

## **Peters Township School District Resocialization of Extra-Curricular Procedures**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented all School Districts with countless challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), among others, has found that while children can be infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests that there are steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, staff, and community.

The Peters Township School District will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), as well as the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) to safeguard the participants and staff of our athletic and extra-curricular programs. The Peters Township School District realizes knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, as new information and treatments become available. The recommendations below will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our students, staff, and community.

This document will provide guidance for Pre-Season Athletic Events using the information that was released from CDC, PDE, DOH, NFHS, and PIAA. Once more guidance is available, this document will include more specific information for marching band and other extra-curricular activities. Modification of this document will take place prior to the start of the Fall Season and the return of students based on the release of any new guidance.

### **MANDATES**

The following is mandatory for **all phases** for Middle School and High School Extra-Curricular Athletics and Activities during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. All student athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, and staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or meeting.
  - a. The purpose of the health screening is to check each individual for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
  - b. This health screening will involve temperature check and COVID-19 questions.

- c. The location of this health screening will be announced prior to the practice or event
2. Coaches and activity sponsors shall promote healthy hygiene practices to limit the spread of COVID-19 including:
  - a. Hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) shall be required prior to and following team activities.
  - b. Students and participants shall wear a face covering (masks or face shields) when feasible.
    - i. Face coverings will be required prior to and following team activities.
    - ii. Face coverings will not be required for athletes while practicing or competing.
    - iii. When not engaged in vigorous activities, students must wear face coverings.
  - c. Coaches, activity sponsors, and other adult personnel shall wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times, unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
  - d. Frequent use of hand sanitizer.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Coaches and activity sponsors shall ensure that participants encourage social distancing (6 feet apart) through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, when feasible.
5. Prior to any team in-person event, educate athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, and staff on health and safety protocols.
  - a. These protocols include:
    - i. Information about the COVID-19 health screening,
    - ii. Promoting healthy hygiene,
    - iii. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if COVID-19 is suspected in an individual,
    - iv. Review social distancing,
    - v. Review facility entrance and exit plans, and
    - vi. Review hydration plans.
6. Require that anyone who is sick to stay home.
7. Follow the plan (found later in this document) for a student or employee who gets sick.
8. The administration will regularly communicate and monitor developments with state and local authorities, coaches, sponsors, staff, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
9. Athletes, participants, coaches, and activity sponsors **MUST** provide their own water and water bottle for hydration. Water bottles are not permitted to be shared. Disposable cups will not be provided. Water fountains and water buffaloes shall not be used.
10. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by state and local government/agencies. These items include gloves, face masks, and eye protection.

11. Students' caregivers should identify their children, and the District's primary contact should identify their staff, who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions such as:
  - Age 65 or older,
  - Lung disease, moderate-severe asthma,
  - Serious heart conditions,
  - May be immunocompromised,
  - Obesity,
  - Diabetes, and/or
  - Kidney or liver disease.
12. Parents and students must complete and return a participation waiver for communicable diseases including COVID-19 to participate in athletics or extra-curricular activities. (Attachment)

### **PHASE 1 (Pennsylvania Yellow Phase)**

- All school facilities must remain closed as per Pennsylvania Guidelines.
- Students and coaches/sponsors may communicate via online meetings (CANVAS).
- Students are encouraged to participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.
- Athletes, participants, coaches, and activity sponsors should follow all guidelines set forth by the state and local governments/agencies.

### **PHASE 2 (Pennsylvania Green Phase)**

#### **Pre-workout/Pre-meeting Screening**

- All staff and students will be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to any workout or event. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
  - Screenings will include:
    - Temperature check (using a handheld temperature device) and
    - Asking questions to each person for COVID-19 symptoms. The responses to the questions will be recorded and stored to provide a record.
- Attendance will be recorded for potential contact tracing.
- If individuals participating in extra-curricular activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they must be immediately sent home.
- Any individual with suspected positive COVID-19 symptoms shall not be allowed to take part in any in-person team activity.
  - Students will need to contact parents/guardians for immediate pick-up.
  - Parents should contact their primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional for guidance.
- The Pandemic Coordinator and school nurse will be notified.

### **Limitations on Gatherings**

- Staff and students must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times possible, including in the field of play, meeting locations, sidelines, dugouts, benches, meeting rooms, and workout areas. During down time, staff and students shall not congregate.
- Gatherings for meetings and workouts shall not exceed 50% of the total occupancy permitted by law for the facility or no more than 250 total individuals (whichever is less), including staff per field or court. Occupancy will be posted in all areas.
- Sports-related activities are limited to student athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. Spectators will not be permitted.
- Facility use by the public will be prohibited during extra-curricular activities.
- The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.
- During out-of-season activities, student athletes are not permitted to use the locker rooms.

### **Facilities Cleaning**

- Adequate cleaning schedules shall be created and implemented for all extra-curricular facilities and common area to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Extra-curricular facilities shall be cleaned prior to arrival and following workouts and team gatherings with high touch areas cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment must be wiped clean after each individual's use.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

### **Physical Activity**

- Staff must review and consider the CDC guidance to modify practices and events to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. This includes focusing on individual skill building versus competition and limiting contact in close contact sports and activities.
- Personal items should not be shared. This includes clothing, towels, and pinnies.
- If equipment must be shared, all equipment shall be properly disinfected often during practice and events, as deemed necessary.
- Frequent handwashing and the use of hand sanitizer is required.
- When weightlifting, spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar.

### **Hydration**

- All students, staff, and officials must bring their own water and drinks to team activities.
- Team water coolers for sharing through disposable cups are prohibited.
- Fixed water fountains and water buffaloes cannot be used.

## **OTHER GUIDANCE**

### **Primary Point of Contact**

- The Peters Township School District has designated Dr. Michael Fisher as the District's Pandemic Coordinator and primary point of contact for all questions related to COVID-19.
  - Contact information for Dr. Fisher is: 724-941-6250, x7298 (Office) and [FisherM@pt-sd.org](mailto:FisherM@pt-sd.org) (Email)
- A secondary contact for Athletics is Mr. Brian Geyer, Athletic Director.
  - Contact information for Mr. Geyer: 724-941-6250, x5233 (Office) and [GeyerB@pt-sd.org](mailto:GeyerB@pt-sd.org) (Email)
- Any questions on the implementation of this document should be referred to Dr. Fisher or Mr. Geyer.
- This Pandemic Coordinator shall ensure that all coaches and sponsors are trained on all safety protocols prior to the first in-person team event.
  - These protocols include:
    - Performing a COVID-19 health screening,
    - Promoting healthy hygiene,
    - Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if COVID-19 is suspected in an individual,
    - Review social distancing, and
    - Review facility entrance and exit plans.

### **Transportation**

- Modifications for team transportation to and from extra-curricular events may be necessary based on current Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines.
- This may include:
  - Reducing the number of students and staff on a bus or van,
  - Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus or van, and/or
  - Social distancing on a bus.
- These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, state and local governments/agencies.
- All extra-curricular travel must be approved by the Athletic Director and/or Principal.

### **Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities**

- Sidelines/Bench Area
  - Staff must ensure appropriate social distancing is maintained on sidelines, bench areas, and other areas during practices and events, as deemed necessary by the CDC, PIAA, state and local governments/agencies.

### **Who should be allowed at events?**

- Extra-Curricular related activities are limited to student, participants, coaches, sponsors, officials, and staff only.
- Spectators will not be permitted.

- The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.

### **Overnight/Out-of-State Events**

- The Peters Township School District will evaluate each event and follow all state and local government/agencies guidelines on a case-by-case basis.
- All overnight travel is prohibited until March 1, 2021 (at the earliest) unless approval is granted by the Superintendent.
- Every consideration must be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high-risk exposure by traveling outside of the region.

### **Other Important Information**

- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva are prohibited including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during or after events. Limit unnecessary physical contact with teammates, other participants, coaches, staff, and officials.
- If multiple events are to be held at the same facility, adequate time shall be scheduled between contests to allow for facilities to be cleaned and disinfected, and to minimize interaction between students and staff.
- Sports complexes with multiple fields may operate simultaneous games or practices on fields within a complex only if social distancing can be maintained.
- Establish protocols to limit entrance and exit traffic, designating specific entry to and exits from facilities with clear signage to ensure separation of participants and staff.
- Stagger pick up and drop off times and locations for practice and events.
- Students are not permitted to congregate to ensure avoid crowding during pick up and drop off.
- Parents dropping off and picking up students should remain outside of facilities. Parents are not permitted to enter the facility.
- When restarting competitions, scrimmages, games, and matches, schedules will be limited to teams in the region first (PIAA District 7 and District 8 only).
  - Playoff events would be exempt from regional play.
  - If COVID-19 cases continue to stay low, expansion beyond regional play may be considered.

### **Positive Cases and Coaches, Staff, or Athletes Showing COVID-19 Symptoms**

#### **What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?**

- Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix)
- Symptoms may include:
  - Fever or chills,
  - Cough,
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
  - Fatigue,
  - Muscle or body aches,

- Headache,
- New loss of taste or smell,
- Sore Throat,
- Congestion or runny nose,
- Nausea or vomiting, and/or
- Diarrhea.

**What if athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, or staff are sick?**

- If athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, and staff are sick or think they are infected with the COVID-19 virus, they **MUST STAY AT HOME**.
  - It is essential that athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, and staff take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading.
  - If athletes, participants, coaches, sponsors, and staff think they have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, they should call their healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Caregivers should monitor their children for symptoms prior to any extra-curricular activity or sport.
- Student athletes or participants, who are sick or showing symptoms, must stay home.
- If student athletes or participants are sick, caregivers are asked to notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, school nurse, athletic trainer, coach and/or sponsor).
- The athletic director or principal will immediately inform the District's Pandemic Coordinator and the Superintendent.
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, sponsors, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and/or monitored for symptoms.
- If a positive case of COVID-19 is diagnosed, local health professionals, the CDC, and/or DOH will implement contact tracing. All subsequent directives will be followed.

**What if a student or staff becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?**

- A coach or sponsor will make every effort to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event.
- If a student is sick, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
- The ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction
- The facility, where the sick individual was present, will be disinfected immediately.

**How will a student or staff return to athletics/extra-curricular activity following a COVID-19 diagnosis or exposure to a person with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis?**

- Student or staff must provide written medical clearance from their medical doctor or CRNP, if they have COVID-19.

- Once a diagnosed individual is determined by a medical doctor or CRNP to be non-contagious, fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), has vast improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), and experiences no vomiting or diarrhea, the student or staff may participate in athletics or extra-curricular activities again.
- Student or staff exposed to a positive case but not testing positive can return to play following the expiration of the CDC or PA DOH quarantine period.

## **EDUCATION**

- Staff, coaches, sponsors, parents, and students will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails):
  - COVID-19 signs and symptoms,
  - Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, etc.),
  - The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document, and
  - Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by DOH, state and local governments/agencies, NFHS, and PIAA.

## **APPENDIX**





## **RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information on wearing or making a mask,

visit: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx>

For more information on COVID-19, visit the Department of Health's website, [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov).

## **RESOURCES**

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities  
(per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control – “What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”

PA Department of Health – “Phased Re-opening Plan by Governor Wolf”

PA Department of Health – “Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletics, and the Public”