



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Section One Executive Committee adopts start date for Fall 2020 season

HARRISON, N.Y. — On Wednesday, September 2nd, the Executive Committee of Section One, Inc., of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) met for the second time this year to continue discussions pertaining to the start of the fall interscholastic athletics season for the 82 member schools in the region.

On Monday, August 24th, Governor Cuomo announced that “low and moderate risk” sports are authorized to begin September 21st. All school based sports must follow the New York State Department of Health-issued guidance.

After reviewing data collected from the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents and in conjunction with the planning efforts of the Section One COVID Task Force and Athletic Council, comprised of Athletic Director and Principal representation from each of the three Conferences, it is evident there is a desire to focus on the reopening of schools and the safety of all those involved.

In light of these considerations, the Section 1 Executive Committee has approved the following:

- The High School sports of cross country, field hockey, soccer, and girl’s tennis are permitted to begin **Tuesday, September 29th**. No open workouts or practices are authorized prior to this date.
- A district may choose to delay the start of their fall season beyond September 29th based on their individual district needs.



- The Section One Modified Committee will continue to meet to evaluate the status of modified sports.

As per the DOH guidelines, the sports of volleyball, football and competitive cheer are classified as high risk. Governor Cuomo has permitted high risk sports to practice, however they are not authorized to compete until a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020. As a result of the information available to us at this time, the Section One Executive Committee has determined:

- High risk fall sports and their ability to practice will be reviewed as soon as new information becomes available from NYSPHSAA and state officials.
- Should a decision regarding competitions for high risk sports (volleyball, football, and competitive cheer) not be announced by state officials, Section One will consider moving to a condensed season model to afford the ability for those high risk sports to have competitions.
- While swimming is categorized as a “low-moderate risk” sport, Section One continues to gather data pertaining to the pool/facility availability throughout the region. Section One may have to consider postponing girls swimming to another season.

“As always, the Section has made the safety and well-being of our student-athletes, coaches, officials, and communities its top priority. Today’s decisions by the Executive Committee represents a balance between supporting schools as they reopen amid this complex and unprecedented time, while also providing for the safe return for our student-athletes to interscholastic competition,” stated Section One Executive Director Todd Santabarbara.

With that in mind, “the Section continues to be guided by a belief in the value that interscholastic sports participation contributes to student-athlete’s feelings of belonging and overall social-emotional well-being,” Mr. Santabarbara added.

The Section One Executive Committee will reconvene prior to September 29th, and in conjunction with the Athletic Council, and Section One COVID Task Force will continue to examine the data and guidance available while planning the best path forward for the Section One student-athletes.

The Center for Interscholastic Athletics, a division of Southern Westchester BOCES, serves 82 high schools in Dutchess, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester counties, providing support with the organization and management of athletic programs. Section One is part of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Inc., a non-profit organization that provides equitable and safe competition for the students of public, private and parochial member schools.

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