport committees can be found in the CIAC handbook

([https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/ciachandbook\\_2021.pdf](https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/ciachandbook_2021.pdf)).

Sport	First Practice Date	First Contest Date	Max. Number of Regular Season Games	Max. Number of Games Per Week	Last Date to Count Tournament	Minimum Number of Games to Qualify	Tournament Experience
Basketball	**19-Jan	***8-Feb	12	*2	League Determined	NA	Mar 15-28
Competitive Cheer	May conduct small group conditioning and non-contact skill building.						
Competitive Dance	May conduct small group conditioning and non-contact skill building.						
Gymnastics	**19-Jan	***8-Feb	12	*2	League Determined	NA	Mar 15-28
Ice Hockey	**19-Jan	***8-Feb	12	*2	League Determined	NA	Mar 15-28
Indoor Track	**19-Jan	Practices only. Indoor/outdoor meets will be considered for March.					
Boys Swim	**19-Jan	***8-Feb	12	*2	League Determined	NA	Mar 15-28
Wrestling	May conduct small group conditioning and non-contact skill building.						

**\*Three (3) games can be scheduled in a week twice during the regular season.**

**\*\*Practices may start no sooner than January 19<sup>th</sup>, however, may start later based on district determination.**

**\*\*\*Games may start no sooner than February 8<sup>th</sup>, however, may start later based on district determination.**

Any equipment that is used throughout conditioning and the winter season must be maintained and sanitized in accordance with the ReOpen CT sector rules for sport: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Aug-14-updates/CTReopens\\_Sports\\_FitnessCenters814.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Aug-14-updates/CTReopens_Sports_FitnessCenters814.pdf)

Home or away games vs. out-of-state or non-CIAC member schools are not permitted for the winter sports season.

Basketball and Indoor Track (if permitted in March) must schedule all contests within leagues. Leagues should create divisions based on geography and play as many games as possible within those divisions.

Gymnastics and Boys Swim must schedule within leagues when possible. Any meets between opponents in different leagues meets must be held virtually.

Ice Hockey must schedule within leagues when possible. If schools need to schedule outside of leagues, distance between schools should be the number one scheduling priority.

Multi team events will not be permitted during the winter season, with the exception of "teams of one" that may compete with their host school.

Student-Athlete Conditioning should be a priority when considering scheduling scrimmages and games. Teams should complete a minimum of 15 days of conditioning prior to their first contest. Conditioning time may virtual and/or in-person and may include partial and/or full team practices and skill work. Teams must have a minimum of 10 days of practice prior to holding a full team scrimmage. Teams may hold a maximum of two scrimmages prior to the first contest date. All scrimmages must be held with schools located geographically close to one another.



## **Basketball**

The CIAC boys' and girls' basketball committee have adopted the following COVID modifications in alignment with consideration issued by the NFHS Basketball Rules. "The modifications outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment." (NFHS)

***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all basketball participants must wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.***

***In basketball, a one (1) minute mask break will be instituted at the first stoppage of at or after the 4-minute mark of each period. During a mask break, players will maintain greater than 6 feet of distance and may get water. Additionally, a game official has discretion to stop the game at any point during the contest to address mask concerns. Such concerns may include but are not limited to: a player's mask comes off during play, a player's mask is observed to have slipped below the player's nose, the official is experiencing an issue with his/her own mask, etc. Players and officials should have multiple masks available during a game. A mask may need to be replaced due to a strap breaking or excessive sweat and moisture buildup. Players and officials are encouraged to change masks as needed during timeouts, mask breaks, or game stoppages so that they can maintain wearing a dry close-fitting mask that covers their nose and mouth.***

### **Return to Competition**

#### **1. Basketball Rules Considerations**

- a. *Pregame Protocol (2019-2020 NFHS Officials Manual, page 16, 1.8; NFHS Basketball Rule Book – 3-4-5)***
    - i. Limit attendees to the referee and the head coach from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
    - ii. All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
    - iii. Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
  - b. *Team Benches (1-13-1)***
    - i. *Social distancing should be practiced when possible. Below are some suggestions.***
      1. Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
      2. Place team benches opposite the spectator seating.
      3. Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
      4. Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.
      5. Limit contact between players when substituting.
      6. Personnel not in the game should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.
  - c. *Officials Table (2-1-3)***
    - i. The host should sanitize the table before the game and at half time.
    - ii. Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes.
    - iii. Limit seats at the table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.
2. Table personnel should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.
- 3. Pre and Post Game Ceremony**
    - a. Suspend the pregame introduction handshakes.
    - b. Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.
  - 4. Basketball Rules Interpretations**
    - a. *Rule 4-1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES***
      - i. Basketball

1. Ball given to officials in the locker room, where it is sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warm-ups.
2. The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.
3. Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the table.
- ii. Face mask coverings are required for all coaches and players.
- iii. Require coaching staff and other bench personnel to wear face coverings while on the bench.

**b. Rule 5-3 Officials Uniform and Equipment**

- i. By state association adoption, long-sleeved shirts are permissible. (5-1-3)
- ii. Officials should not be required to wear jackets during pre-game court/player observation.
- iii. Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
  1. Choose a whistle whose tone will carry inside.
  2. Check the market for choices
- iv. Cloth face coverings should be worn by officials.
- v. Gloves are permissible.

**5. Other Considerations**

**6. *Throw-in***

- i. Official may stand 6 feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.

**7. *Free Throw Administration***

- i. The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.

**8. *Timeouts***

- a. Coaches and teams are encouraged to separate players during timeouts. The court itself can be used to space out players.

**Gymnastics**

The successful completion of this season rests with the underlying premise that students and school personnel remain healthy. To that end, it is imperative that coaches stress with their athletes the importance of remaining healthy and stemming the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands and face, and by following all the guidelines established by their school and team. Coaches should stress the importance of good health practices while they are with the team and when they are at home and in school. This season depends on students remaining healthy and that requires diligence at all times.

***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all gymnastic participants must wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth, except when competing on an apparatus.***

**1. COHORTS:**

- a. A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.
- b. Keep the same cohorts of about 10 kids for the season.
- c. Teams of one, competing at a host school, become part of that school's cohort. (Each team of one does not have to be in a different cohort.)

**2. COMMUNICATION.** It is important for the schools to communicate with each other prior to the meet. Coaches should discuss:

- a. The home team spectator policy (who, if anyone, is allowed in the gym as a spectator)
- b. Bench space
- c. Gym entrance
- d. Space to put bags, clothing, etc.
- e. Locker and rest room availability
- f. Meet procedures for sanitization

3. SPORTSMANSHIP. Sportsmanship standards remain in place as detailed in the “CIAC Class Act” program and the tournament packet for all regular season and post season contests.
  - a. Judges and teams should refrain from shaking hands and maintain a distance.
  - b. If someone is in violation of social distancing norms, that person should be reported to the coach or the most senior supervisor from the home school.
4. UNIFORMS.
  - a. Players should arrive at and leave the meet in uniform. Understand that there will not be locker availability to change before or after the meet.
5. SOCIAL DISTANCING/PERSONAL SANITIZING
  - a. Practice – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day. Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
  - b. Non-coaching staff, coaching staff, and student athletes must wear face coverings at all times while at the site for practices and competition.
  - c. Student athletes must wear cloth facial covering while in the facility and when moving from each apparatus, but not while participating on the equipment as the mask could come off, move, or become a distraction and increase the risk of injury. Cloth face coverings must be worn when entering and leaving the gym but should be stored in the athlete’s gym bag during practice. It is not recommended that face coverings be worn while the athlete is participating on the equipment. The default expectation is that the face covering will be on. A game administrator, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this. Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Coaches and officials may remove their face covering briefly for a “break” at any point during play when they are socially distanced greater than 6 feet. Spectators, workers, and others are required to wear face coverings and they are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.
  - d. Social distancing should be in practice while waiting for a turn on the apparatus or moving from one event to another. Communicate gym policies clearly to participants and parents.
  - e. Everyone should wash and sanitize their hands before entering and leaving the gym and must wash/sanitize their hands between rotations to different events.
  - f. Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
  - g. Benches – No benches should be used during practice. Players’ items should be at least 6 feet apart – see #9 for guidelines on personal items. Benches should be permitted only during competition.
  - h. Practice Area/Competition Site – Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice/competition area. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials. All others (i.e. managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be in the practice/competition area.
  - i. Huddles – Social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained, as much as possible, and face coverings utilized when the coach is communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups. Communicating with smaller groups is preferred.
  - j. Team Handshakes – Athletes shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during or following practices and competitions.
  - k. Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should NOT be utilized.
6. SANITIZING/EQUIPMENT
  - a. Contact equipment manufacturers for specifics on proper cleaning protocols for their equipment. Continued use of disinfectant chemicals may reduce the life of the product. The application of disinfectant chemicals may have unintended results and place the gymnast at risk of injury.
  - b. Remove common chalk bowls. Chalk bowls frequently become talking places for athletes.
  - c. General Equipment –Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following practice. The set-up and break-down of equipment on any given day should be handled by limited individuals.

## 7. COACHES

- a. Communicate guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- b. Conduct workouts in “pods” of same students always training and rotating together on apparatus in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- c. Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- d. Athlete safety is paramount, and coaches should not be restricted from spotting an athlete if necessary, to protect the athlete from injury.

## 8. STUDENT-ATHLETES

- a. Each student is responsible for his/her own supplies.
- b. Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- c. Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.

## 9. GYM BAG SUPPLIES Personal Items – It is recommended that each athlete bring his/her own gym bag for personal items (see gym bag information below). All personal items should remain in the gym bag when not in use. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice.

- a. A close fitting cloth facial covering must be worn when entering the building and anytime you leave the gym.
- b. Warm-up clothing, electronic devices, and other personal items that are used by the athlete, prior to practice/competition, must be placed back in the gym bag before practice/competition begins.
- c. Grips, wristbands, and any braces that are normally used during practices will stay in your gym bag.
- d. Include a travel size spray bottle filled with water to spray your grips. Be sure to keep the spray bottle inside a Ziploc bag in case it leaks.
- e. Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available. There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. The hand sanitizer will be used before each event and when exiting the building. Be sure to have this inside a plastic bag in case it leaks.
- f. Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. Wipes should be used to disinfect your feet – can be alcohol wipes. These will be used when entering, after each event and before exiting.
- g. 1 ½” white athletic tape and any other tape you normally use during practice.
- h. Fingernail clippers – flat edge instead of round because they are for cutting rips
- i. Personal water bottles for drinking– the water fountains will not be in use because of CDC guidelines. Bring two bottles if you think you will drink that much water. All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared.
- j. Your shoes will also be stored in your gym bag, in a separate compartment or bag that is inside your gym bag. Preventing possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag. Additional shoes should also be stored in a separate compartment or bag inside a gym bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- k. A gallon-size freezer Ziploc bag or plastic container big enough to get your hands into. Each gymnast will be given chalk for their personal use. There will not be any shared chalk buckets available in the gym. Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice – before you return to the gym again. Be sure the disinfectant doesn’t contain bleach, it could ruin your bag. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well.
- l. Personal Items – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice/competition.
- m. Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal gym bag when not in use.
- n. Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in the gym bag when it is not being used.
- o. \*\*Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice and before return to practice again. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well.

## 10. JUDGES

- a. Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- b. Don't share equipment.
- c. Follow social distancing guidelines.
- d. Space judges 3-6 feet apart at judging tables.
- e. Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-meet ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- f. Judges and meet personnel must wear cloth face coverings.
- g. Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet) when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach a referee closer than 6 feet at any time.

## 11. PARENTS (A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- a. Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- b. Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- c. Gym bag, water bottle, grips, tapes, pre-wrap, wrist guards, personal chalk bag etc. (See gym bag guidelines) No Individual chalk bags, plastic bins, buckets, or other storage containers should be used and stored in the athlete's gym bag.

## 12. SCHEDULING

- a. Schools must compete within your league. If a school wishes to compete outside of their league it must be a virtual meet.
- b. Schools are allowed to compete more than twice against each opponent. The first three meets vs. the same opponent can count toward qualifying for the state championship.
- c. If an opponent cancels a meet, the remaining school may compete virtually and count their scores toward qualifying for the state tournament.

## 13. IN-PERSON COMPETITIONS

- a. SPECTATORS. The CIAC recommends that spectators should not be allowed. Schools may have varied rules for spectator attendance. It is important to find out what the rules of the school are.
- b. There are no in-season tournaments, invitationals nor out-of-state competitions for the 2020-2021 season.
- c. There will be no New England Championship for the 2020-2021 season.
- d. No more than 2 teams (plus attached teams of one) can compete at the same time.
- e. Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting, all participants will be required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants
- f. Teams will go directly to their first event for announcements and the playing of the National Anthem. There will be no march-in by the teams.
- g. If an athlete chooses to wear a face covering during competition, there will be no deduction for improper uniform. If not wearing a mask during competition, once an athlete completes their routine, a face covering must be utilized as soon as possible and as the athlete approaches other athletes/participants.
- h. Non-competing athletes must be socially distanced and in a designated area not near competing athletes and judges.
- i. Judges should be at least six feet from events, athletes/crowd. Judges workstations will be cleaned in between events.
- j. Runners/score flashers must remain at least 6 feet away from judges/events, will wear protective gloves and will remain with the same judges throughout the competition.
- k. There should be a designated waiting area, socially distanced, for athletes waiting to compete.
- l. Each team should have all floor music on a device and managed by only one coach/athlete (per team).
- m. Athletes should be sanitizing hands prior to and after competing on an event. Coaches/staff should make every effort to clean equipment after each competitor and, at the very least, at the completion of

the rotation, prior to another team using the apparatus. Be aware of drying time of cleaning products so that there is no hazard to the participants.

- n. Post-Game Procedures –Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet Teams and group of players should maintain social distancing and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.
- o. Use of locker rooms will be for rest rooms only with a limit of one person at a time.
- p. Athletes will supply their own water bottles, grips, and chalk. Community chalk buckets/trays will not be available. Athletes are reminded to wash hands after using chalk, prior to putting their face coverings back on.
- q. All personal belongings should be kept in a designated area.
- r. Open warm-up/stretch must be socially distanced from other teams.
- s. Equipment should be cleaned/sanitized between warm-up and competition.
- t. At the completion of the meet, prior to leaving the facility, hand sanitizer should be used by all event participants.
- u. Private gyms must follow DPH and CDC guidelines.

#### 14. VIRTUAL MEETS

- a. The CIAC is recommending that meets be held virtually as much as possible.
- b. For all virtual meets the same judge must judge each of the competing teams. A variation could be that the same judge scores each team on the same event, while another judge scores each team on another event.
- c. There are three suggestions for virtual meets: Video Meets, Hub Meets, or Judge travel meets.
- d. For any virtual meet, competitors must follow the NFHS rules for warm-ups.

#### 15. VIDEO MEETS. Each team takes a video of their competitors and sends it to the judge or posts it online for the judge to score.

- i. Recommendations for taking video:
  - ii. Use two digital cameras, iPads, iPhones for the same performance in case one does not work correctly or doesn't show the entire performance.
  - iii. Practice taking video of performances in the preseason.
  - iv. Put the cameras on a tripod.
  - v. Make sure that the range of the video can record the height of jumps and dismounts. (It needs to record height as well as width.)
  - vi. Make sure music is recorded.
  - vii. Make sure there is plenty of adequate lighting
- b. Posting video - Teams can post the video to youtube.com, zoom, Facebook live, NFHS network or send it via email to the official.
- c. Send the judge the line-up of performers as well as any documents required to score the performance as found in the CIAC Gymnastics Tournament Packet.
- d. The judges are required to score the meet and send the results to the two teams within 24 hours.
- e. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON ETHICS – Competitors can only have one (1) chance to perform each event, in accordance with NFHS rules. There can be no re-takes!** The coach should make this clear to each gymnast. The coach must make it clear as to when each gymnast is performing each event for a score. There can be no restarts, fudging, or re-filming in any way. This is a matter of sports ethics as well as a growth experience for the competitors.

#### 16. HUB MEETS. In a "Hub" meet, all competing schools go to one site. Each school is given a different performance time schedule. The judge is on site and stays for all competing teams.

- a. Two schools (plus attached teams of one) can compete at the same time
- b. Sanitize equipment between each team's performances.
- c. Clearly communicate the schedule and distancing guidelines.
- d. The judge will be paid a full fee for every two teams.
- e. Example schedule:
  - i. 8:00 am Teams A and B perform
  - ii. 11:00 am Teams C and D perform
  - iii. 2:00 pm Teams E and F perform

- iv. 5:00 pm Teams G and H perform
- 17. JUDGE TRAVEL MEETS. In a Judge travel meet the competing teams stay at their own facility. The judge goes to each facility at a different scheduled time or day to score the meet.
  - a. The judge will be paid for a full fee for scoring at each venue.

### **Ice Hockey**

All event attendees including coaches, athletes, rink personnel, athletic trainers and spectators are required to wear face masks. Each facility will provide schools with specific procedures while using the facility, which must be followed.

***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all ice hockey participants will wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.***

***In ice hockey, a one (1) minute mask break will be instituted at the first stoppage of play at or after the 4-minute, 8-minute, and 12-minute mark of each period. During a mask break, players will maintain greater than 6 feet of distance and may get water. Additionally, a game official has discretion to stop the game at any point during the contest to address mask concerns. Such concerns may include but are not limited to: a player's mask comes off during play, a player's mask is observed to have slipped below the player's nose, the official is experiencing an issue with his/her own mask, etc.***

***Players and officials should have multiple masks available during a game. A mask may need to be replaced due to a strap breaking or excessive sweat and moisture buildup. Players and officials are encouraged to change masks as needed during timeouts, mask breaks, or game stoppages so that they can maintain wearing a dry close-fitting mask that covers their nose and mouth.***

### **Ice Hockey Guidelines Players and Coaches**

1. Players' Benches (1-9-1)
  - a. Maintain social distancing as much as possible when on the bench.
2. Penalty Benches (1-10-1)
  - a. Limit to essential personnel and maintain social distancing from personnel and participating players.
3. Team Captains (2-2-1, 2-2-4, and 2-2-5)
  - a. Captains need to maintain social distancing when talking or conferring with a referee.
  - b. Maintain social distance during the pre-game meeting with captains and head coaches.
4. Protective Equipment
  - a. Face masks (3-4-2) - Face coverings are required.
5. Mask Timeout
  - a. A 1-minute mask time out will occur at the first stoppage after the 4-minute, 8-minute, and 12-minute mark of each period.

**Tooth and mouth protectors (3-4-4)** - State associations should develop statements instructing athletes to refrain from the removal of mouthguards while on the playing rink. If mouthguards are removed on the sidelines or bench area, the athlete should use hand sanitizer each time after touching the mouthguard.

### **Considerations for Officials**

1. On-Ice Officials Uniform and Equipment
  - a. Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
  - b. Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
    - Fox 40 Mini
    - Fox 40 Unisex Electronic - 3 tone
    - Ergo-Guard - (3 tone) - orange
    - Windsor - (3 tone) grey

- Check the market for other choices
  - c. Face coverings are required.
  - d. Gloves are permissible.
  - e. Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel, and equipment.
  - f. Bring your own water bottle.
2. Maintain social distancing for meetings with captains and coaches
  3. Essential off-ice officials should maintain social distancing and wipe down workspace before and after the contest.

### **General Ice Hockey Considerations**

1. Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.
2. Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions/pregame meeting.
3. Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands.
4. Maintain social distancing of 6 feet or greater on the bench when possible.
5. Everyone should have his/her own beverage container that is not shared.
6. Cloth face coverings are required for all coaches, team staff, and game administration officials.
7. Gloves are permissible for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
8. Try to limit the number of non-essential personnel who are at ice level and near participants throughout the contest.
9. If available, dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to arrival.
10. Disinfect equipment and uniform after use.

### **Indoor Track**

Indoor track will begin with practices only. Indoor/outdoor dual meets will be considered for March.

All event attendees including coaches, athletes, meet personnel, athletic trainers and spectators are required to wear face masks. ***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all indoor track participants will wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.*** Each facility will provide schools with specific procedures while using the facility, which must be followed.

#### **1. Guidelines for Student-Athletes:**

- a. Each student is responsible for his/her own equipment
- b. Students-Athletes must wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- c. Students must come dressed appropriately to compete in running events. Sweats or other non-essential equipment will not be allowed at the start line.
- d. Hand sanitizer will be utilized at all contests and practices.
- e. Athletes must tell their coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- f. Face coverings must be worn at all time, including during competition.
- g. Each student-athlete must bring his/her own labeled water bottle.
- h. Absolutely no spitting, nose blowing, or other similar action will be permitted in any capacity including or around garbage cans within the facility.

#### **2. Guidelines for Coaches:**



- a. Communicate to your district/school Covid-19 guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents, which should include wellness checks for each practice and competition.
- b. Conduct workouts in “pods” of the same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- c. Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- d. In order to maintain proper social distancing, there will be no coaching boxes for the 2020-2021 Indoor track season
- e. Coaches will be allowed to assist their athletes in setting marks in the following events PV, LJ and HJ. Coaches must leave the area once competition begins.
- f. Coaches must always wear face covering

### 3. Guidelines for Officials:

- a. Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- b. Don't share equipment. Field positions will not be rotated.
- c. Follow social distancing guidelines:
  - Pre and Post Meet conferences,
  - Clerking at the start line,
  - Tabulations and posting of results.
- d. Only electronic whistles will be allowed if needed in an event.
- e. Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-game ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- f. Officials personnel must always wear face coverings

### 4. Events Guidelines:

- a. Student- Athletes are required to wear a facial covering when not actively competing.
- b. SP will enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
- c. To limit contact: athletes will provide their own implements (that pass inspection) and retrieve their own implements after all throws when instructed by an official.
- d. If athletes can't provide their own implements, then it is recommended that implements be sanitized between each use.
- e. LJ, TJ will enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
- f. HJ, PV will enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
- g. The facility will set a measuring tape. The measuring tape will stay on the runway throughout the competition.
- h. To lower the risk of these events, athletes must bring their own tarps to cover the pit. Tarps will be removed and disinfected after each athlete's attempts.
- i. To limit contact, athletes will not share vaulting poles.
- j. Sprint, Hurdle, relay events run entirely in lanes, may use every other lane to assist with distancing.
- k. Blocks should be disinfected after each heat / race.
- l. Recommend not using baskets at the start line for apparel.
- m. Any event not entirely run-in lanes will have a maximum of 10 competitors per heat.
- n. For relays schools will bring their own baton. Competitors must wear gloves.

### **Boys' Swimming**

The successful completion of this season rests with the underlying premise that students, and school personnel remain healthy. To that end, it is imperative that coaches stress with their athletes, the importance of remaining healthy and stemming the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands and face, and by following all the guidelines established by their school and team. Coaches should stress the importance of good health practices while they are with the team and when they are at home and in school. This season depends on students remaining healthy and that requires diligence at all times.

1. Given that a number of schools are lacking a pool to consistently practice or compete; plus the realization that we all should be trying to make this season the best possible experience for kids; please try to be accommodating to other schools who may need some help in getting their kids what competitive experience they can.
2. DUAL MEETS. No more than two teams can compete in the same pool at the same time. Teams of one and coop teams can compete with their host team in dual meets.
3. VIRTUAL MEETS. Teams can choose to compete from a distance by having students perform events at their home pool and then enter their performance times against their opponent. A viable option for leagues is to schedule swim meets virtually to maintain distancing. Virtual meets can be useful in keeping kids separate, providing an option for teams located geographically far from each other, and for giving kids the chance to compete against a greater variety of other teams. Coaches should share times and then score the meet.

Example options for virtual meets:

- a) Each team swims at their home pool. An official goes to each pool. The coaches score the meet.
  - b) The home team swims their events at 3:00 pm (after school). The visitor school goes to the home team pool and swims their events beginning at 6:00 pm.
  - c) Several teams swim events at their own pool. The group of schools score against each other.
  - d) School A and School B have a meet on their schedule in another league. School C, lacking local schools to compete against, swims at their own pool and scores against B and A in a tri-meet or a double dual meet.
  - e) The visiting school only brings their top swimmers (or their seniors) and competes against a similar group from the home team. The remainder of the kids on the teams compete virtually.
1. SPECTATORS. The CIAC recommends that no spectators be allowed. Spectator policy will vary from school to school. It is important to know the spectator policy at the host school and communicate that to parents and fans.
  2. COMMUNICATION. It is important for the schools to communicate with each other prior to the meet. Coaches should discuss:
    - a. The home team spectator policy (who, if anyone, is allowed in the pool or pool bleachers as a spectator)
    - b. Pool deck space
    - c. Building/pool entrance
    - d. Space to put bags, clothing, etc.
    - e. Locker and rest room availability
    - f. How to submit entries at the meet
  3. Sportsmanship standards remain in place as detailed in the "CIAC Class Act" program and the tournament packet for all regular season and post-season contests.
    - a. Officials and teams should refrain from shaking hands and maintain a distance.
    - b. Violations of social distancing norms should be reported to the highest authority from the school at the event.
    - c. Egregious violations of social distancing norms could warrant ejection by the official. The official may give a warning and will inform the coach.
  4. Players should come to the meet in their suit and wearing a sweat suit. **When possible**, students should leave the event wearing their swimsuit and sweat suit. Home teams should make an effort to provide a well-ventilated changing area (rest room, classroom or other secure and clean area) for visiting teams to change out of their wet swimsuits after the meet and maintain 6 feet distance particularly when the weather is cold.
  5. Swimmers and divers should bring a gym bag and keep their clothing, towels, and all personal articles in their bag during the meet.
  6. Home teams should provide a "spill over" area for students who are not entered in the current event. This could be a classroom, hallway, bleachers, gymnasium etc. The purpose is to keep non-competitors distanced from each other and from the opposing team when they are not competing.
  7. DURING THE MEET
    - a. WARM-UPS. Coaches must agree on warm-up procedures. Depending on the time available and number of swimmers, teams may have to adjust within the normal warm-up period to safely distance

athletes as efficiently as possible. Here are some possible warm-up scenarios to consider:

1. Establish multiple sessions for warm-up periods to limit number of swimmers per lane. Restrict the number of swimmers in the competition area. Limit the number of swimmers per lane during warm-up and warm-down periods.
  2. Have the home team warm-up using all the lanes, then have the visiting team warm-up using all the lanes.
  3. Have a warm-up before the meet for swimmers who are in the first set of events. Then another warm-up after diving only for the next set of events. Have a final warm-up after the 500 only for swimmers in the final set of events (realizing that some swimmers will compete in multiple events).  
\*\*\*Any variation of warm-ups that is agreed on by the coaches is fine. Whatever the two coaches agree for a warm-up scenario is OK with the CIAC. It is important to communicate in advance and to inform the officials as much in advance as possible. It is also important to keep kids as separated as possible.
- b. During the national anthem students, coaches, officials, scorers, and all game personnel should maintain 6 ft. distance.
  - c. Lap Counting (2-7-6, 3-4) - Only one person per lane should be permitted at turning end. Home team must pre sanitize the lap counters prior to the meet. Provide hand sanitizer (and gloves) and require lap counters to clean hands and wipe down the lap counters.
  - d. Pre-Meet Conference (3-3-6, 4-2-1d) - Only one coach from each team will be permitted in the pre-meet conference. The referee can use P.A. system to allow participants to hear but keep them properly separated.
  - e. Referee and Starter (4-2, 4-3) - Various rules require interactions between officials, coaches, and athletes. When possible, officials should use alternative methods for of communications include utilization of the P.A. system, hand signals or written communication.
  - f. Notification of Disqualification (4-2-2d, e) - Notification shall occur from a distance via use of hand signals or the P.A. system.
  - g. Meet Officials (4-8, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-13) - Officials responsible for information processing are often located together at a desk/table adjacent to the competition course or in an office/remote location. Develop alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information. Require a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table.
  - h. TIMERS (4-9) – Only one timer per lane. Timers must assemble at the finish of each race, at the edge of the pool within the 6-8 feet confines of the lane that they are timing. Timers should wear facial coverings
  - i. ENTRIES. Submission of Entries to Referee (5-2) - Alternative forms of entry submission can be designed to reduce face-to-face interaction and paper entries. Examples include: (1) centralization of where/how/to whom entries are submitted; and (2) reduction or elimination of certain penalties currently attached to improper entries.
  - j. RELAYS
    - i. Require all takeoff judging from the sides of the pool.
    - ii. Space swimmers apart from one another using marks on the pool deck.
    - iii. Timers and relay takeoff judges should wear cloth facial coverings.
  - k. DIVING
    - i. Alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information will be required.
    - ii. Recommendations include a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table. Create a 3-6 feet space between judges by spacing groups of judges on opposite sides of boards or on one side of the board on a multi-level platform.
    - iii. Limit number of divers during warm-up by creating multiple sessions.
    - iv. Mark the pool deck with tape 6 ft. apart so divers can maintain social distancing.
    - v. During competition, divers may not approach the board until their turn to compete.
    - vi. Hot tubs should not be permitted.
    - vii. Dive order sheets should be posted in multiple areas to reduce number of divers viewing at the same time and to allow them to stay distanced.

- l. Team Seating and Lane Placement - Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool and require the teams to compete in consecutive lanes. (Don't alternate lanes for the competition.)
- m. SCORE TABLE (3-4) Should be limited to essential personnel,
  - i. The score table should be sanitized before and after the meet.
  - ii. Hand sanitizer and wipes should be available at the score table.
- n. FACE COVERINGS Coaches, managers, game personnel and swimmers who are not competing must wear face coverings.

## Wrestling

***In accordance with DPH, wrestling is a high-risk sport and therefore many not engage in any activities beyond small group conditioning and non-contact skill building for the duration of the winter season. In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all indoor track participants will wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.***

***The follow mitigating strategies were proposed and approved if wrestling competitions were permitted. These protocols are left in the document, even though wrestling programs are limited to small group conditioning and non-contact skill building for the duration of the winter season, as a resource for other youth organizations when wrestling competition is permitted to resume.***

### 1. Definitions

- a. Practice Group: Subset of the team numbering no more than 16. Teams larger than 16 will be split into two groups generally by size (e.g., lightweights and heavyweights)
- b. Cohort: 4 similarly weighted individuals who each day and for the season only come in contact with each other. Each group assigned to a specific quadrant on the mat for the duration of their time on the mat.

### 2. Season

- a. Reduced competition schedule
  - i. Wrestlers and teams can only compete twice during the week
    - 1. Scheduled as time and gym space allow between schools
    - 2. Dual meet format only
    - 3. Wrestlers may only compete once in a day (twice in a week)
  - ii. No multi meets of any kind during season
    - 1. Effectively cuts competitive contact in less than half
  - iii. No season individual tournaments
- b. Reduced athlete contacts and practice duration
- c. Winter break in competitions between 12/24 and 1/2 (can be used for make-up events)
  - i. Two practices will be allowed during break
- d. Maximum of 14 dual meets

### 3. Practice

- a. All schools will use a daily screening protocol
- b. Hygiene
  - i. Mat disinfected before practice
  - ii. Mat disinfected between cohorts
  - iii. Disinfecting skin foam, wipes, and hand sanitizer provided
  - iv. Masks worn by all people at all times in environment. ***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all wrestling participants will wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.***
  - v. Workout gear laundered daily
  - vi. Additional equipment sanitized

c. Environment

i. Locker rooms

1. Socially distant
2. Masks remain on
3. At beginning of practice only, go home to shower and change out
  - a. Schools in hybrid
    - i. In person students may use lockers to prepare
    - ii. Virtual students should (if permitted by LEA policy) prepare at home

ii. Mat spacing

1. 40' x 40' +/- practice mat divided (large programs may have and use multiple mats provided same protocol followed)
  - a. 4 15' x 15' quadrants
  - b. 10' buffer between each quadrant
  - c. 4 wrestlers (cohort) drill in each quadrant
  - d. 2 wrestlers (subsets of cohort) "live" in each quadrant

iii. Athletes

1. While on Mat (45 min +/-)
  - a. Practice groups (one on mat, one off)
  - b. Divided into cohorts of 4 permanent partners (day long, year-long), each in their own mat quadrant
    - i. Drilling
    - ii. Live wrestling (no masks only at this time)
  - c. No more than 16 athletes on the mat (4 cohorts)
  - d. No more than 8 athletes on the mat during live wrestling
  - e. Contact
    - i. No more than 12 minutes, total, of live wrestling (masks off)
    - ii. No more than 12 minutes, total, partnered skill drilling (masks on)
  - f. Non-Contact
    - i. 20 +/- minutes instruction and individual drilling
2. While off Mat (45 min +/-)
  - a. Individual strength and endurance training
    - i. Body weight strength training
    - ii. Calisthenics and running
    - iii. No athlete-to-athlete contact
    - iv. Outdoor advised whenever possible

4. Competition Protocols

- a. All schools will use the screening protocol
- b. Hygiene
  - i. Mat disinfected before meet and after every match (two mats recommended to reduce time between matches and total time spent in gym)
  - ii. Disinfecting skin foam, wipes, and hand sanitizer provided
  - iii. Masks worn by all people at all times in environment. ***In alignment with DPH requirements for moderate risk indoor sports, all indoor track participants will wear a close-fitting face mask that covers the nose and mouth.***
  - iv. Competition gear laundered
  - v. Additional equipment sanitized
  - vi. No contact between anyone (scorers, officials, coaches, athletes) other than two specified competitors

- c. Environment
  - i. Locker rooms
    - 1. Home team may use locker rooms to dress into gear (before match only, must go home to change out and shower after match)
    - 2. Away team must come dressed for competition and go home to change out
  - ii. Gym
    - 1. Social Distance enforced (Bench 6-12 foot spacing with coach, on deck athletes, cool down athletes. Remaining team members seated, socially distant, in bleachers. No spectators)
    - 2. Scoring table surfaces, keyboard, writing implements sanitized and assigned to individuals
    - 3. Seating surfaces sanitized
    - 4. Mat disinfected before meet and after every match (two mats recommended to reduce time between matches and total time spent in gym)
    - 5. Masks worn at all times by all present.
- d. Wrestling Match Process
  - i. Weigh-ins
    - 1. To be held in gym 30 minutes prior to start time. Social distance maintained. Officials will observe fingernail and skin hygiene at that time
    - 2. 2 lb. allowance for gear
  - ii. Warm-ups
    - 1. Held behind respective benches or in proximate hallways for a ten-minute period prior to competing
    - 2. Wrestlers may also warm up individually behind bench prior to their own match
  - iii. No more than 20 individual matches may be wrestled in a dual meet
    - 1. Note: there are 14 varsity weight classes, the limit of 20 will allow some JV athletes to compete
  - iv. During a match
    - 1. 6-minute match according to NHFS rules will be conducted with modifications
      - a. No overtime contests (to prevent matches longer than 6 minutes)
        - i. A tie at the end of regulation results in no points for either team
      - b. No contact between official and athletes
    - 2. Conclusion of match
      - a. Wrestlers shake hands
      - b. Official indicates (by pointing) winner of match.
      - c. Winner raises own hand
      - d. Wrestlers leave mat directly to cool down
      - e. Mat is sanitized and next match begins on a sanitized mat
  - v. Injury
    - 1. Match rules regarding injury remain in place
    - 2. If trainer intervention required, trainer to be wearing mask, athlete to be wearing mask
  - vi. End of team competition
    - 1. Score rendered on scoreboard
    - 2. Wrestlers exit venue through different exits (no handshakes lines, etc.)

## 5. Separate JV competitions

- a. Should two teams have large enough squads to field a separate JV competition, they may do so at a different time or place from the varsity match following protocols and athlete season limitations

## **Additional Considerations for a Winter Sports Season**

**Spectator/Fan Attendance** – As an education-based experience, CIAC sports must consider the primary goal of maximizing on-campus learning for all students. Sport complexes and recreation athletic facilities are primarily utilized for sport contests. Conversely, school facilities are used as instructional areas when games are not being played. Due to the variety of facilities used for interscholastic athletic competition, it is difficult to develop a one size fits all regulation. **The CIAC position on fan/spectator attendance is that fans should not be allowed at interscholastic contests or practices.** We understand the complexities of individual districts who use public fields and affirm that the ultimate decision rests with the district; however, the CIAC believes that prohibiting fan/spectator attendance aligns best with the goals of education-based athletics. Any allowance for spectators/fans should align with DECD sector rules. A Shipman and Goodwin legal opinion issued to CIAC concerning public school alignment with DECD fan attendance sector rules is available at a school's request. The CIAC supports the plans established by school districts that direct the presence of adults on campus at this time. Notwithstanding the above, permissible spectator/fan attendance will be governed by local districts' current operating plan.

**Gathering Limitations** – During practice/conditioning, athletes should remain grouped in smaller cohorts for purposes of spread mitigation and contact tracing strategy. Contests should be scheduled within a league/conference to mitigate potential spread and maximize contact tracing capability. When not directly participating in practices or contests, care should be taken to maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet between individuals. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for athletes and coaches. Vulnerable individuals should not supervise or participate in any workouts.

**Facilities** - Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities. Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.). Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place. Consider strategies to prevent groups from gathering at entrances/exits to facilities to limit crossover and contact, including staggering starting/ending times.

**Screening** - All staff and students are required to self-screen for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress, and to confirm temperature below 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The coach or activity supervisor must confirm self-screening by all activity participants upon arrival. Records of self-screening for each person should be recorded and stored (see sample Appendix II). Officials, medical staff, and media should self-screen prior to attending an event. Any person with COVID symptoms must notify school personnel, be removed from participation, self-isolate, and contact his/her primary care provider or other health-care professional.

**Face Coverings** – In accordance with CT DPH guidelines (1-8-21), “All participants, coaches, and officials will utilize a mask that completely covers the nose and mouth, and that is worn directly on the face, at all times including during active play. The latest guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that youth athletes wear cloth face coverings when they are on the sidelines, in the locker room, and traveling as well as during group training and active competition (except in pools or while using certain gymnastics apparatus).” While the CSMS Sports Medicine Committee does not have any data to confirm the necessity or effectiveness of wearing masks while actively competing in interscholastic competition, it recognizes DPH's position and supports the CIAC continuing with winter sports under DPH's mask requirements. Artificial noisemakers such as an air horn or a timer system with an alarm can be used to signal in place of a traditional whistle. (2020 NFHS Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities, 2020)

**Hygiene Practices** - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces. Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place. Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow. Avoid touching your face. Appropriate clothing/shoes should always be worn to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces. Athletes must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home. There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing, or shoes between students. Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible. Athletes should take their equipment home with them and disinfect that equipment each night.

Athletes should arrive at practice and games prepared to participate without the need to use a locker room, to the extent possible.

**Hydration/Food** - All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. Food should not be shared. Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized, except for water bottle refill stations.

**Weight Rooms** - Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment. Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam should be covered. Appropriate clothing/shoes should always be worn in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces. Maximum lifts should be limited, and power cages should be used for squats and bench presses. Spotters should stand at each end of the bar.

**Locker Rooms** – Locker rooms should be used as little as possible. Sanitation of locker rooms should follow CDC guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>). Ventilation in locker rooms is critical to providing a safe environment. Schools should explore efforts that may increase ventilation and decrease exposure to wet environments in locker room settings. When locker rooms are used, consideration of greater social distance (12 feet) should be applied. To minimize exposure, a schedule should be developed when locker rooms are used. When students must use a locker room to change for a practice or game, supervision should be provided to ensure social distancing is maintained and masks are worn. Capacity limits of locker rooms should be established to limit the number of athletes using a facility at any one time and to optimize social distancing.

Indoor sports such as volleyball and swimming should encourage visiting teams to arrive in uniform to limit the use of locker rooms. However, a designated bathroom or locker room should be provided for the visiting team. Schools should follow CDC sanitation guidelines to clean that designated area after the contest.

**Athletic Training Rooms** – Athletic training rooms are essential to providing care to our student-athletes. Athletic trainers will work with athletic directors to establish protocols for the training room, including a schedule for visits by athletes.

**Preparticipation Physical Exams** - In accordance with CIAC bylaws, sport physicals are valid for 13 months. In collaborating with the Connecticut State Medical Society, Sports Medicine Committee, we feel it is appropriate to extend the validation of physicals to 15-months for winter sport athletes, due to the high demand of medical appointments. Yearly sport physicals to assess injury risk and receive health guidance from doctors are critically important. Again, the coronavirus is a health pandemic and students should receive a physical within the 13-month standard when possible.

**COVID-19 Advisory Committee** - CIAC recommends continuation of the established COVID-19 advisory committee within each school/organization which meets regularly before and during each athletic season. The purpose of these committees is to maintain constant communication among leadership, address concerns as they arise, and stay informed on COVID-19 best practices around athletics. Recommended members include school physician, athletic trainer, school nurse, athletic director, one coach (appointed by the athletic director), building principal (or designee), and superintendent (or designee). (See Appendix I)

**Contact Tracing** - As student/youth-athletes return to physical activity, a system of contact tracing and notification should be established in the event that a participant tests positive for COVID-19. In the event that a student/youth athlete tests positive for COVID-19, administration and the local department of health must be immediately notified. The school, athletic team, and student(s) must follow the direction of the local department of health.

**Transportation** - "Schools must consider social distancing requirements when scheduling contests and events for the fall. Social distancing (as required by state or local health department) will need to be maintained during transportation (2020 NFHS Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities, 2020)" and should follow transportation guidelines issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education (



[19/CTReopeningSchools.pdf](#)) and established by local school districts. The CIAC believes that regional play and modified sub-varsity experiences will assist in elevating some transportation issues and make it more feasible for parents to transport their child.

**Game Officials** – Officials should come contests dressed for contests whenever possible.

**Appendix I**

**COVID-19 Advisory Committee**

**Building Principal (or designee):**

**School Physician:**

**Athletic Trainer:**

**Superintendent (or designee):**

**Athletic Director:**

**School Nurse:**

**Coach:**



## Appendix III (Under Review to Update with Most Recent 1-8-21 Guidance)

### NOTICE OF RISKS, INFORMED CONSENT, AND WAIVER REGARDING INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS DURING COVID-19

Given the current pandemic health emergency related to the highly contagious novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”), and following the recommendations of the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) for the continued operation of sports activities for interscholastic youth sports, the [DISTRICT] Board of Education (the “Board”) and the [DISTRICT] Public Schools (together, the “District”) invites students to participate in District-sponsored interscholastic sports during the 2020-2021 winter season under certain conditions and consistent with all applicable rules, regulations, federal and state orders and guidance, and guidance from public health officials related to COVID-19. This Notice of Risks, Informed Consent, [and Waiver] (the “Notice”) relates to students’ optional and voluntary participation in the 2020-2021 season of [SPORT] (“Winter Sports”), which participation is expected to begin on or around [DATE] and continue until on or around [DATE]. The parents or legal guardians (“Parents”) of participating students (“Student” or “Students”) and the Student must sign this Notice and return it to [CONTACT/OFFICE] by [DATE].

#### INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person, primarily through respiratory droplets. Recent data suggest that there can be transmission of COVID-19 through respiratory droplets of those with mild (or no) symptoms or those who do not feel ill. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no) symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include, among other symptoms, fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, headache, congestion or runny nose, muscle or body aches, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. The estimated incubation period is between 2 and 14 days with a median of 4 to 5 days. It is important to note that some people become infected and do not develop any symptoms or feel unwell.

COVID-19 is a new disease and there are limited data and information about the impact of many underlying medical conditions on the risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Severe illness from COVID-19 is defined as hospitalization, admission to the intensive care unit (ICU), intubation or mechanical ventilation, or death.

Among adults, the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. Additionally, adults of any age with the following conditions **are at increased risk** of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19: [cancer](#); [chronic kidney disease](#); [COPD \(chronic obstructive pulmonary disease\)](#); Down Syndrome; [heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies](#); [immunocompromised state \(weakened immune system\) from solid organ transplant](#); [obesity \(body mass index \[BMI\] of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher but < 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>\)](#); [severe obesity \(BMI ≥ 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>\)](#); [pregnancy](#); [sickle cell disease](#); [smoking](#); and [type 2 diabetes mellitus](#). Adults of any age with other medical conditions not listed here **might be at increased risk** for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. As more data become available, additional risk factors for severe COVID-19 may be identified.

While fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared to adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick from COVID-19, and can spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. Children, like adults, who have COVID-19 but have no symptoms can still

spread the virus to others. Most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or have no symptoms at all. However, some children can get severely ill from COVID-19 and might require hospitalization, intensive care, or a ventilator to help them breathe. In rare cases, they might die. Babies under one year old and children with certain underlying medical conditions might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Children with the following conditions, among others not listed here, might be at increased risk for severe illness: asthma or chronic lung disease; diabetes; genetic, neurologic, or metabolic conditions; sickle cell disease; heart disease since birth; immunosuppression (weakened immune system due to certain medical conditions or being on medications that weaken the immune system); medical complexity (children with multiple chronic conditions that affect many parts of the body, or are dependent on technology and other significant supports for daily life); and obesity. **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and partners are investigating a rare but serious medical condition associated with COVID-19 in children called Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).** It is not yet known what causes MIS-C and who is at increased risk for developing it.

While there are now authorized and recommended vaccines to prevent COVID-19 in the United States, there is currently a limited supply of these vaccines and many people will not have been vaccinated by the time Winter Sports begins. In addition, multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been documented in the United States and globally during this pandemic. **Therefore, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. The CDC also advises, among other precautionary measures, that individuals should cover their mouth and nose with a mask when around others; stay at least six feet away from others who do not live with them; avoid crowds; avoid indoor spaces that do not offer fresh air from the outdoors as much as possible, and if indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible; wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available; cover coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily; monitor their health daily; and stay home and isolate from others when sick.**

**Additional information regarding COVID-19 is available on the following websites or upon request from the District:**

- **CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>**
- **DPH website at <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>**
- ***[District policies located at WEBSITE]***

Although the District has implemented certain preventative measures consistent with applicable rules, regulations, federal and state orders and guidance, and guidance from public health officials related to COVID-19, the District cannot ensure that Students participating in Winter Sports and/or their families or others in the Student's household will not become infected with COVID-19. Moreover, the District cannot protect against exposure to or infection by COVID-19 that occurs due to the actions, omissions, and/or negligence of students or others, including District staff members.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE OPERATION OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Due to the rapid increases in community cases in the weeks leading up to the holidays, DPH and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) recommended a “pause” on team sports activities effective November 23, 2020 through January 19, 2021. As of January 8, 2021, DPH continues to recommend a cautious approach to any restart of athletic activities. In a January 8, 2021 letter to the Connecticut Association of Schools - Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Association (the “January Guidance”), DPH notes that this “recommendation is based on what we know (that community transmission rates have been high in our state for several months), what we anticipate (that the combination of increased mobility and holiday gatherings will lead to another ‘bump’ in cases in the first few weeks of January), and unknowns that we think could make things worse (introduction of new virus variants that are more transmissible and may lead to many more cases, hospitalizations, and deaths).”

### ***Operation of Sports***

In “Updated Guidance for the Operation of Interscholastic, Youth and other Amateur Sport Activities during the Covid-19 Pandemic” (revised November 9, 2020) (the “November Guidance”), DPH noted that, at that time, there had been an increase in the number of infections and shift in the age distribution of cases to younger individuals occurring across Connecticut and advised that by their nature of play certain sports are more likely to promote exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 through respiratory droplets. DPH advised sports organizations to pay specific attention to these risks when making a determination whether or not to engage in activities in the coming months, to inform players and parents of the risks of participation, and to be aware of any additional restrictions or requirements from local health departments or other local agencies.

In the November Guidance, DPH agreed that there are real and significant benefits of athletic activity for physical and mental health and well-being for both children and adults. However, DPH also agreed with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and other governing bodies that not all sports are equal in their risk for their potential to spread infectious respiratory droplets, and therefore certain sports and activities have more potential to be conducive to the spread of COVID-19 infections in our communities. In the January Guidance, DPH advises specifically that for **moderate and lower risk winter sports (basketball, ice hockey, gymnastics, indoor track)**, practices should begin no earlier than January 19, 2021, including any team activities that involve group aerobic conditioning, sport-specific non-contact skill development drills, team practices, and/or intra-squad scrimmages. DPH further advises that interscholastic **in-state competitions** should begin no earlier than February 1, 2021 assuming community metrics continue an appropriate downward trend and athletic activities are not impacting in-person learning. For **higher risk winter sports (competitive cheer, competitive dance, wrestling)**, DPH does not recommend any activities beyond small group conditioning and non-contact skill building for the duration of the winter season. In addition, DPH recommends against the operation of traditional large, multi-school indoor track meets for the winter season, as well as any athletic activities involving out-of-state facilities, teams, or athletes at least through the months of January and February 2021.

## **Mitigation Strategies**

In the January Guidance, DPH advises that all participants, coaches, and officials will need to utilize a mask that completely covers the nose and mouth, and that is worn directly on the face, at all times when participating in organized team sport activities, including during active play. DPH notes that the latest guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that youth athletes wear cloth face coverings when they are on the sidelines, in the locker room, and traveling as well as during group training and active competition (except in pools or while using certain gymnastics apparatus). The January Guidance also advises that individuals required to quarantine due to close contact with a known COVID-19 case must not gather with other athletes for engagement in team sports prior to completion of a full 14-day quarantine requirement, notwithstanding any guidance to the contrary regarding the shortening of required quarantine periods.

## **Return-to-Play after COVID-19 Infection**

In the January Guidance, DPH notes that there is the potential, and documented cases, of severe disease complications in people of all ages. DPH notes further that long-term health effects and impacts on organ systems function resulting from even mild or asymptomatic COVID-19 disease is still unknown, although there have been some studies implicating blood clotting and cardiac effects as potentially under-recognized longer-term sequelae. As such, DPH recommends that health screening and clearance requirements for allowing athletes to begin a phased return to activities after COVID-19 infection should incorporate the AAP's guidance for return-to-play and include specific cardiac evaluations. In addition, DPH recommends that parents and athletes be informed of the cardiovascular risks associated with COVID-19 infection and provide informed consent based on knowledge of such risks. For additional information about the cardiovascular and other risks associated with COVID-19 infection, and current guidance from the AAP regarding returning to sports, please carefully review the AAP's "COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports," available at <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-interim-guidance-return-to-sports/>.

For DPH's guidance regarding, among other relevant matters, (1) risks associated with various sports and sports activities (including risk categorizations with associated sports; recommendations for the operation of various amateur sports activities; and risk categorizations for various athletic activities); (2) recommended COVID-19 mitigation strategies; and (3) return-to-play after COVID-19 infection, please carefully review the November Guidance, available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Communications/Guidance/General-Guidance-for-Youth-and-Amateur-Sport-Activities-during-COVID-19-Pandemic>, and the January Guidance, available at <http://www.casciac.org/pdfs/DPHCIACUpdateWinterSports1.8.21.pdf>.

## **INFORMED CONSENT *[AND WAIVER]***

We, \_\_\_\_\_ **[PARENTS AND STUDENT NAMES]**, understand that the Student has the opportunity to participate in Winter Sports. We understand that Winter Sports will take place ***[both on and off]*** District grounds and will be provided consistent with current applicable health and safety guidance from federal, state, and local authorities. We understand that the choice to have

the Student participate in Winter Sports is voluntary. Before the Student will be permitted to participate in Winter Sports, the District requires that we read the information in this Notice (including the information contained in the websites cited herein) and sign below to ensure that we are informed of and understand the risks related to COVID-19 associated with participating in Winter Sports.

**In signing below, the Parents attest that we are the parent/guardian of the above-named Student, and the Parents and Student attest that we have read the Notice and the websites cited herein and understand the risks related to COVID-19 associated with participating in Winter Sports. We further understand that there are cardiovascular and other health and safety risks associated with returning to athletic activities after COVID-19 infection. We also acknowledge that the health and safety risks posed by COVID-19 cannot be completely eliminated, despite the implementation of reasonable and age-appropriate precautions and protocols. We further understand that because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the risk of transmission inherent in [SPORT], DPH and NFHS have categorized [SPORT] as a “[RISK CATEGORY]” sport. We further understand that there may be risks to the Student associated with adhering to certain mitigation strategies recommended and/or required by DPH and required by the District, such as wearing a face covering mask that completely covers the nose and mouth, including during active play. Finally, given the unknown nature of COVID-19, we understand that it is not possible to list each and every specific risk associated with COVID-19 and that neither the District nor public health officials can guarantee that any student participating in Winter Sports or other in-person activities will not come into contact with someone infected by COVID-19 and/or contract such illness.**

By opting to allow the Student to participate in Winter Sports, we agree that the Parents and the Student will abide by any such health and safety protocols that the District may require, such as requiring students to wear face covering masks that completely cover the nose and mouth (including during active play) and adhering to any quarantine periods required by the District. We understand that promoting public health is a shared responsibility and that every member of the District community must do his/her part to minimize risks.

In consideration for being allowed to participate in Winter Sports, we fully **ASSUME ALL RISKS**, inherent and otherwise, whether or not described above, in connection with the Student’s participation in Winter Sports, **[OPTIONAL WAIVER LANGUAGE: and waive the right to initiate and/or pursue in any manner any and all lawsuits and any other claims in any forum against the Board, its board members, officers, employees, agents, contractors, and/or the District, and assigns (the “Released Parties”) for any injury or harm connected to the Student’s participation in Winter Sports. These agreements of assumption of risks and waiver do NOT apply if (1) the liability, damage, loss or injury is CAUSED SOLELY BY THE NEGLIGENCE of the Released Parties and do not include the negligence or any other act or omission by any other person or entity (such as the Student, the Parents, other student athletes, other third parties or independent vendors/contractors); or (2) the liability, damage, loss or injury is CAUSED BY THE RECKLESS, WANTON or INTENTIONAL MISCONDUCT of a Released Party.]** These agreements of assumption of risks **[and waiver]** will be construed in accordance with Connecticut law.



**WE HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE NOTICE ABOVE (INCLUDING THE INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 AND THE OPERATION OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC) AND CONSENT TO THE STUDENT PARTICIPATING IN WINTER SPORTS DURING THE 2020-2021 WINTER SEASON.**

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Parent/Legal Guardian signature

Date

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Parent/Legal Guardian signature

Date

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Student signature

Date