



## **Warbirds Covid-19 Return to Play Protocols (In accordance with area schools and NDHSAA)**

**Acknowledgement of Infection Risks:** The risk of COVID-19 transmission will still be present as school activities begin in August and likely through the 2020-2021 school year. Students and their families, along with school personnel must recognize these risks and implement best practices to reasonably mitigate these risks. Participation in school activities is voluntary and every individual will need to evaluate the risk versus the benefits of activity participation. Those immunocompromised students and staff, or those who live with family members with elevated health concerns, should evaluate associated risks of participation and may choose not to participate. The primary means of COVID-19 transmission is through respiratory droplets and potentially through aerosolization. Risk mitigation strategies should be aimed at reducing the likelihood of a person's respiratory droplets coming into contact with another person. Every school is different, and every activity is different, so understand that certain mitigation strategies may be feasible in one school or for one activity, but not another.

**Benefit of Sports/Activities:** The physical and psychosocial benefits of education-based activity participation are numerous. Students who participate in school activities learn life lessons in an environment that cannot be duplicated. The academic achievements, social and leadership skills, as well as overall mental health are known to be greatly enhanced in students who participate in a school activity compared to those who do not. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in thousands of North Dakota students missing out on these life-shaping educational experiences over the past several months.

### **Fall Sports/Startup:**

Thank you in advance for reviewing these plans and guidelines. We believe we have outlined a plan that gives our participants the highest likelihood of playing a full season as possible. We understand that some of these processes and restrictions are less than ideal. In the times we are currently facing our major goal has been to provide our student-athletes opportunities to participate.

The Activities Directors from our region have met to discuss some common guidelines for our region and develop best practices for our teams and respective coaching staffs. We are doing our best to work together and provide safe opportunities for activities to take place, while following the guidelines from the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH), the North Dakota High School Activities Association (NDHSAA), the Governors' office, and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI).

### **Schedules**

Our schedules will look different this year, and we need to practice patience with changes that are going to come as the year moves forward. One recommendation from NDHSAA was to eliminate multiple team events for this fall.

*\*Member schools should consider limiting the number of participating schools at regular season events. All events in moderate or higher risk sports as defined by the NFHS (lower risk sports in the Fall include cross country, golf, swimming & diving, and tennis) involving more than two member schools should receive prior approval from the host school's local health unit.*

This recommendation has resulted in schools cancelling many events. Almost every volleyball tournament in the state has been cancelled including the tournaments we planned on attending this year. We may lose other contests based on the situation each school and community are facing at the time. In the end, if it means that we have fewer competitions but have a chance to compete at regionals and playoffs it will be well worth it. We ask that you stay positive through these uncertain times.

### **Practices**

- Daily Attendance Logs – REQUIRED BY NDHSAA
  - Coaches will do their best to evaluate athletes each day, but if you as parents notice that your child is suffering from symptoms and not well, keep them home.
  - Coaches will communicate to athletes they are to go home if they are sick.
  - Daily attendance logs at practice/contests/other gatherings for each team (varsity, junior varsity, junior high, etc.) are required. This requirement is an effort to prevent spread of COVID-19 and to aid in contact tracing in the event of any positive tests within the team.
  - Daily logs should indicate groups that were in close contact (within six feet of each other for a period of 15 minutes or longer) and if individuals were masked.
- We will limit the amount of students in the locker room before practice and after games to 10 athletes.

### **Mandatory Quarantine**

This will be dictated by the Department of Health and to this point.

#### **General Consensus**

- A single case of COVID-19 would follow the Department of Health Guidelines along with contact tracing inside that team.
  - Depending on practice protocol and situations it may not necessarily include the entire team, although very well could be. This will be a fluid and case by case situation
- No practice or competitions would be held during a mandatory quarantine.
- Teams that practice separate (JH vs Varsity) may possibly be able to continue to practice and play games depending on the Richland County Department of Health's decision.
- Games would be rescheduled, if possible, after quarantine.
- Absolutely no access to the building for student-athletes during a mandatory quarantine.

### **Transportation/Road Trips**

- No pregame or postgame meals.
- We will still provide bus transportation with restrictions.
  - We will be requiring all riders to wear masks both going to the event and coming home if social distancing is not attainable.
  - Student athletes will sit in their same seat to and back from practices and games. A seating chart will be recorded. Coaches are responsible for making a seating chart and keeping kids in those assigned seats.
- Parents are able to bring their children home from the event by filling out a transportation consent form. We will still transport them to the event but a parent may drive them to the contest if they sign a consent form.
- Busses will be sanitized before and after each trip.

## **Masks**

- Student/athletes entering an indoor facility must wear a mask where required. When leaving the locker room to go to the competition area, masks can be left with belongings. When returning to dress and leave the facility, masks must be worn where it is required. This is both home and away.
- Coaches must wear a mask where it is required.
- Masks do not need to be worn outside if appropriate social distancing is being exercised, but they must be worn where it is required.

## **Locker Rooms**

- Coaches will be responsible for daily checks to make sure that all practice gear and equipment are cleaned each night.
- Equipment will not be left in the locker room with the exception of helmets, shoulder pads, and shoes.
- Recommendations from the NDDoH include:
  - Stagger schedules for locker rooms to avoid crowding.

## **Water**

- All athletes, managers, and coaches must have their own water bottles.
- Water bottles must not be shared between athletes, managers, and coaches.

## **Game Workers**

Table/Sideline and Press Box Workers will wear masks at all times.

Hand Sanitizer will be available at the scorer's table for workers, officials, and team personnel.

## **Physicals**

Athletes can use a form B if they had a physical for 19-20 and said physical is on file in the District Office.

## **Spectators**

- Game Attendance- Attendance to indoor events will be limited. In an effort to ensure each participant is given the opportunity to have someone in attendance Region 1 has outlined the following process. Capacities are determined through the guidelines issued by NDDoH. Attendees will be asked to leave the gym immediately following a contest.

### **Phase 1: (Green)**

- Visiting teams will be allocated 25% of seating capacity (or a max of 100)
- Home seating will be limited to 75% of gym capacity
- Masks will be worn in facilities where they are required
- Social distancing encouraged
- \*Coaches/participants are not included in team allocation

### **Phase 2: (Yellow)**

- Visiting teams will be allocated 10% of seating capacity
- Home seating will be limited to 50% of gym capacity
- Masks will be worn in facilities where they are required
- Social distancing encouraged
- \*Coaches/participants are not included in team allocation

### **Phase 3: (Orange)**

- No Fans

### **Process For Away Volleyball Matches Ticket Distribution:**

- Before each match each student-athlete will be given a set number of wristbands. If a player/family does not need their allocation, they can give them to another player/family, back to the coach, or to the ticket taker when they arrive.
- Who gets a wristband is at the discretion of the player/family and does not have to remain consistent.
- Each game will have a different wrist band.
- The wrist band means you will be allowed access- you still need to pay at the admissions area.

### **Player Allocation:**

- Our coaches and AD's will make a determination in the coming weeks.
  - Ideas include:
  - Per family allocation home/away
  - Per player allocation home/away
  - Request system with minimums.

### **Outdoor events:**

- May be treated differently than indoor events due to the ability to social distance in a larger area.
- All fans will wear masks in the stands if social distancing cannot be maintained.

*\*Any event held at Wyndmere or Lidgerwood will require fans to immediately leave the venue from which it is being held, no congregating will be allowed this year.*

### **Ticketing**

- Activity passes will still be available.
- Ticket takers will be required to wear a mask and gloves at all times.
- Please make an effort to bring exact change when attending our or other school's events.

### **Concessions**

Must follow ND smart restart restaurant guidelines