

Plan for Resuming Volleyball Duanesburg Central Schools

Governor Cuomo recently announced that effective February 1, 2021, participants in higher-risk sports may participate in individual or distanced group training and organized no/low-contact group training and other types of play, including competitions and tournaments, if permitted by local health authorities.

Subsequently, Schenectady County Public Health Services Interim Public Health Director Keith Brown [released guidance](#) for districts in Schenectady County to follow. As with all aspects of our reopening, Duanesburg Central Schools will strictly follow this guidance in order to ensure that we are able to provide opportunities to students in the safest way possible.

Because of the nature of higher-risk sports, participating involves some risk to the health of participants, their families, and our school system. In order to minimize this risk, DCS athletes, coaching staff, volunteers, and officials will closely follow the guidance as stated in this plan. Failure to do so may result in immediate termination of the sports season.

Plan administrator (Responsible for communicating the plan to student-athletes, coaches, parents, trainers, referees/officials, etc.)

Penny Hardenstine Director of Athletics

Plan coordinator (Serves as a point of contact, should any cases be identified. The coordinator must facilitate and assist with case investigation and contact elicitation and notification.)

Penny Hardenstine, Director of Athletics and Stephanie Yauchler, HS Nurse

Schenectady County Public Health Metrics

In order to be eligible to restart higher-risk sports, SCPHS has advised the district that the following minimum metrics must be achieved countywide:

- The 7-day rolling average percent positivity in the county, as calculated by NYSDOH, must be at or below 4.0%. If the 7-day rolling average percent positivity is above 4.0%, then activities must be restricted to individual or distanced group training or organized no/low-contact group training.
- The region's hospital capacity (percent of hospital beds available) must be above 15%, as calculated by NYSDOH. The region's rate of hospital admissions must not be unacceptably high or require additional interventions to control the rate of growth, as determined by NYSDOH.
- The absence of other emerging epidemiological data, information or factors as determined or identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) or Albany County Department of Health that impact COVID-19 control or mitigation.

The rise of any or all of these metrics may result in suspension or termination of the season.

Participant Agreement

In order to participate in the sports season, students, coaches, volunteers, and officials must sign a consent agreement that indicates their understanding of the risks involved with COVID-19. These risks must include the following:

- Participation in the sport may expose the student-athlete to COVID-19.
- Symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can spread the virus.
- Masking, distancing, and other mitigation measures reduce, but do not eliminate risk.
- At present, it cannot be predicted who will become severely ill if infected.
- COVID-19 can lead to serious medical conditions and death for people of all ages.
- The long-term effects of COVID-19 are, at present, unknown; even people with mild cases may experience long-term complications.
- There is a significant risk of transmission to those in the home of infected student-athletes.
- Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk of serious disease.
- Each district/school obtains a medical clearance from the student-athletes healthcare provider.

In addition, each student must also sign a pledge saying “I understand that what I do outside of practice and competition can affect the health of teammates, opponents, and the community. My actions can directly impact the future of the sports season.”

In addition, each participant’s primary health care provider must consent to the participant’s fitness to participate in the sport.

Daily system to ensure wellness of participants, coaches, spectators, and officials

- All coaches, staff, and athletes must attest that they are in good health and are not experiencing symptoms of Covid-19. A record of these attestations must be maintained using the district’s attestation application.
- All coaches, staff, and athletes will have their temperature taken and recorded upon arrival to practice/games and before loading the bus to an away game.
- Officials will be required to complete the attestation and have their temperature taken and recorded when they arrive for the game.
- Spectators will not be allowed at volleyball games. The exception will be Senior Night.
 - Each senior will be allowed two guests to attend
 - Guests will be required to complete the attestation and have their temperature taken and recorded when they arrive for the game.

System for logging attendance by all individuals associated with the practice or competition

(Must capture names, phone numbers, email addresses and counties of residence of all in attendance).

Each coach will be given an attendance log using Google Sheets to complete daily. This sheet will include:

- Team roster and the contact information listed above for each athlete, coach, and event staff.
- Daily temperature for each person in attendance. The recorded temperature serves as a certification of that individual feeling well, and daily attendance

Practice and game times congestion avoidance

Practice:

- Squad size is limited to 12
- Varsity squad size can be expanded the first three days for tryouts.
- JV and Varsity will practice consecutively with the first team exiting the gym to the weight room, hallways, or home 15 minutes prior to the arrival of the second team.

Practice Pod Groups

The Varsity team and the JV Team will not exceed a roster of 12 individuals.

- Varsity Coaches will determine rosters after practice #3 establishing the two independent squads.
- These squads will remain separate unless the varsity squad size drops below 12, and it becomes necessary to add a player(s) to the varsity squad from the JV squad
- The teams will practice at separate times
- The teams will travel separately to away games.
- The teams will wait in the bleachers, away from the playing team, during away events.

Sharing of objects and equipment

During skill and drill work, each athlete will be assigned their own ball to use for the day.

During team activities, such as running plays:

- All athletes will be required to wash/sanitize their hands before engaging in team activities
- Two ball racks will be identified, one for used balls waiting to be sanitized, one for clean balls.
- Clean volleyballs will be rotated in before each new team activity and/or athlete change.
- Athletes using the fitness room will wipe down equipment after each use. This will be supervised by a coach.

Cleaning of field of play surface

- The gym floors will be cleaned at the end of the school day and before the first practice/game.
- The floors will be cleaned again after the last practice/game.
- After practices coaches will wipe down any bleachers, seating, areas etc.
- After games the bleachers, chairs, score table, handsets, will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes such as "Monk"

Ventilation of Practice and Competition Areas

- The ventilation fans in the gymnasium will be at maximum allowable outdoor exchange air per outdoor air temperature.
- Gym doors will remain open at all times

Locker Rooms and Showers

Will not be used

Carpooling

Carpooling will be discouraged to the extent possible.

Athletes are required to ride the bus to and from away games.

Bus Travel

If the combined squad size exceeds 18, the teams will travel separately to games.

- One person per bench seat. Maximum 14 people, plus the driver, on a 64 passenger bus
- Athletes and coaching staff will have assigned seats, for the season, on all athletic buses.
- All athletes coaching staff and drivers will have temperatures taken and recorded, and attestation completed prior to departure.
- No one who is feeling unwell or has a temperature of 100+ will be allowed to travel.

Congregate Dining

Teams will refrain from team meals.

If a team elects to have a team meal following Senior Night, they must submit a request to the Director of Athletics. The request must include:

- Location
- Number of attendees including names and contact information.
- Protocols for following NYS DOH regulations on dining and gatherings.

Emphasis of Prevention Methods

- Masks will be worn by all event staff, coaches, students, at all times.
- Athletes will be required to bring their own personal water bottle which is clearly identified as theirs.
- Athletes will store personal items at a designated spot in the gym/hallway. This space shall be a minimum of 6' away from the personal belongings of other athletes.
- Athletes will be required to wash/sanitize their hands upon arrival to the gym.
- Athletes will not be allowed to share snacks.

- To the extent possible, athletes will be assigned their own equipment for practice
- Volleyballs will be separated on two racks. One which contains unused/clean balls and one with used balls.
 - Used basketballs will be cleaned at the end of practice following the Spaulding Sports Ball cleaning recommendations
 - Use a damp cloth with soap and water, apply moderate pressure
 - Do not over saturate the ball
 - Allow to air dry.
- Athletes are strongly encouraged to shower immediately upon arrival home and to wash their work out gear/uniforms immediately.
- Athletes are required to show up dressed to play.
- Team benches will be non-linear and socially distanced in the bleachers on and behind the bench.
- Visiting teams will be assigned their own Section of bleachers.
- Hand sanitizers will be provided in the gym for each team's use.

Unnecessary Physical Contact

Athletes, Coaches, and event staff will remain socially distanced to the extent possible.

- The teams will be introduced but remain at their bench
- The handshake will be eliminated both prior to the game and following the game.
- High fives will not be permitted
- Teams will be assigned a classroom for pre-game, half time, and post-game meetings

Overnight Travel

There will be no overnight travel

Use of Cloth Face Masks

Cloth face coverings/masks that conform to recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are required to be worn at all times, by all student-athletes, coaches, managers, referees/officials, spectators, individuals dropping off or picking up student-athletes, etc.

- It is important that the cloth face covering/mask fits the individual well and is worn over the nose
- and below the chin at all times when in use.
- If the cloth face covering/mask is removed for a break, the individual should remain at least 6 feet away from all other individuals.
- Cloth face coverings must be washed daily in hot water and not reused until cleaned.
- Coaches, managers, and other school employees should monitor proper use of cloth face coverings/masks and correct improper use, when indicated.
- Individuals with a medical condition that would be complicated by wearing a cloth face covering/mask can apply to the district/school medical director for an exemption by providing appropriate documentation that the condition will be present throughout the length of the sports season.
- Additional coverings will be provided as needed during all practices and competitions

Spectators

Spectators will not be allowed at DCS games. The exception will be Senior Night, where each Senior Athlete will be allowed to have two spectators attend the game. The facilities will be secured at all times.

Entry will be monitored at all times.

Vaccination Status

Vaccination status does not alter any requirements.

Ill participants, spectators, coaches, and others associated with competition or practice

Any person exhibiting signs/symptoms of Covid-19, or having a temperature of 100+ will not be admitted into the building, or onto a school bus. This includes all athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, spectators, or other persons attending a practice or game. If an athlete feels ill or presents with symptoms at a game or practice they will be isolated in the nurse' office until a parent arrives to transport them home. Adults who feel ill will be sent home immediately. Coaches, or event staff will notify the Director of Athletics immediately when a person is sent home.

Testing

Coaches and athletes will be required to participate in surveillance screening tests as recommended by Schenectady County Public Health Services. If a positive is detected through a rapid test screening by the school nurse indicates a possible positive, the individual must verify the positive with a PCR test before being allowed to participate.

Bubble Leagues

The WAC has divided the league into two divisions to reduce cross county contact. Schools will play the teams within their division. No games are permitted with opponents outside of the league.

Complaint Hotline and Log of Complaints

Complaints regarding implementation of health and safety guidelines should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. James Niedermeier, who can be reached by email at jniedermeier@duanesburg.org or at 518-895-2279 x241. A record of all complaints and resolutions will be kept by Dr. Niedermeier and available upon request to local health officials.

Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation

All other guidance in NYS's Interim Guidance For Sports And Recreation During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency must be followed wherever games and practices are held.

Parent/Guardian Informed Consent

I/we understand that participation in high risk sports may expose our student athlete, _____, to Covid-19. We recognize that at present, it cannot be predicted who will become severely ill if infected. Both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can spread the virus and preventative measures such as masking, distancing, and other mitigation measures reduce, but do not eliminate the risk Covid-19. This virus can lead to serious medical conditions and death for people of all ages. The long-term effects of COVID-19 are not known; even people with mild cases may experience long-term complications. We acknowledge there is a significant risk of transmission to those in the home of infected student-athletes. Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at a higher risk of serious disease. Duaneburg Central Schools requires parents to obtain a medical clearance from the student's healthcare provider before participating in interscholastic high risk sports.

Coaches and athletes will be required to participate in surveillance screening tests as recommended by Schenectady County Public Health Services. If a positive is detected through a rapid test or screening by the school nurse indicates a possible positive, the individual must verify the positive with a PCR test before being allowed to participate.

I understand that what I do outside of practice and competition can affect the health of teammates, opponents, and the community.

Parent/Guardian #1 _____

Parent/Guardian #2 _____

Student Athlete _____

Date _____

Medical Provider Consent

1/30/21

Dear Medical Provider,

As you know, Governor Cuomo has stated that “high risk” sports may begin play as of February 1st, pending the approval of local Department of Health guidelines. Our local health department has stated that our athletes need permission from their own medical providers as of 1/29/01 or later in order to join their team and compete.

I am requesting permission for my son/daughter _____ to participate in the interscholastic sport of _____ at Duanesburg CSD during the 2021 season. The guidelines do not require that you physically see them in person, although that is certainly your prerogative should you choose to do so.

I request that you sign below indicating your consent. To expedite this process I am requesting that you fax or email the permission form to:

Penny Hardenstine, Director of Phys. Ed and Athletics
phardenstine@duanesburg.org
Fax: (518) 895-9971

If you have any questions please contact Penny or Stephanie Yauchler,
syauchler@duanesburg.org Duanesburg Jr/Sr. HS Nurse

Medical Provider:

Phone:

Date:

Approval of Plan to Resume Volleyball at Duanesburg CSD

District Superintendent _____ Date _____

District Medical Director _____ Date _____

Board of Education _____ Date _____