

South Middleton School District



Athletics & Activities Health and Safety Plan

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Athletics Health and Safety Plan: South Middleton School District

The COVID-19 pandemic presents the South Middleton School District with a myriad of challenges. The SMSD Administration with board approval offers this document as guidance on how SMSD will consider approaching the many components of high school athletics and activities across Pennsylvania and within the South Middleton School District.

The South Middleton School District believes it is beneficial to the physical and mental well-being of our school students to return to physical activity and athletic competition. SMSD recognizes that it is likely that ALL students will not be able to return to – and sustain – athletic activity at the same time in all schools, leagues, and districts across Pennsylvania. There may also be variation in what sports and activities will be allowed to be played and held. While SMSD Leadership would typically have reservations regarding such inequities, SMSD endorses the idea of returning students to school-based athletics and activities when it can be done safely.

Points of Emphasis:

1. Decreasing potential exposure to respiratory droplets is the guiding principle behind social distancing and the use of face coverings. It is also the basis of the stratification of risk by sport. The use of cloth face coverings is meant to decrease the spread of respiratory droplets. As state and local COVID-19 prevalence increases, the need for strict social distancing and the use of face coverings is required. SMSD will look to guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
 - a. Governor, Tom Wolf, has ordered that public school entities in counties with substantial community transmission to attest to health and safety protocols. The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and prevention declared the coronavirus disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a national emergency in the United States of America. On March 6, 2020, Governor Wolf proclaimed the existence of a disaster emergency throughout the Commonwealth as a result of COVID-19, and further extended the disaster emergency by Amendment on June 3, 2020 and August 31, 2020. Following an initial curtailing of COVID-19 spread due to the Commonwealth’s mitigation efforts, a second wave of COVID-19 cases began in the summer months. Despite all efforts taken to date, the pandemic continues to spread, and taking action to prevent the spread while continuing to allow for necessary resumption of economic and social activity requires the Commonwealth to take steps to minimize the danger to Pennsylvanians as a result of participating in that activity.

- b. Recognizing the benefits and potential drawbacks of the use of cloth face coverings during conditioning and physical activity, SMSD recommends the following:
 - i. The wearing of cloth face coverings shall be strictly enforced.
 - ii. Cloth face coverings should be considered acceptable. There is no need to require or recommend “medical grade” masks for athletic activity.
 - iii. All student athletes, coaches, and training staff must follow current State orders for masking during workouts, practices, and competition.
 - iv. Plastic shields covering the entire face (or attached to a helmet) shall not be allowed during contests. Their use during practices increases the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or others.
 - v. Coaches, officials and other contest personnel must follow current State orders for masking during workouts, practices, and competition. Consistent with Department of Health Orders, coaches must wear face coverings and consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. This is a requirement under PDE and the DOH.
2. Due to the likelihood of recurrent future outbreaks in some locales, the South Middleton School District must be prepared for periodic school closures and the possibility of some teams having to isolate for significant periods while in-season. Development of policies is recommended regarding practice and/or competition during temporary school closures, the cancellation of contests during the regular season, and parameters for the cancellation or premature ending to post-season events/competitions.
3. With the uncertainty of which phase will be attained at the beginning of each sports season or maintained during a season, scheduling contests that require less travel when possible must be considered. Such scheduling will reduce time spent in buses or vans. It will also potentially decrease the need for rescheduling contests as “opening up” may occur regionally. If opponents at the time of a contest are subject to different restrictions, re-scheduling that contest for a later date may be considered.
4. The principles presented in this guidance document can be applied to practices, rehearsals, and events for the performing arts with the exception of singing and the playing of wind instruments. The extent of the spread of respiratory droplets during these activities is currently under investigation and further guidance will be issued as it becomes available.
5. “Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as persons age 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health

conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

6. Until a cure, vaccine, or very effective treatment is readily available, or so-called “herd immunity” is confidently reached, social distancing and other preventive measures such as face covering will be the minimum requirement if workouts, practices, and contests are to continue.

Areas to Address:

A. Preparticipation Physical Evaluation

Due to concerns regarding access to primary care providers during the late spring and early summer, the NFHS SMAC released a position statement giving guidance to state associations concerning timing of the Preparticipation Physical Evaluation. Options vary from a one-year extension to keeping current requirements. State associations and their SMACs can also consider interim history updates by having students complete a form or having a telemedicine visit with their primary care provider.

B. Mandatory Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the cancellation of essentially all “in person” educational events. It is recommended that online education courses take the place of “hands on” or in-person training, whenever possible. This includes accepting online training courses for AED/CPR and First Aid for the 2020-21 academic year.

C. Equipment Reconditioning

The National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association (NAERA) has advised that significant equipment reconditioning capacity is currently operational. If schools have not sent out equipment for reconditioning, they should be directed to do so immediately. If schools currently have equipment being reconditioned, a school official should contact the reconditioning company to make specific delivery arrangements if their school is currently closed.

D. Conduct of Conditioning and Practice Sessions

[Pennsylvania Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency.](#)

Launch date for sports related activities: (Sept. 4, 2020)

Primary Point of Contact

| Point of Contact Name | Position of Point of Contact | Contact Information |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Mr. Karl Heimbach | Athletic Director | ksh@smsd.us |
| Mr. Ben Witter | Athletic Trainer | blw@smsd.us |

Key Strategies, Policies, and Procedures

[Pennsylvania Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency.](#)

Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting, and Ventilation

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|--|---|---|--|-------------------|
| * Cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilating spaces, surfaces, and any other areas used by student athletes and sporting activities (i.e., restrooms, drinking fountains, locker rooms and transportation) | Maintenance staff custodians will sanitize spaces before athletes and coaches arrive and after they leave. | Zach Gump: Supervisor of Buildings & Ground, Safety & Security | Sanitizing solution Spray bottles | N |
| Other cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilation practices | Coaches, athletic administration, game help to sanitize if another team/group using space after their team. | Coaches, athletic administration, game help | Sanitizing solution Spray bottles | Y |

Social Distancing and Other Safety Protocols

See Appendix A

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <p>* Protocols for social distancing student athletes and staff throughout all activities, to the maximum extent feasible</p> | <p>Begin with limited contact and a phased approach as approved by Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director.</p> <p>Athletes will be reminded to stay socially distanced when not actively participating in practices and workouts.</p> <p>As competitions begin, student-athletes are expected to social distance and wear face coverings when participating in workouts, practices, and competition. Coaches will wear a face covering during all workouts, practices, and competition.</p> | Coaches | N/A | Y |
| <p>* Procedures for serving food at events</p> | <p>Concession stands will not be open until further notice.</p> | N/A | | N/A |
| <p>* Hygiene practices for student athletes and staff which include the manner and frequency of hand-washing and other best practices</p> | <p>Students must sanitize their hands before and after practice and competitions.</p> <p>Hand sanitizing will also be conducted throughout practices and competitions.</p> <p>Students must bring their own water bottles—water bottles are not to be shared and water fountains should not be used.</p> <p>Students should arrive dressed for practice and games.</p> | Coach | Touchless Water Dispensers and Hand sanitizer | Y |

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------|
| * Posting signs, in highly visible locations, that promote everyday protective measures, and how to stop the spread of germs | Signs will be posted in athletic facilities, bathrooms, and locker rooms to remind athletes of healthy habits. | Zach Gump: Supervisor of Buildings & Ground, Safety & Security | Signage | Y |
| * Identifying and restricting non-essential visitors and volunteers | All sports-related activities will adhere to limitations set forth in state and local guidelines. | AD and Event Staff | N/A | N |
| Limiting the sharing of materials and equipment among student athletes | Equipment may be shared but coaches are required to periodically sanitize frequently used items during practices. Anyone without a water bottle should see the Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer. Uniforms and practice clothing must be washed frequently. | Coaches | Sanitizing solution Spray bottles Sanitizing wipes | Y |
| Staggering the use of communal spaces (i.e., locker rooms, weight rooms, etc.) | Communal spaces will be used only for the purposes of equipment storage and health screenings. Face coverings will be required in ALL spaces. | Coaches | Sanitizing solution Sanitizing wipes Spray bottles | Y |
| Adjusting transportation schedules and practices to create social distance | Students are required to wear masks on school vans and buses and should sit distanced from others to the extent feasible. Two students per seat max on buses and 6 students max on school vans. | AD & Coaches | N/A | N |

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Limiting the number of individuals in athletic activity spaces, and interactions between groups of student athletes | <p>All sports-related activities will adhere to limitations set forth in state and local guidelines.</p> <p>Athletes will be socially distanced when not actively participating in drills or practices.</p> <p>There should be no shaking hands, fist bumps, and high fives. All unnecessary contact should be avoided between teammates, other athletes, coaches, officials, etc.</p> | AD, Coaches, & Event Staff | N/A | Y |

Monitoring Student Athletes and Staff Health

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------|
| * Monitoring student athletes and staff for symptoms and history of exposure | Screenings will be conducted before each practice, individual workout, or competition. | Coaches | Checklist | Y |
| * Isolating or quarantining student athletes, coaching staff, or visitors if they become sick or demonstrate a history of exposure | Follow Public Health Guidance for Pre-K to 12 Schools | Coaches Athletic Trainer | Emergency contact list for athletes | Y |
| * Returning isolated or quarantined coaches, staff or student athletes, to school and/or athletics | Follow Public Health Guidance for Pre-K to 12 Schools | Athletic Trainer Kim Spisak, Director of Student Services | N/A | N |
| Notifying coaching staff, families, and the public of cancellation of sports-related activities, school closures and other changes in safety protocols | SMSD website/social media platforms will be used to notify stakeholders of changes and rescheduling of events. | Karl Heimbach - Athletic Director | Athletics website | N |

Other Considerations for Student Athletes and Staff

| Requirements | Action Steps | Lead Individual and Position | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | PD Required (Y/N) |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------|
| * Protecting student athletes and coaching staff at higher risk for severe illness | Students who are uncomfortable participating due to medical concerns or fear of potential exposure may observe drills and competitions from a safe social distance. We will accommodate medical concerns of coaching staff if feasible. | Coaches | | N |
| * Use of face coverings by all coaches and athletic staff | Coaches and athletic staff are required to wear face coverings at all times. | Coaches | Face masks | N |
| * Use of face coverings by student athletes | Athletes participating in indoor physical activity where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance must wear face coverings to protect themselves and others around them including on the sidelines, communal spaces, and buses/vans. | Coaches Athletic Trainer | Face masks | N |
| Unique safety protocols for student athletes with complex needs or other vulnerable individuals | The Athletic Trainer will consult with school and medical personnel regarding these cases. | Athletic Trainer Kim Spisak, Director of Student Services | Medical Documentation of complex needs | |
| Management of Coaches and Athletic Staff | The daily reporting of symptom questionnaire sheet will be submitted to Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director. | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director Ben Widder, Athletic Trainer | Symptom questionnaire | |

Athletics Health and Safety Plan Professional Development

The success of our plan for resuming sports-related activities safely requires all stakeholders to be prepared with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement the plan as intended. The following are components of our professional learning plan.

| Topic | Audience | Lead Person and Position | Session Format | Materials, Resources, and or Supports Needed | Start Date | Completion Date |
|---|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Competitions and Practice procedures and expectations | Coaches | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director | In Person | Handouts for practice planning | Prior to 9/2/20 | 9/1/20 |
| COVID-19 Screening | Coaches | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director | In Person | Screening pages | Prior to 9/2/20 | 9/1/20 |
| Competitions Procedures | Student Athletes | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director | In Person/Virtual | Sport and Location specific hand-out | Prior to 9/2/20 | On-going |
| Competitions Procedures | Parents | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director | Virtual/ In-person/Email | Sport and Location specific hand-out | Prior to 9/4/20 | On-going |

Athletics Health and Safety Plan Communications

Timely and effective family and caregiver communication about sports-related health and safety protocols and schedules will be critical. We will establish and maintain ongoing communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in our community.

| Topic | Audience | Lead Person and Position | Mode of Communication | Start Date | Completion Date |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <p>Health and Safety Plan posted for public</p> <p>Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols. Coaches will participate in Safe School Training for cleaning and disinfecting equipment, as well as minimizing the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.</p> | Parents/Students | Karl Heimbach, Athletic Director | Website | Upon approval | N/A |

Athletics Health and Safety Plan Summary: South Middleton School District

Launch Date: September 4, 2020

Facilities Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting, and Ventilation

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|---|---|
| <p>* Cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilating learning spaces, surfaces, and any other areas used by students (i.e., restrooms, drinking fountains, locker rooms, and transportation)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning schedules have been created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases prior to season start and following each usage. • High use facilities will be cleaned with greater frequency. • Weight Room Equipment will be wiped down after an individual's use—team practice areas and restrooms will be cleaned daily. • Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces. • Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) will be cleaned intermittently during practices and events. • Coaches and athletic staff were trained on sanitization procedures by maintenance staff prior to season start and will be tasked to help spray down areas/items used by their teams. |

Social Distancing and Other Safety Protocols

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|---|--|
| <p>* Protocols for social distancing student athletes and staff throughout all activities through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, as prescribe in this plan.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sports-related activities will adhere to limitations set forth in state and local guidelines. • When possible, student athletes, and staff should maintain consistent grouping of people, to minimize virus spread. |

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|--|---|
| <p>* Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering. (Face coverings are required in certain instances and recommended in other instances to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual.)</p> <p>* PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant or determined by local/state governments.</p> <p>* Procedures for serving food at events including team meetings and meals</p> <p>* Hygiene practices for student athletes and staff including the manner and frequency of hand-washing and other best practices</p> <p>* Posting signs, in highly visible locations, that promote everyday protective measures, and how to stop the spread of germs</p> <p>* Identifying and restricting non-essential visitors and volunteers</p> <p>* Limiting the sharing of materials and equipment among student athletes</p> <p>* Athletes and Coaches MUST provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.</p> <p>* Staggering the use of communal spaces (i.e., locker rooms, weight rooms, etc.)</p> <p>* Adjusting transportation schedules and practices to create social distance between students</p> <p>* Limiting the number of individuals in athletic activity spaces and interactions between groups of student athletes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Large teams may be broken into smaller practice groups to minimize exposure should an athlete test positive for COVID-19. ● All sports-related activities will adhere to limitations set forth in state and local guidelines. ● Athletes must refrain from sharing clothing/towels and items must be washed after each practice and competition. ● Athletes must sanitize their hands before and after each practice and competition. ● Hand sanitizing will also be conducted throughout practices and competitions. ● Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar. ● Students MUST bring their own water bottle--water bottles must not be shared. ● Sidelines/bench/locker rooms— social distancing will be maintained when possible on sidelines/bench during competitions, practices and workouts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tape or paint may be used as a guide for students and coaches. ○ Athletes must arrive dressed for practices and games. ○ Social distancing practices will be followed during practices and competitions as well as bathrooms/gathering areas. ○ It is required that athletes and coaches wear face coverings in bathrooms/gathering areas ● All coaches/staff and athletes will be trained on social distancing and safety protocols ● Concession stands will not be open until further notice. |

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
|----------------|--------------------------------------|

Monitoring Student Athletes and Staff Health

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|--|---|
| <p>* Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. A screening tool can be found at the end of this guidance document as a guide – however, no screening tool should be directly contrary to any screening tool created by PDE.</p> <p>* Isolating or quarantining student athletes, coaching staff, or visitors if they become sick or demonstrate a history of exposure</p> <p>* Returning isolated or quarantined coaching staff, student athletes, or visitors to school</p> <p>* Notifying coaching staff, families, and the public of cancellation of sports-related activities, school closures and other changes in safety protocols</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to participate in practices or competitions. • COVID-19 Screenings will be conducted by coaches before practices and competitions. • Team attendance and screening responses (for both athletes and coaches) must be recorded each day to aid in longitudinal data tracking for individual athletes and contact tracing should an athlete/coach test positive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Daily screening responses will be submitted by coaches to the Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer. • Anyone answering “Yes” to any screening questions will be removed and isolated immediately. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The parent/guardian will be notified immediately, and the athlete should leave the team event as soon as possible. • Families will be notified of an illness or exposure to the team via email, Remind app or similar method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modifications to practice and competition schedule may be necessary depending on exposure. ○ Athletic Director and Athletic Training Staff will be consulted to develop a plan to ensure the safety of the rest of the team. ○ Modifications to the SMSD Athletic Health and Safety Plan will be posted to the District and Athletics websites/social media platforms. • Plan in place if a student or employee gets sick. • The Athletic Department in conjunction with Superintendent of Schools and high school principal will provide notification to families on cancellation of sports related activities, school closure and within school-year changes using District notification systems. |

Other Considerations for Student Athletes and Staff

| Requirement(s) | Strategies, Protocols and Procedures |
|--|--|
| <p>* Protecting student athletes and coaching staff at higher risk for severe illness</p> <p>* Use of face coverings by all coaches and athletic staff</p> <p>* Use of face coverings by student athletes as appropriate</p> <p>* Unique safety protocols for student athletes with complex needs or other vulnerable individuals</p> <p>* Management of Coaches and Athletic Staff</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions. (See - CDC “People Who are at a Higher Risk for Severe Illness”) • Coaches and assistants will be queried as to whether they intend to coach this year given the circumstances and plan the district has in place. • Athletes and coaches who are sick with COVID-19 or suspect they have symptoms of COVID-19 will STAY HOME to protect others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anyone with active or suspected illness is instructed to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare provider for screening and treatment. • The use of face coverings will be in accordance with the PA Department of Health regulations and guidelines. • Students who are uncomfortable participating due to medical concerns or fear of potential exposure may observe drills and competitions from a safe social distance. • Practices or games may be canceled if there are not enough coaches / board approved volunteers due to illness or individual quarantine. • All stakeholders will be trained on these procedures by the Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer and reminded throughout the season as needed. |

Athletics Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors of the **South Middleton School District** reviewed and approved the Athletics Health and Safety Plan on

The plan was approved by a vote of:

_____ **Yes**

_____ **No**

Affirmed on:

By:

(Signature of Board President)

(Print Name of Board President)