

Lowell Public Schools Department of Athletics

COVID-19 Plan for Fall Sports





Agenda

- Schedule of High School Sports for 2020-2021
- COVID-19 Plan for Sports
- COVID-19 Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season
- Merrimack Valley Conference Contest Day Operations
 - Screening Procedures
 - Face Masks/Coverings
 - Venue Restrictions / Spectator Guidelines
- Transportation



ATHLETICS





Schedule of High School Sports for 20-21

The MIAA COVID-19 Task Force recommended and the MIAA Board of Directors endorsed the following season structure for the 2020-2021 academic year:

- **Sept 18th – Nov. 20th:** *Fall Sports I* - B/G Cross Country, and Golf will play. B/G Soccer, Field Hockey and Girls Volleyball is currently scheduled for Fall I, but may be moved to Fall II. Fall Crew will not be offered due to the COVID-related closure of the Bellegarde Boathouse. Football is allowed to practice per MIAA rules.
- **Nov. 30th - Feb. 21st:** *Winter Sports* - B/G Basketball, B/G Hockey, Wrestling, B/G Gymnastics, B/G Indoor Track, Winter Cheer and Boys Swim/Dive (MIAA Meeting in early November)
- **Feb. 22nd - April 25th:** *Fall Sports II* - Football, Competitive Cheer, Girls Swim/Dive, Unified Basketball and **sports not played in Fall Season I**
- **April 26th - July 3rd:** *Spring Sports* - Baseball, Softball, B/G Lacrosse, B/G Tennis, B/G Track, Boys Volleyball and B/G Crew



ATHLETICS



COVID-19 Plan for Sports

- The health and safety of our school communities must remain the top priority, and we recognize that any plans for athletic opportunities must adapt to evolving public health metrics.
- Our goal is to keep student-athletes safely participating in their sport throughout the season.
- We will be following health and safety guidelines from several organizations:
 - Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
 - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
 - Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)
 - Merrimack Valley Conference (MVC)



ATHLETICS



ATHLETICS

COVID Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season

- The state provides a weekly COVID update on Wednesdays, and codes each city in Massachusetts as **green**, **yellow** or **red** based on the average daily case rate per 100,000 residents.
- As part of the most recent update on September 30, Lowell was elevated to “**red**,” which means our city has an average daily case rate of more than 8 per 100,000 residents. According to today’s update, Lowell’s average daily case rate per 100,000 is 10.9.
- Including Lowell, five Merrimack Valley Conference (MVC) communities were identified on 9/30/2020 as “**red**” on the state’s community-level data map, bringing the total to six MVC communities as “**red**” (representing 7 of the 11 MVC schools).



ATHLETICS

COVID Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season

- While DESE guidance indicates that we should not make decisions about educational learning models until we examine multiple weeks of data, this recent increase of cases gives us pause for concern in regard to interscholastic competitions as they mix cohorts of students from multiple communities.
- Simply put, we want to proceed cautiously in order to not put our students, their families, or our communities at higher risk until we know more about the trajectory of the virus in this area.

MVC
MERRIMACK VALLEY CONFERENCE



COVID Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season

- MVC member schools have jointly agreed to take the following actions:
 - For sports designated as low risk by DESE and MIAA, where students from opposing schools do not physically interact, interscholastic competitions can currently proceed as scheduled.
 - This includes **cross country** and **golf**



ATHLETICS

MVC
MERRIMACK VALLEY CONFERENCE



ATHLETICS

COVID Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season

- MVC member schools have jointly agreed to take the following actions:
 - For sports designated as moderate risk by DESE and MIAA, all interscholastic competitions scheduled for this week will be postponed until later in the fall season, and will be reassessed after the 10/7/2020 report is published.
 - This includes **field hockey, soccer, and volleyball**
 - Options include moving forward with a season with modified schedules, or postponing at this time until the "Fall II" season (Feb. 22 - Apr. 25)

MVC
MERRIMACK VALLEY CONFERENCE



COVID Data & Impact on Fall Sports Season

- MVC member schools have jointly agreed to take the following actions:
 - For sports designated as high risk, the seasons have been moved to the “Fall II” season later in the year (Feb. 22 - Apr. 25)
 - This includes **competitive cheer, football, and unified basketball**
 - **Girls Swimming/diving** was also moved to Fall II



ATHLETICS

MVC
MERRIMACK VALLEY CONFERENCE



ATHLETICS

Fall Sports I Season

- LHS teams participating in the Fall I season started practice on September 18.
- First Game/Match
 - Golf - September 30th
 - Cross Country - October 2nd
 - B/G Soccer, Field Hockey, Girls Volleyball - TBD
- High School Schedule
 - Only scheduled to play games vs. schools in the MVC.
- Practice
 - B/G Soccer, Field Hockey, Girls Volleyball will continue to practice while the season is on “pause”.



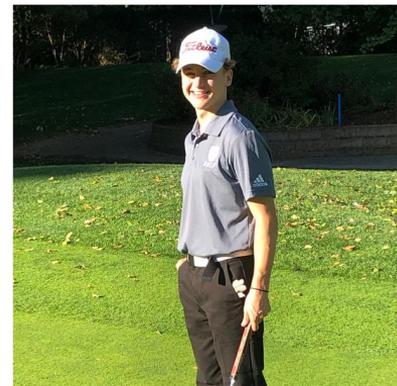
LHS Teams in Action



ATHLETICS



LHS Teams in Action



ATHLETICS



LHS Teams in Action



ATHLETICS



Merrimack Valley Conference Contest Day Operations



Contest Day Screening Procedures

- Working with the MVC, we have COVID-19 contest day screening procedures for student-athletes, staff and game officials.
- Athletics Directors, Coaches and Athletic Trainers have all taken the NFHS COVID-19 course and are prepared to handle any situation that may arise.



ATHLETICS



Merrimack Valley Conference Contest Day Operations



Game Day Face Masks / Coverings

- We will be following guidelines set forth by DESE and the MIAA, and student-athletes will be wearing masks, while participating in their sport.
- This includes wearing a mask on the bus to and from the game, on the sideline, during practice, and even while on the field during a game/match.
- Coaches and Athletic Trainers will also be wearing masks.
- Exception: Masks do not need to be worn if athletes or staff can safely socially distance (at least 6 feet) while outdoors.



ATHLETICS



Merrimack Valley Conference Contest Day Operations



Spectator Guidelines

- As part of COVID-19 protocols there are several venue-related restrictions.
 - No auxiliary personnel at games including cheerleaders or band members, for example.

- Outdoor Spectator Guidelines
 - Crowds are limited to 50 people - 25 for the home team and 25 for the away team.
 - Check-in will be required at each LHS game site.
 - Spectators must socially distance and wear face coverings at all times.
 - Unfortunately, student spectators are not allowed unless they are attending in place of a student's family member.

- There will be no spectators for indoor sports.



ATHLETICS



ATHLETICS

Transportation

Guidelines for transporting our student-athletes to and from contests:

- Social distancing rules apply on the bus
- Players will have assigned seats on the bus
- Transportation will be provided to and from the event
- Any student-athlete going home with a parent after a game instead of riding the team bus needs a note