



COVID-19 AND OTHER IMPORTANT UPDATES

To: NJSIAA Member Schools
From: Colleen Maguire, Chief Operating Officer
Date: July 17, 2020
RE: NJSIAA Weekly Update

NFHS Network Update:

The NFHS Network recently announced its “High School Support Program”. As part of this program, the NFHS Network is offering up to two free Pixellot automated production cameras to any state association member school. The cameras will help high schools stream their athletic events and activities to those that are unable to be there in person. NJSIAA has scheduled a 20-minute Zoom meeting for any member school interested in learning more about the details of this program and to answer all questions. More details regarding this program can be found [here](#).

If your school is interested, then please plan to join this meeting on Thursday, July 23rd, at 1:00pm. Here is the link for the Zoom Meeting: <https://nfhs.zoom.us/j/96310320209>

Pre-Participation Examination (PPE) Proposal Status:

The PPE bill (A4295) was approved by the Assembly’s Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee on Wednesday, July 9th. The next Assembly voting session is Thursday, July 30th, and this bill is on the agenda. Our lobbyist has requested that the bill be included in any earlier voting session, in the event one is scheduled. We do not anticipate any amendments or changes to the proposal at this time but we will keep you updated on its status. Upon approval by the Assembly, the bill will be immediately sent to the Governor’s Office.

Just a reminder, the Senate passed the proposed bill (S2518) on Monday, June 15th. Below is the link to the full Senate bill for your reference: https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/S3000/2518_R1.PDF

COVID-19 Medical Advisory Task Force Update:

The Medical Advisory Task Force continues to study and monitor the national and state COVID-19 situation in an effort to assure that our student-athletes can return safely to practice and competition. Every effort is being made to give NJ student-athletes opportunities to engage in the sports they love. It is important to understand that the body of research and information on this virus changes daily. Care will be taken to make the most responsible decisions possible for their physical, emotional and social well-being. Additional guidelines for the summer recess period are in final review and should be made available no later than July 24th.

NJSIAA has created a COVID-19 Information webpage. All documents and directives are now located at: <https://www.njsiaa.org/covid-19-documents>

COVID-19 Sports Advisory Task Force Update:

Since the release of the Return to Play – Model 1, the Sports Advisory Task Force has turned its attention to developing additional models for the three athletic seasons. The goal is to have multiple models prepared should there be a need to implement a contingency plan based on changes to health circumstances or in-person instruction. These models will be made available if and when changed circumstances warrant a particular model.

NFHS Executive Directors Roundtable Updates:

Every Tuesday afternoon, I participate in a roundtable meeting with Executive Directors from across the country. The most important takeaway from these meetings has been that the status of fall sports varies significantly by state. So far, very few states have proactively made changes to their fall season but do anticipate the need to make changes in the near term. Some states have had the Governor interfere and make decisions on their behalf by cancelling high risk sports or postponing the fall season. Please note that we continue to communicate frequently with the Department of Education, key members of the legislature and the Governor’s office. To date, they have been very supportive of our decision-making and approach to the school year.

Below are a few highlights from this past week:

District of Columbia – Association moving to January through June model, allowing 8-weeks per season.

Iowa – Association is currently hosting its baseball and softball state championships. Approximately 5% of schools have had to miss a part of the regular and/or post-season as a result of COVID-19 infection. Overall, all schools have been very understanding and cooperative with the guidelines established specific to COVID-19.

Kentucky – Governor delayed the start of fall sports practices from July 15th to August 3rd, at the earliest.

New Mexico – Governor postponed football and soccer to February 22nd and volleyball to an October start, for now.

New York – The public high school association postponed the start of the fall sports season to September 21st. The Association also confirmed that there will be no regional or state championships during 2020-2021.

Vermont – Governor’s task force cancelled football and prohibited the start of fall sports practices until the first day of school.

Virginia – The public high school association postponed football for the fall season. The association will vote in early August on one of three models that will be in place for the school year.

Next week, I anticipate we will continue to see announcements from state athletic associations, specifically from some large, influential states. Please be reminded, NJSIAA released its Model 1 plan in order to allow schools time to start planning but also to allow time before a final determination must be made on the status of the fall season. We appreciate your continued patience with our decision-making and your persistence in working on your school’s own return-to-play plan in order to maximize participation opportunities for our student-athletes.