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For Immediate Release

MPSSAA July 14, 2020 Update

This memo serves as a weekly update on the MPSSAA status regarding the start of the fall athletic season. According to the latest [Maryland Health Department](#) orders, “High school and college athletics may resume sports gatherings and events, but may not open to spectators or the general public. For contact sports (e.g., wrestling, basketball, and football), play should be modified to safely increase distance between players following [CDC guidance](#).”

What Does This Mean: Local School Systems (LSS) in compliance with state and local health department guidelines may re-engage student athletes for the purpose of mental, physical, and social-emotional well-being. All local school systems may choose to initiate summer out-of-season school-based open conditioning, exercise, weight training, and non-sport specific student gatherings. Schools are recommended to implement the preparation phase found in the [MPSSAA Guidance](#) in anticipation of the first available play date, which is currently August 12, 2020 as noted in the State Superintendent’s statement on [June 11, 2020](#) and the latest guidance of the [Maryland Health Department](#).

MPSSAA Status - Current:

- All athletics and activities may be operating in the Lowest Risk: Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone, or with family members. This includes school system approved virtual engagement.
- All LSS may begin at their discretion to move into Increasing Risk: Summer out-of-season school-based open conditioning, exercise, weight training, and non-sport specific student gatherings.
- All LSS are recommended to implement the Preparation Guidance in plans for the first available practice date.

MPSSAA Status - What’s Next:

- All LSS should prepare for moving into Increasing Risk: In-Season Team Based Practices.
- The current first available practice date is August 12, 2020 for fall sports as noted in the State Superintendent’s statement on [June 11, 2020](#) and the latest guidance of the [Maryland Health Department](#).
 - Please note this is subject to change based on the most recent information in collaboration with the Governor’s Executive Orders, Maryland Health Department, and any announcements by the State Superintendent of Schools.

- Local School Systems may enter into this date at their own discretion.

Current Expectation Timeline

- MPSSAA will update this status weekly on Tuesday, July 21, Tuesday, July 28, and Tuesday, August 4 regarding the start of Fall Practices and necessary sport modifications.
- The MPSSAA will continue to work with the Governor's office, Maryland Health Department, the State Superintendent of Schools, the medical community, and counterpart state high school athletic associations regarding any changes or modifications to the current fall practice and first play date.
- Periodic updates may occur at any time regarding guidance and status updates from the Governor's office, Maryland Health Department, and the State Superintendent of Schools.
- Fall State Championships will be assessed in early October 2020 based on schools ability to participate in a regular season.
- Winter Sports will be assessed the first week of October based on the most recent information regarding indoor facilities.

Contingency Plans: The concept to move sport seasons and other contingency ideas continue to be a topic of discussion around the state, the country, and within the MPSSAA task forces for the return to interscholastic athletics and activities. The MPSSAA with its stakeholders will continue to discuss these options and make any additional announcements as necessary. These contingency plans will be based on maximizing participation and engaging all students as best as possible in interscholastic athletics and activities. The MPSSAA Executive Council goals are to:

1. Operate a normal cyclical schedule within the MPSSAA Guidelines and LSS decisions.
2. Allow sports that may be able to operate to do so within their sport season.
3. Operate modified starts or shorten seasons within each defined sport season.
4. Assess additional contingencies if a competition season is unable to be administered.

The MPSSAA is committed to continuously follow the lead of the Governor's office, Maryland Health Department, and State Superintendent of Schools while working with LSS, the medical community, and counterpart state associations to develop plans that will return these highly educational programs with a goal of maximizing student participation. Continue to check back on the [The MPSSAA Roadmap for Return of Interscholastic Athletics \(Covid-19 Updates\)](#) web page with updates on guidance, resources, and any announcements as schools re-engage students for academic and extracurricular programs.