



New Providence High School

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“Dedicated to Excellence”

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Dear Staff, Students, and Parents/Guardians,

In preparation for our upcoming return to fall athletics, this letter will serve to provide all of the necessary information as it pertains to those procedures. Please read through this letter in its entirety to ensure that you understand the expectations and requirements for all coaches, athletes, and their parents/guardians.

New Providence Athletics has enjoyed a return to action via the NJSIAA phased return to play summer recess workouts. As per my July 27th correspondence to all fall athletes and parents/guardians, [these workouts](#) began on August 3rd for all registered fall sports athletes. Summer recess workouts will continue through Friday, August 28th.

The NJSIAA has pushed back the official start to the fall athletics season via their [“Return to Play Update - Model 1.”](#) The official start date for fall preseason will now be September 14th for all sports. The Pre-season will run through September, with games/matches beginning for tennis on September 28th, for football on October 2nd, and for all other fall sports on October 1st.

The NJSIAA’s rationale for modifying the fall season in such a manner is described below:

“The Task Force recognizes that returning to school is the main priority and that all student-athletes should acclimate to the classroom before they begin their fall sports season. By delaying the start of practices until after the school year begins, schools will have the opportunity to open their buildings and work through the logistics of their modified school day before extra-curricular activities start. By reducing the length of the season, student-athletes will not only have the opportunity for participation but will have more time to focus on their academic requirements. Leagues and conferences have the ability to amend their schedules for regular season competitions with a focus on keeping athletics local. There is no model that eliminates all risks, but a reduced season will naturally lead to a reduced amount of competition, which minimizes the risk of infection or spread by exposure to many different teams and schools. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every school district differently. This fall season will focus on providing athletic opportunity, engagement and participation – not winning championships. In order to focus on the Restart of School and to level the playing field athletically, there will be no state-wide, postseason competition under this delayed start model.”

From Saturday, August 29th, through Sunday, September 13th, fall coaches only may have *virtual contact* with their student-athletes. Therefore, there may be no in-person practices, scrimmages or games during this two week timeframe. As mentioned above, this time will allow our student athletes to focus on their academics and the return to school via the New Providence School District’s hybrid school model before beginning any official athletic commitments. For more information from the NJSIAA as it pertains to their Return to Play Model 1 - please view this [video](#).

Beginning on September 14th, the fall season will officially begin. As per the NJSIAA's Model 1 guidance, *"Once regular season practices commence on September 14th , all practices will be run in accordance with local school district policies."* As such, the New Providence Athletic Department has developed its own procedures for the return of fall athletics, utilizing the [recommendations of the NJSIAA Medical Advisory Task Force](#) as its guide.

In order to return to athletics this fall and put our athletes, coaches, and community in the safest environment possible, the following critical areas are being addressed:

1. Screening
2. Positive COVID-19 Procedures
3. Face Coverings
4. Locker Rooms/Restrooms/Weight Room
5. Hygiene
6. Practices/Game Procedures/Post Practices
7. Sports Equipment
8. Transportation
9. Fan Attendance
10. Athletic Trainer's Office

Critical Area #1: Screenings:

- Student athletes will be screened each day, prior to being cleared to enter the practice area, game field, or travel on a bus to an away game.
- Coaches: Completion of required mandatory self-screening form prior to arriving at practice or the game each day. Any answer of "Yes" on this form will require that the coaching staff member stays home and sees a doctor for clearance prior to returning to coaching.
- Student Athletes - Screening performed each day prior to practice/game/travel:
 - Students will provide a verbal response to questions and receive a physical temperature check.*
 - *Students who exhibit an elevated temperature may need to be held in a cool-down area and re-checked in 15-20 mins. This might be particularly applicable on a hot day and/or if they walked/biked to school.
 - Coaches will be provided with non-contact thermometers and proper PPE in order to conduct the daily screenings for their respective teams each day.
- Upon failing a screening (either due to elevated temperature or presenting signs or symptoms of COVID-19), the student athlete/coach will be separated from the screening area and the athletic trainer will be contacted and the parent/guardian will be called to immediately pick up the student. The student/coach must have medical clearance from a doctor (MD or DO) to return to school/practices or may return to school/the team following isolating for at least 10 days after onset of symptoms, and may be released from isolation if their symptoms have improved **AND they have had no fever, without the use of medicines for at least 24 hours.**
- If someone in the household tests positive, the student/coach should follow the quarantine protocol of 14 day school/team exclusion.

Critical Area #2: Positive COVID-19 Procedures/Contact Tracing:

- In the case of a positive COVID-19 test the following steps must be taken:
 1. The athletic trainer will notify the director of athletics and school nurse.
 2. The school nurse will notify the building principal.
 3. Building principal will notify central administration.
 4. Central administration will report necessary information with the appropriate health authorities.
 5. The building principal will be responsible for all communication of positive tests with parents/guardians or further communication of incidents.
 6. All media contact or news releases concerning the student-athlete or the event will be handled by the Superintendent. All information concerning the student/staff member will be considered strictly confidential.
 7. Any student or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 must remain in isolation for at least 10 days after onset of symptoms, and may be released from isolation if their symptoms have improved **AND they have had no fever, without the use of medicines for at least 24 hours.**
 8. Stakeholders will be informed of potential exposure in a timely manner as information becomes available.
- Follow direction of local health authorities for needs as it pertains to their contact tracing procedures.
- Draft letter (nurses in correspondence with school physician and local department of health) on file to be used in event of positive tests (to be distributed to NPSD families and staff).
- Adhere to all applicable federal and state requirements regarding privacy of educational records (e.g. FERPA).

Critical Area #3: Face Coverings:

- Coaching staff members and school personnel are required to wear face coverings at all times (unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health).
 - Exceptions:
 - Doing so would inhibit the individual's health
 - The individual is in extreme heat outdoors
 - The individual is eating or drinking (must be at least 6 feet apart from peers/staff).
 - A coach is engaged in high intensity physical activity during practice (i.e., tennis coach hitting back and forth with a student athlete, cross country coach running with student athletes, etc.)
 - Coaches must maintain physical distance of no less than 6 feet from all student athletes when engaging in physical activity that would require them to not wear their mask.
- Student athletes are required to have a face covering on their person at all times. Student athletes are expected to wear their face covering at all times in which they are not engaged in high intensity activities (i.e., before and after practice, during warm-ups and cool-downs, while receiving instructions on a drill, technique, or play, while waiting to begin an activity, etc.).
 - Exceptions:
 - Doing so would inhibit the individual's health
 - The individual is in extreme heat outdoors

- A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), precludes the use of face covering
 - A student is eating or drinking (must be at least 6 feet apart from peers/staff).
- Face coverings for coaching staff and students are to be cloth face coverings as recommended by the CDC. Face shields are not a replacement for a face covering (as per the current CDC guidelines)

Critical Area #4: Locker Rooms/Restrooms/Weight Room:

- Locker rooms will not be available to any student athletes for the duration of the fall season (to be reevaluated following the fall season).
- Students will report to practice/bus/game each day dressed and prepared for that day's activities.
- Students will take all equipment home following that day's practice/game, and must regularly wash/sanitize all equipment upon returning home each night.
- Coaches will have access to the coaches locker rooms in order to change following the school day and be prepared for practice. Coaches must adhere to social distancing at all times within the coach locker rooms. Coaches must wear masks at all times.
- Student athletes will be permitted to use the restrooms as needed. Coaches will send only one student athlete at a time to the restroom from their respective teams.
 - To the fullest extent possible, appropriate social distancing shall be maintained, when more than one student-athlete is in the restroom.
 - Face coverings are to be worn at all times in the restroom (unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health).
- The NPHS/NPMS weight room will remain closed until further notice.
 - Should the governor allow for the reopening of indoor gyms, this practice will be reevaluated at that time.

Critical Area #5: Hygiene:

- Students and staff should make every effort to wash their hands as often as possible, including before and after each day's practice/game.
- Hand sanitizer will be accessible at all times via each team's provided medical kit.
- Student-athletes shall wear their equipment to the practice/game and shall return home in the same equipment.
- There shall be no spitting, chewing seeds, or gum during practices or games.
- Students will be reminded to regularly wash and sanitize their athletic equipment in between practices and games

Critical Area #6: Practices/Game Procedures/Post-Practices:

- During all workouts, coaches and staff are reminded to be alert for any students exhibiting signs of distress regarding mental health secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Whenever possible/applicable, students will maintain social distancing during practice. This includes on the sideline, while watching a drill, and participating in certain drills that will allow for proper distancing.
- Social distancing (even on benches/sidelines) may not be possible at any time during formal athletic contests (as a result of bench and sideline restrictions). Students are to wear an appropriate face covering

while on the bench/sideline of a game at all times. The facemask may be removed when the student enters the game himself/herself.

- All NJSIAA Heat Guidelines/Policies are to be followed at all times. The athletic trainer will be responsible for monitoring the heat during practices and games.
- Student athletes are expected to bring their own water (at least 32 oz) to each practice/game. Water will be available via water coolers in case of an emergency. All individual water coolers/bottles must be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name.
- Students are to maintain social distancing when arriving and leaving practice locations, wearing their masks at all times.
- Any program who watches game film together (of themselves or their opponents) must do so following all social distancing requirements from the school day. This includes requiring that all students are in masks at all times, and that all students remain at a distance of six (6) feet from one another (utilizing the appropriate and designated desks from each school day).
 - Programs will break up film sessions into smaller groups in order to adhere to these guidelines.
 - Programs may only run film sessions for specific teams (i.e. varsity only) in order to adhere to these guidelines.

Critical Area #7: Sports Equipment:

- Each student-athlete shall bring individual water bottles (at least 32 oz.) to each workout for his/her own personal consumption. There shall not be any trading or sharing of water bottles.
- All sports equipment and touchpoints (e.g., balls, benches, agility cones, ladders, clipboards, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected after each workout with EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants against COVID-19.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing to practice (do not share clothing) - individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.

Critical Area #8: Transportation:

- Buses will be mandated to have students in masks for the duration of all trips, as social distancing to the fullest extent (6-feet apart for all, which would allow only 11 passengers to ride on a 54 passenger bus) will generally not be possible.
- Students will be distanced to the greatest extent possible at all times on buses.
- Parents will have the option to drive their children to these events/activities (should they choose) utilizing the school [district form](#) and policy sign off when doing so. This will help to lower total numbers on buses when applicable.

Critical Area #9: Fan Attendance:

- Access to practices/workouts must be limited to student-athletes, coaches, and appropriate school personnel. Parents are not permitted to remain on site during these workouts (those picking up should do so at the conclusion of each day's practice session).
- Guidance on fan attendance at games/matches is expected to be provided prior to the start of the fall season from the state and/or county (conference) level. To date, this guidance has not been finalized/shared.
- All eventual capacity guidelines will be followed to the fullest extent.

- In the event that fans are permitted to attend athletic contests, all visitors are required to wear face coverings at all times (unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age). All potential fans will be required to adhere to proper social distancing (minimum of 6 feet) at all times (the exception being one's immediate household members).

Critical Area #10: Athletic Trainer's Office

- Student-athletes will be required to make an appointment with the athletic trainer for an evaluation. Procedures for making an appointment will be shared with all athletes via their respective team Google Classroom pages.
- To keep student-athletes from congregating outside of the athletic training office, waiting spaces in the hallway will be clearly marked 6 feet apart.
- Immediate injury evaluations will not require an appointment and will take precedence over existing appointments if necessary.
- If an injury occurs on a field/court/track, all student-athletes (with non-emergent needs) must exit the athletic training office so that the athletic trainer can attend to the immediate injury.
- There shall be no more than 4 people allowed in the athletic training office at a single time, including the athletic trainer.
- The athletic training office will be arranged so that all treatment tables are spaced 6 feet apart. The athletic trainer's desk will also be spaced 6 feet from the treatment tables.
- Treatment tables will be sanitized between each patient.
- Medical equipment and touched surfaces (e.g. foam rollers, the station holding gauze, bandages, etc) will be sanitized between each use.
- The athletic trainer will wear gloves during each patient encounter. Gloves will be changed after each patient encounter. The athletic trainer will wash her hands between patient encounters.
- Patients shall wear face coverings in the athletic training office at all times (unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health).
- The athletic trainer will wear a face covering at all times (unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health).

As mentioned above, the guidelines described in this correspondence were developed with the New Providence School District's main guiding principle for reopening its schools - "Health & Safety" - in mind at all times. As the NJSIAA's return to play model document states, "*There is no model that eliminates all risks*"; however, we believe the guidelines outlined above will limit this risk to the greatest extent possible.

It is important to note that all of the above procedures and guidelines are subject to change, as guidance from the Governor, NJDOE, NJDOH, and/or NJSIAA may adjust due to the fluidity of the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the [NJSIAA has announced](#) that its Covid-19 Medical Advisory Task Force and its Covid-19 Sports Advisory Task Force will continue to meet and will look to provide further guidance to its member schools by mid-August in regards to "resources for the virtual contact period, as well as COVID-19 related recommendations for the regular season." Should these recommendations necessitate the above guidelines changing in any manner, those amendments will be communicated to all stakeholders.

Respectfully,



Vincent Carangelo
Director of Athletics, New Providence High School