



PRESS RELEASE – Mechanicsburg, PA – Friday, June 5, 2020

PIAA recognizes that students and schools desire to engage in voluntary out-of-season activities. Presently, school affiliated activities are not permitted. Student-athletes, consistent with the Governor's phase in systematic approach to re-opening the Commonwealth and in accordance with (1) PIAA eligibility rules, (2) health and safety guidance provided the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Education (PDE) and any local or county directives, and (3) in accordance with policies established by local school administration, as of July 1, and possibly sooner as discussed below, may engage in voluntary out-of-season activities. Within these areas:

1. On Wednesday, June 3rd, PDE released its Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools. Within that document, and under the category of "Protocols for sporting activities consistent with the CDC Considerations for Youth Sports for recess, and physical education classes," PDE provided that "guidance for organized school sports will be published separately." PIAA is working cooperatively with PDE and the Governor's staff to develop that guidance. We are optimistic that such guidelines will be issued in the near future.
2. If not already underway, schools are encouraged to evaluate return-to-play policies that address, at a minimum, the following areas: pre-workout screening; limitations on number of students participating together; sanitizing facilities; permitted types of physical activity; usage of athletic equipment, and individualized hydration. As has been recommended by the PIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), schools should tailor re-start guidelines to fit a school's local needs, as opposed to a reliance on a "one-size fits all" approach. If you'd like to review detailed guidelines on developing policies in these areas, please refer to the links below.

PIAA Executive Director, Dr. Robert Lombardi, emphasized, "in anticipation of PDE guidance being issued soon, schools need to be assessing appropriate return to play protocols for them to be able to open up their campuses."

Finally, as a reminder, all activities must still be in accordance with PIAA out-of-season rules and regulations. PIAA is urging everyone to "play by the rules" to keep students eligible, to promote optimal health conditions and to prevent any setbacks that may jeopardize the starting of fall sports.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

https://nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf

<https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/sports-medicine/documents/return-to-play/high-school-athlete-guidelines-pdf.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/20200522-Department-of-Health-2020-Summer-Program-FAQ.pdf>

About Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association

Beginning in Pittsburgh, on December 29, 1913, PIAA was given the privilege of serving its member schools and registered officials by establishing policies and adopting contest rules that emphasize the educational values of interscholastic athletics, promote safe and sportsmanlike competition and provide uniform standards for all interscholastic levels of competition.