

Baltimore County Public Schools  
Athletics  
Spring Season 2021



**2020-2021**

**BCPS Interscholastic Athletic Season**

Spring Season Return for BCPS Student-Athletes

**Rationale:**

- The physical and social emotional benefits of education-based activities are numerous. Students who participate in school activities learn life lessons in an environment that cannot be duplicated, and benefit from such things as academic, physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being. Re-engaging in sports activity with friends has both physical and psychological health benefits for children and adolescents. These activities will allow BCPS students to stay connected with their classmates, teammates, coaches, and schools in a safe, controlled, and responsible manner.

**Guiding Principle:**

- The health and safety of BCPS students, student-athletes, coaches, and stakeholders will continue to be our top priority and drive in all decision making.
- The office of athletics will follow the health metrics outlined in local and federal guidance to determine the extent to which any in-person athletic activities can be held. These metrics will be monitored on at-least a weekly basis to determine the ongoing nature of athletic activities in BCPS.

*(These activities may be modified or cancelled at any time.)*

## Season Requirements:

All students will follow BCPS athletic eligibility policies in order to participate. In addition, the following is required:

- 1) **Registration** - Submitted through FormRELeaf and on file with the school athletic director.
- 2) **Pre-Participation Physicals** - Students must continue to follow the state regulations regarding completion of an annual pre-participation physical examination. The MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee has added a supplementary sheet to this physical form for the use of appropriate health care providers. This form is attached to the linked PPE form below. Local school systems should use the preparation phase to ensure all students have an up-to-date physical on file. The recommended preparticipation physical form may be found at: <https://www.mpssaa.org/membership-services/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-recommended-forms-and-resources/>
- 3) *A student athlete with a history of COVID-19 infection must provide a preparticipation medical clearance that was performed after the infection. Once medically cleared, a student athlete with a history of COVID-19 infection should begin a gradual return to play, reporting any symptoms to their health care provider.*
- 4) **Parent/Student-Athlete Participation Acknowledgement Statements** - Included among pre-participation forms, it is recommended local school systems implement a sign off acknowledging both parent/guardian and student has read provided information on the risk of COVID-19 as it relates to their participation in interscholastic athletics and activities. This form also includes acknowledgement of the symptom free requirements from the CDC for attendance at any gathering or event. [https://www.mpssaa.org/assets/1/6/MPSSAA Roadmap For Return of Interscholastic Athletics Recommended Forms.pdf](https://www.mpssaa.org/assets/1/6/MPSSAA_Roadmap_For_Return_of_Interscholastic_Athletics_Recommended_Forms.pdf)
- 5) **Flu Shot** - BCPS strongly encourages students to get a flu shot.

## **Staff and Student Expectations**

Maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace is a component of our strategic plan. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitates that Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) establish health screening expectations for all employees and student athletes. The expectations listed below have been adopted in accordance with CDC and Health Department recommendations.

By reporting to conditioning or practice, the employee/student confirms that they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 infection and do not have an increased risk for spreading infection while on BCPS property.

Specifically, the employee/student should:

- Verify that they do not have a fever. It is recommended that each employee/student check their temperature at home prior to reporting to work.
- Not report if they have a temperature of 100.4+ degrees or higher.
- Not report to if they have symptoms of illness that could be COVID-19 infection. Symptoms of COVID-19 infection include fever, new onset cough or shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, and/or new loss of taste or smell and/or two of the following symptoms: fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, chills, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- Consult with their health care provider if they have a fever or COVID-19 symptoms.
- Not report if they are awaiting COVID-19 test results.
- Not report if they are under isolation due to current COVID-19 infection.
- Not report if they have been told to quarantine due to recent close contact with a COVID-19 patient.
- Report the following situations to their supervisor or coach: a positive COVID-19 test, recent exposure to a person with COVID-19 and/or being tested for COVID-19.
- Agree to follow all mitigation requirements established for their school such as, maintaining social distancing and use of face coverings.

## **Absolute Guidelines**

**Students who do not follow proper return to play guidelines will be removed from program and not permitted to return.**

- **Face Covering:** Face coverings must be worn at all times. Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and on the bus to and from contests. It is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
  - Face coverings should be changed/washed daily.
  - Face coverings should be worn over the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the chin.
  - Face coverings should not have a valve.
  - Face covering breaks will be provided as follows: one three-minute face covering break will be provided for every 20 minutes of physical activity.
- **Social Distancing:** Social distancing is always in effect on school grounds. (This includes during workouts) Prior to and after conditioning sessions, students are not permitted to gather or congregate at or outside the school facilities.
- **Water:** Students must bring their own water with their names clearly marked. Students water bottles should be at least 16 oz. Hydration stations are not permitted to be used by students.
- **Hand Sanitizer:** Students should bring hand sanitizer with them to workouts.
- **Hygiene:** Proper hygiene must be always followed.
  - Use hand sanitizer whenever possible.
  - Students are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer.
  - Students should be reminded not to touch their faces.
  - Students may not share water bottles, towels, etc.
  - Team huddles, handshakes, fist bump, hugs, spitting, chewing sunflower seeds, and other activities that promote transmission of illness is not permitted.
- **Schedule:** Teams must follow BCPS approved competition schedule.

## **Entrance/Exit Strategies**

- Cars will drop off students and leave school grounds.
- Drop off and pickup locations and times may be staggered in order to further promote social distancing.
- To promote safety, parents may NOT attend and watch a workout.
- Students must be picked up immediately after practices session has ended.
- Carpooling is not recommended for non-household members.
- Students who individually transport themselves or walk are to leave the premises immediately following the conclusion of each assigned workout session.

### **Team Arrival**

- Visiting teams will arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before game time.
- Visiting teams will arrive dressed and ready to take the floor (there will be no access to locker rooms).
- JV/Varsity team not playing will remain in bleachers following social distancing guidelines.
- Coaches will meet and verify that appropriate health screening has occurred prior to team arrival. The visiting team will provide a completed screening verification form.

### **Check-In Procedures**

- Each coach will check in with the athletic director prior to practice.
- Each coach will have a designated drop off/pick-up location.
- Students should arrive promptly and remain in their vehicles until their coach is present.
- Coaches will use the BCPS screening/attendance tracking sheet to sign in all students for the day.

### **Consideration for Coaches**

- Coaches will complete all BCPS required COVID training.
- Coaches will complete and submit to the athletic director the COVID-19 questions prior to start of practice sessions.
- Coaches must wear face covering at all times, including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Coaches must complete attendance every day for contact tracing purposes.
- Coaches must monitor students for symptoms prior to and during workouts by filling out the daily screening and observing for symptoms.
- Coaches will design practices that implement social distancing.
- Coaches will design practices to resume gradual return to play to avoid overuse injuries.
- Coaches need to consider all students have some level of detraining and may not be returning at the same fitness level. It is important to adjust accordingly and design practices with gradual conditioning.
- Break time may need to be increased and/or staggered to accommodate social distancing, hand washing, etc.

### **Consideration for Students**

- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas and on the bus to and from contests. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Students must bring their own water with their names clearly marked. Students' water bottles should be at least 16 oz.
- Students must clean their own uniforms and equipment before and after contest/practice.
- Equipment should not be shared.
- Students should gradually work up intensity of activity.
- Students must communicate health and fitness-related concerns to coaches and athletic directors immediately.
- Students should arrive and leave facility promptly. There is no loitering permitted on BCPS property.

### **Accommodations for students with special needs**

- Exceptions may be needed for some of these conditions based on circumstances.
- For parents/caregivers that rely on public transportation or walk, an area away from practice should be set aside that allows for social distancing.
- Schools and organizations should attempt to have extra masks/face coverings available.
- Additional situations may arise based on social vulnerabilities. Schools and organizations should attempt to think of these situations and develop solutions that continue to practice the key elements of preventing COVID-19 transmission.

### **Consideration for Transportation**

- See the BCPS Reopening Plan for mitigation and sanitization procedures for the safe transportation of students.

### **Consideration for Facilities**

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate the chance of any communicable diseases in accordance with CDC procedures and in alignment with procedures outlined in the BCPS Reopening Plan.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces should be wiped down and sanitized.
- Restrooms will be designated for use by school and athletic administration.
- Restrooms should have signage as to how many individuals are permitted in the restroom at one time.

- Individuals should wash their hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds before touching any surfaces or participating in practices.
- Hand sanitizer or hand washing should be used as students transfer from place to place.
- Appropriate clothing should be worn by students to minimize sweat from transmitting onto surfaces.
- At this time, all locker rooms are off limits and should not be used.
- Building service workers will maintain a cleaning schedule in conjunction with athletic department.

### **Consideration for Inclement Weather Procedures**

- Inclement weather procedures will be created by the school athletic department with input by school administration, school safety manager, custodial staff, grounds crew, school nurse and athletic trainer. All social distancing guidelines must remain in effect.

### **Consideration for Spectators at BCPS Athletic Events**

- At this time, due to COVID metrics, spectators are limited to three per student athlete on the team.
- Due to the size of some of our smaller facilities, adjustments may be made to accommodate spectators safely under current social distancing guidelines.
- Face coverings are required at all times for spectators in attendance. Failure to adhere to the face covering guideline will result in removal from the contest.
- The spectators in attendance must practice social distancing. Failure to adhere to the social distancing guideline will result in removal from the contest.
- There is to be no congregating at the field or in the stadium following the game. All parents are to meet their student back at the school.



## **Responding to Positive COVID-19 Cases**

In the event a student or staff member with recent presence in a BCPS school or office tests positive for COVID-19 or has had close contact in the community with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 (quarantine), the following procedures will be followed:

1. Staff members/coaches will be required to notify principal/athletic director of positive test or quarantine due to exposure. Parents will be directed to notify the school nurse/athletic director of positive test or quarantine due to exposure.
2. Persons with confirmed cases of COVID-19 will receive verbal and written guidance on the length of their isolation from work/school as well as the requirement for medical or health department clearance to return.
3. Persons with close contact in the community will receive verbal and written guidance on the length of their quarantine from school/work, information about testing, and steps to take should they develop symptoms or test positive.
4. Schools/offices notify Office of Health Services (OHS) of all cases of COVID-19. The OHS will identify and notify close contacts immediately in accordance with Baltimore County Department of Health (BCDH) protocols.
5. Office of Health Services will notify the BCHD of all cases.
6. Office of Health Services will notify the entire facility (school or building staff) of confirmed case by next workday.
7. School cleaning and closing decisions, either for specific areas or the entire facility, based on the presences of a person who has tested positive, will be made based on BCDH guidance.
8. Persons who test positive will isolate at home for minimum of 10 days including 24 hours symptom-free.
9. Close contacts will quarantine for 10 days with no symptoms.
10. Students with COVID must have medical clearance before participation. This medical clearance must be conducted after COVID infection.
11. The school nurse will monitor and enforce clearance to return for students. The Office of Employee Absences will provide clearance for all employees.

## **Spring Sports Specific Guidelines**

### **Allied Softball**

#### **Practice**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student athletes must always wear face coverings, unless advised by a physician.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Athletes will use the same softball during the practice session.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces should be wiped down and sanitized.

#### **Games**

- Coaches and officials must wear face coverings.
- All athletes will wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth and fit tightly to the face during all activities, unless advised by a physician.
- Must follow BCPS guidelines.

### **Tennis**

#### **Practice/Games**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces and equipment should be wiped down and sanitized.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidelines.

## **Cheer**

### **Practice/Games**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- When practicing indoor, student athletes must wear face coverings.
- When practicing outside or cheering at outdoor contests, student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces and equipment should be wiped down and sanitized.
- Must follow BCPS guidelines.

## **Track**

### **Practice**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces and equipment should be wiped down and sanitized.

### **Meet Procedures**

- Event staff/volunteers should wear face coverings at all times.
- Athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-race and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for start and finish areas and any designated area where students/team staff will be located.
- All teams will provide their own garbage bags to collect waste and take with them.
- Athletes must arrive at meets dressed in proper attire for the meet.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidance.

## **Girls Lacrosse**

### **Practice/Game**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Balls will be sanitized after each session.
- Coaches will use electronic/handheld whistles or whistles under their mask.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidance.

## **Boys Lacrosse**

### **Practice/Game**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Balls will be sanitized after each session.
- Coaches will use electronic/handheld whistles or whistles under their mask.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidance.

## **Baseball**

### **Practice/Game**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Coaches should use electronic/handheld whistles or whistles under their mask.
- Before, during, and after using facilities, all surfaces and equipment should be wiped down and sanitized.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidance.

## **Softball**

### **Practice/Game**

- Coaches must always wear face coverings including during timeouts and socially distanced team huddles.
- Student-athletes must wear face coverings pre- and post-competition/practice and it is recommended they wear face coverings during competition/practice. This includes travel to/from workout areas. They are required to bring their own face coverings.
- Coaches and athletes must follow social distancing guidelines.
- Athletes will use hand sanitizer as needed.
- There will be no sharing of water bottles or other personal items.
- Athletes will remain in their assigned area throughout practice.
- Coaches should use electronic/handheld whistles or whistles under their mask.
- Balls should be sanitized before and after each practice session.
- Must follow BCPS and MPSSAA guidance.