

Howard County Public School System Athletics Framework for 2020-21

OUR GOAL

Working within the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) plans and under the guidance provided by the MPSSAA, our goal is to **create safe and meaningful participation opportunities for HCPSS student-athletes during the 2020-2021 school year.**

First Semester Plan

Guiding Principles:

Understanding the balance between workload and time commitment for both the student athlete (SA) and coaching staff.

Using this opportunity to engage the SA while understanding that participation in the first semester virtual sessions is not required by the coach or the SA. **These activities are strictly voluntary.**

While HCPSS athletics will be starting in a virtual setting, the Office of Athletics in conjunction with the Return To Play committee is working on a plan to return to in-person instruction in small groups. Instruction will comply with local health department and Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations at the time of implementation and will follow the timeline for return to small group instruction for the Howard County Public School System. All forms will be required prior to any in-person sessions.

Virtual Engagement Sessions

Coaches are able to engage with prospective team members for 60-90 minutes one day a week from the beginning of the virtual period through January 22, 2021, excluding any school system holidays or religious observance days.

Fall Sports: Mondays
Winter Sports: Wednesdays
Spring Sports: Fridays

Considerations for Virtual Engagement Sessions:

- 1) Must be open to all students attending the school offering these sessions.
- 2) Virtual Training Periods may **NOT** include tryouts. These sessions are not to be used as criteria for making a team.

- 3) Sessions may include an Athletic Trainer from Pivot assigned to that school. Services Pivot Sports Medicine can provide during the virtual engagement period are listed in **Appendix A**.
- 4) AAMs will provide oversight for all teams by attending at least one team gathering per week per sport or by staying in regular communication with head coaches throughout the virtual period.
- 5) Coaches should submit virtual plans of engagement prior to the first session for approval by the AAM.

Consideration in Planning any sessions

Coaches, Athletics and Activities Managers, and Athletic Trainers may choose from any of the following to include in a virtual setting:

Conditioning programs
Skills and sport instruction
Nutrition
Academic support
Recruiting
Team Building
Character Development
Film Study
Mental exercises (brain teasers, challenges, video quizzes)
Quizzes on sports related rules/concepts
Quotes and inspirational messages
Clips of recommended workouts
Sportsmanship activities
Nfhslearn.com courses

Include regular email communication between gatherings, possibly to include references/assignments

Resources/Ideas for Coaching in the Virtual Space:

Relevant Magazine/Journal articles

- *Seven Essentials to Successfully Coach Virtual Teams* <https://www.skipprichard.com/7-essentials-to-successfully-coach-virtual-teams/>
- *Staying Connected with your Teams during the Pandemic* <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/staying-connected-with-your-teams-during-the-pandemic/>
- *Tape and Twitter: Recruiting offers new challenges for high school athletes, coaches* https://observer-reporter.com/sports/tape-and-twitter-recruiting-offers-new-challenges-for-high-school-athletes-coaches/article_47e03426-93a3-11ea-8d9a-5b436ee666a2.html
- *Special Olympics Our Top Ten Ideas for Virtual Coaching Sessions*
- <https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/covid-19/6-Our-Top-10-Ideas-for-Virtual-Coaching-Sessions.pdf>

- *Coronavirus & Youth Sports- Calls For Coaches*
https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2020/04/Calls-for-Coaches-Adapted-for-COVID-19-Response-FINAL_1.pdf
- Website: *Project Play, applies and shares knowledge that helps stakeholders build health communities through sports* <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/>
- *Online Training, Classes and Workouts* <https://www.sportsengine.com/virtual-programs>
- *BSN SPORTS Coaching Clinics* <https://www.varsitybrands.com/virtual>
- pandemic tips for sports community
- <https://appliedsportpsych.org/blog/2020/03/the-covid-19-pandemic-tips-for-athletes-coaches-parents-and-the-sport-community/>
- Project Play is reporting on the latest developments in youth sports and physical activity related to COVID-19. Articles, webinars, coach resources. See attachment.
- <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/coronavirus-and-youth-sports>
- Coach responsibility to prepare athletes
- <https://thesportjournal.org/article/a-coachs-responsibility-learning-how-to-prepare-athletes-for-peak-performance/>
- Mental training importance
- www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-power-prime/201811/what-mental-training-sports-is-really-all-about%3famp
- Good potential apps:
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2020/04/28/youth-sports-teams-take-practices-locker-rooms-online-during-pandemic/%3foutputType=amp>
 Ex app- <https://www.homecourt.ai>
- <https://coachad.com/news/transformational-over-transactional-coaching/>
- <https://coachad.com/articles/five-strategies-for-team-support-during-covid-19/>
- <https://coachad.com/news/atlanta-falcons-coach-advises-high-school-coaches-on-racial-tension-coronavirus/>
- <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>
- www.azcentral.com/story/sports/high-school/2020/05/09/arizona-high-school-football-teams-conduct-virtual-spring-football/3090935001/
- <https://appliedsportpsych.org/blog/2020/03/the-covid-19-pandemic-tips-for-athletes-coaches-parents-and-the-sport-community/>
- <https://www.theitem.com/stories/coaching-during-quarantine-wilson-halls-ripley-embraces-team-building-during-virus-pandemic,344384>
- <https://playfootball.nfl.com/nfl-way-to-play/staying-active-at-home/>

Second Semester Plan

If current state and local health guidelines and metrics allow, the second semester of program operations would be in-person. Seasons and calendars will be reworked to operate as many sports as possible, consistent with the designated seasons established by the MPSSAA. In the event state level competition is not feasible due to current health metrics, HCPSS will work to implement a local program that maximizes participation opportunities, consistent with state and county health metrics and school system operations. More information will be forthcoming from the MPSSAA and during the fall, when more updated health metrics will be available.

Should events dictate that HCPSS stay in a virtual environment for second semester, a concentrated plan would mirror the MPSSAA plan for fall, winter, and spring seasons. HCPSS would work within this MPSSAA framework to reimagine sports seasons and content.

Appendix A

Pivot Services Provided during COVID-19 Virtual Athletics

Athletic Trainers (AT) have access to the PIVOT PT clinics to provide new evaluation times to our athletes. These hours would be set, and the AT would be available to schedule their own athletes.

AT will provide hours at the school but at the stadium for injury evaluations as well as treatment. The treatment can include injuries that were being treated before COVID and still need attention and new injuries. COVID health recommendations will be enforced.

ATs are available for virtual injury screens and recommendations for both athletes and coaches.

ATs have access to a web-based exercise program. This program will allow the AT to send athletes or coaches home exercise programs to confirm proper treatment.

The Pivot liaison will contact the off-season training companies that are training our kids.

The AT will be present or available during these sessions.

The AT can be part of the virtual training if a team is doing group sessions. The AT can be used for recommendations if the athlete is showing a weakness, or the athlete gets injured during one of these sessions.

ATs will communicate with all coaches to ensure that their training programs include a workout for the deconditioned athlete.

Sports Medicine policies and procedures will need to be drafted to cover COVID. This revision on the handbook will also take a look at the current medical policies and procedures to ensure that all appropriate precautions are taking place.

The AT can assist the AAM with the clearing of physicals and inputting medical conditions into the student-athlete's file in sportware (athletic trainers electronic medical records).

ImPACT Baselines and Post tests are able to be given virtually, the AT is available to do both. If an athlete sustains a concussion during training the AT is able to virtually provide them with

the test and return to play. HCPSS concussion protocol will be able to be satisfied through this process.

ATs will continue to operate through the sports medicine team. Recommendations to physicians and team doctors will continue. Athletes will have priority appointments to both physicians and Physical Therapists.

Schedules that total 25 hours will be sent to the AAM to disseminate to all coaches. Clinic hours Once in person training begins AT will be available immediately.

Weekly and treatment hours will be set in advance.