



Shaler Area School District
Interscholastic Athletic Resocialization Plan
June 2020

~Approved by the Board of School Directors on June 17, 2020~

Introduction

This document contains standards and guidelines for resuming athletic programs and athletic participation for Middle School and High School Interscholastic Athletics in the Shaler Area School District (SASD). With recommendations from health care professionals at the University of Pittsburgh Sports Medicine Department along with guidance prepared by the [Pennsylvania Department of Education](#) (PDE), [Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association](#) (PIAA) and [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#) this document outlines the details related to reintroducing athletic programs to Shaler Area School District. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the SASD will take necessary precautions and comply with guidelines from the federal, state, and local governments, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Pennsylvania Department of Health, as well as the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and PIAA, to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. The goal is to keep transmission as low as possible to safely continue athletic activities.

The recommendations below will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

Disclosure

This document does not supersede any state or federal guidelines currently in place or any future directives that may be issued by public health officials.

Participating in interscholastic athletics both at the high school and middle levels is a privilege, and it is of the utmost importance that athletes work with coaches and staff to help adhere to the following safety guidelines. Doing so is a responsibility of participating in interscholastic athletics, both in and out of season. Failure to adhere to the safety guidelines may jeopardize an athlete's ability to participate.

Social Distancing

- Social Distancing will be encouraged at all times (six feet at a minimum).
 - Athletes will sit every other seat on a bench and will avoid using dugouts when safely possible.

- Athletes will stand six feet apart when not participating in a drill or activity that requires closer contact.
- Staff will be limited to essential personnel only.
- Capacity of fields and locker rooms will be considered when determining the appropriate number of participants.
- Groups will be limited to the smallest number possible.
- Virtual team meetings will take place when feasible.
- Unnecessary contact will be avoided between all students and personnel. This includes but not limited to handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, or elbow bumps.
- When using the weight room, spotting should be on the sides. Surfaces and equipment should be wiped down between lifters. Appropriate clothing should be worn, as to limit sweat being transferred onto equipment/surfaces.
- Individuals (student athletes, coaches and staff who are exhibiting any of the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) prior to arriving for athletic events should remain home and immediately contact the respective coach.

Sanitization

- All equipment will be cleaned as much as possible during sessions, but at minimum after each training session by our Athletic Maintenance Department.
- When possible, athletes will not share gear and instead use their own personal equipment.
- Each athlete will have their own personal defined hydration container that is never to be shared.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available throughout SASD facilities for use before, during, and after workouts.
- All team personnel (coaches, trainers, athletes) will disinfectant hands (wash or hand sanitizer) prior to participation.
- There will be no shared athletic towels, clothing, or shoes between athletes.
- Students will be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothes immediately upon returning home.
- Locker room use for out-of-season workouts will be limited. During off-season workouts, no athletes will be permitted to maintain a locker in school facilities.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Student athletes, coaches, and staff will be required to use masks when in all indoor spaces and when not actively engaging in the sport.
 - While it may be difficult to wear a mask when actively participating in a sport that takes place indoors on a court, the percentage of time without the mask will be limited to the active participation time.
- Wearing cloth face coverings is most important when physical distancing is difficult.

- Cloth face coverings are adequate (surgical or N95, while also acceptable, are not necessary). The [CDC website](#) has complete references for mask specifications and maintenance. The garment should cover both the nose and mouth and allow for continued unlabored breathing.

Pre-Participation Screening

Prior to resuming any pre-season activities, all athletes and coaching personnel will need to have a pre-participation screening. Screening numbers will be limited and by appointment only. Additional information on dates, times etc. will be shared by each Head Coach.

The following COVID-19 screening questions will be used:

1. Have you had any known exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual?
2. Have you been tested for COVID-19?
3. Have you had any new onset cough or shortness of breath?
4. Have you experienced any recent febrile illness? (temp above 100.4 degrees F).

Daily Screening

- All coaches and student athletes will be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to any workout or event. (See Appendix I for COVID-19 Screening Form).
- Screenings will include a temperature check and questioning to each person for COVID-19 symptoms. These responses should be recorded and stored to provide a record.
- Attendance will be recorded for contact tracing reasons.
- If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they must be sent home.
- Any individual with suspected positive COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to take part in workouts.
 - Student athletes will need to contact parents/guardians for immediate pick-up
 - Parents should contact their primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional for guidance.

Acclimatization Steps

(Adapted from UPMC & NFHS guidance)

As many athletes are deconditioned from the quarantine, a six-week acclimatization period will be instituted. This will occur in a phased and staggered manner to help prevent potential spread of illness by any asymptomatic carriers.

Phase One

During phase one, teams will be broken down into groups of no more than 10 student athletes. These groups will remain constant for the next two weeks. Additionally, students will be permitted to participate in non-contact workouts in their small groups.

- Team members will continue to wear masks when indoors.
- Facilities and equipment will be cleaned following each session.
- Continue to have all meetings on a virtual platform.

Phase Two

After 14 days of small groups (10 or less) and no positive COVID-19 cases in the particular team, the smaller groups may be merged into groups of no more than 50 students who can now participate in full contact. Social distancing will be maintained at all other times such as in the weight rooms and locker rooms.

- Team members will continue to wear masks when indoors.
- Facilities and equipment will be cleaned following each session.

Phase Three

After the six week period has been completed and no positive COVID-19 cases in the particular team, the smaller group may combine to the total group for full practices and competition. Social distancing protocols will remain in place at all other times.

- Team members will continue to wear masks when indoors.
- Facilities and equipment will be cleaned following each session.

Illness Protocol

- Should an individual become ill during any of the above phases, they will be removed from the group immediately, masked if not already, and isolated in their individual space. The parent/guardian and Athletic Director will be notified right away.
- The parent/guardian will be encouraged to seek treatment from a medical professional.
- If testing is conducted and yields a positive result, contact tracing should be initiated and SASD will work in collaboration with the Allegheny County Health Department.
- A student who has contracted COVID-19 will need to follow guidelines for return to play. These guidelines will be given to athletes and the parents/guardians by the SASD.

Hydration

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) will not be utilized.

Travel

- Modifications for team transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary based on current Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines.
- This may include:
 - Reducing the number of students and coaches on a bus or van
 - Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus or van

- Social distancing on a bus
- These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, contractor, Department of Education, State and Local governments.

Athletic Event Spectators and Gatherings

The Shaler Area School District will continue to monitor and evaluate guidance provided as it relates to spectators attending high/middle school athletic functions, including conditioning, practices and competition. During the Yellow and Green phases of Pennsylvania's reopening plan, sports-related activities at the PK-12 level are limited to student athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. The addition of visitors (including but not limited to parents/guardians, media etc.) and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.

Education

- Staff, Coaches, Parents, and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):
 - COVID-19 signs and symptoms
 - Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, etc.)
 - The content of this Interscholastic Athletic Resocialization Plan
 - Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by DOH, local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.

Primary Point of Contact

Parents/Guardians who have questions or concerns regarding the Shaler Area School District Interscholastic Athletic Resocialization Plan should contact Clint Rauscher, Athletic Director at rauscher@sasd.k12.pa.us.

Appendix I

**Shaler Area School District
Athletic Department
Daily Team COVID-19 Screening**

Team: _____ Date: _____

Location: _____ Event: _____

Students and Coaches should self-report as deemed necessary prior to each practice/event. Temperature may be taken from a designated, trained individual as needed. The other symptoms should be marked with an “N” for NO or a “Y” for Yes answers.

**For the column “Close Contact,” the answer should reflect the following question: Within the past 14 days, have you had close contact with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19? (Note: Close contact is defined as within 6ft for more than 10 consecutive minutes, without PPE equipment.)

If any responses are “YES” to any question, the student will NOT be allowed to participate in team activities, and will be asked to leave school grounds. Parents or Guardian will be notified.

COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form

Name	Time	Circle Yes/No below										Temp (if higher than 100.3°F)
		Fever		Cough		Sore Throat		Shortness of Breath		Close contact, or cared for someone with COVID-19		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	

Appendix II

Shaler Area School District Athletic Department

Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases Including COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges concerning this highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. Some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the SASD will take necessary precautions and comply with guidelines from public health authorities, such as the Centers for Disease Control and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, as well as the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association, to attempt to mitigate the risks to students, coaches, and their families. As knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, SASD reserves the right to adjust and implement precautionary methods as necessary to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators. Some precautionary methods in the SASD Interscholastic Athletic Resocialization Plan include but may not be limited to:

1. Health screenings prior to any practice, event, or team meeting with participation in the activities being limited and/or prohibited where an individual displays positive responses or symptoms.
2. Encourage social distancing and promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, using hand sanitizer, etc.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
5. Require Athletes and Coaches to provide their own water bottle for hydration.

By signing this form, the undersigned voluntarily agree to the following Waiver and release of liability. The undersigned agree to waive, release and discharge SASD, its Board of Directors, employees, volunteers, successors and assigns, , and will hold them harmless from any and all claims, causes of action, liability, expenses, losses, damages, injuries and/or illnesses associated with exposure to COVID-19 or any other communicable disease arising out of the Student's participation in SASD's athletic programs, events, and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The undersigned acknowledge that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may involve a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. The undersigned further acknowledge that they are aware of the risks

associated with COVID-19 and that certain vulnerable individuals may have greater health risks associated with exposure to COVID-19, including individuals with serious underlying health conditions such as, but not limited to: high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, asthma, and those whose immune systems that are compromised by chemotherapy for cancer, and other conditions requiring such therapy. While recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risks associated with participating in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk of serious illness, medical complications and possible death does exist.

We knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of the released parties, other student-athletes or others, and assume full responsibility for Student's participation in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic. We willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by the SASD to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. We certify that Student is in good physical condition or believe Student to be in good physical condition and allow participation in this sport at our own risk.

Sport: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____