



# RETURN TO ATHLETICS

*Plan for 2020-21 School Year*



*Excellence in Education*



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# PURPOSE OF POLICY

The COVID-19 pandemic has sparked dramatic changes across all aspects of our daily lives. The combination of lifestyle modifications and potential commodities associated with COVID-19 also presents important, athlete specific health and safety risks as return to sport plans emerge. While it is clear that transition periods have a higher risk for catastrophic sport injury, some of the factors that place athletes at higher risk during these periods may be amplified as a result of social distancing measures. These risk factors may also be amplified at various levels – so even athletes within the same team may have a spectrum of risk profiles. As plans for a return to organized sport begin, more than 10 million high school and college athletes emerge from this unprecedented period, calling for healthcare providers and administrators to give greater consideration for how to reduce risk while re-introducing athletics.

Bishop McGuinness is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our student athletes and coaches. To ensure we have a safe and healthy environment during athletics, Bishop McGuinness has developed the following Return to Athletics Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coaches are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our athletic programming and communities, and that requires full cooperation among our coaches, parents and athletes. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our athletic programs.

This policy describes BMCHS procedures for returning to athletics and exercise following a period of prolonged physical distancing for student athletes. We are continuing to monitor the guidelines and CDC recommendations, and may change as conditions warrant. Although we hope the Return to Athletics Plan guides all activities, each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis, therefore similar situations may result in different responses from administration.

The Return to Athletics Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Oklahoma, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Oklahoma Department of Health (ODH) guidelines for COVID-19, Oklahoma Secondary Schools Athletic Association (OSSAA) statutes, rules and standards, and Oklahoma's relevant and current executive orders. The Return to Athletics Plan is supported by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, and is overseen by the principal of BMCHS. However, administrators, coaches, and athletes are equally responsible for supporting, implementing and complying with all aspects of this plan. The BMCHS coaches have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

# PROTOCOLS FOR EXPOSURE

## POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST

Individuals who received a positive COVID-19 test will be required to stay out of school for the appropriate amount of time based on their situation.

- **IN THE SETTING OF SYMPTOMS**

The student can return to social interaction:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever reducing medication AND
- Symptoms have improved

In rare cases, your health care provider may recommend that you stay in isolation for longer than 14 days, possibly up to 20 days, and you may need to finish isolation at home. In rare cases, repeat testing may be necessary but for most cases it is not. If the student has an immunocompromising condition, he/she should discuss with his/her healthcare provider.

- **IN THE ABSENCE OF SYMPTOMS:** The student can return to social interaction if he/she has no symptoms, and 10 days have passed since the date of the positive test

These guidelines are constantly being updated by the CDC, and we are continuing to monitor them, and may change as conditions warrant. All positive COVID-19 tests involving students will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with input from the administration, staff, family members, and others, if needed. [For more on COVID-19 isolation, visit the CDC website.](#)

## PRIMARY EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are considered to be primarily exposed. The definition of close contact is constantly being updated by the CDC – we continue to monitor the definitions and make appropriate recommendations based on those data. In many cases, the administration will contact the involved student and family to inform them of an exposure at school. We also ask that families inform administration of an exposure outside of school. In either scenario, the school will follow CDC recommendations for quarantine and return to social interaction.

- **CLOSE CONTACT**

- A person who is within 6 feet of someone who tested positive for COVID-19
- for a total of 15 minutes or more, irrespective of masking
- A person who has provided care at home to someone who tested positive for COVID-19
- A person who has shared eating or drinking utensils with someone who tested positive for COVID-19
- A person who has acquired contact with respiratory droplets from somebody who tested positive for COVID-19, such as by sneezing or coughing

# PROTOCOLS FOR EXPOSURE

## PRIMARY EXPOSURE (CON'T)

- **CLOSE CONTACT (CON'T)**

If a student is deemed to have fallen into one of these categories, they should:

- Stay home and monitor health for 14 days after the last contact with the known person who tested positive for COVID-19
- Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath or other symptoms of COVID-19
- No COVID-19 test is required for students to return to school

[For guidance on when to start and stop quarantine, visit the CDC website.](#) These guidelines are constantly being updated by the CDC, and we are continuing to monitor them, and may change as conditions warrant. All primary COVID-19 exposures will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## SECONDARY EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

A secondary exposure is defined as somebody who has contact with the person who has been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. At this time, the recommendations are to simply monitor for symptoms. No quarantine is required. Routine screenings will apply.

# GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- All athletic workouts are open and voluntary.
- Positive COVID-19 cases in school cannot be fully prevented, we can only minimize the risk or spread.
- Events will be scheduled to ensure adequate time for all participants to leave the facility before the next group arrives. As a result, everyone should arrive and leave at the scheduled time to avoid overlap in groups.
- Access to school facilities by community members and external groups will not be allowed when school programs are in process.
- All athletes should clean individual equipment (personal and school-issued) and clothing after every use. Coaches should clean all shared equipment after every use.
- Any athlete, coach or staff member who believes they may be sick should remain at home.
- Athletes and coaches must use hand sanitizer and/or wash hands before the start of workout, and as needed throughout practice and during breaks.
- Each coach and athlete must have their own personal water bottle and face covering to participate. No coolers, shared water bottles, hydration stations or cold tubs should be used at this time. Water fountains will not be available.

# IDENTIFICATION + ISOLATION

Individuals have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Individuals who become sick during a workout should go home immediately. Information on others who had contact with the ill person during the time the person had symptoms and 48 hours prior to symptoms should be compiled.

The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess the health status of both coaches and athletes before entering the facilities, and for coaches and athletes to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

- Before beginning athletics and using the facilities, all athletes and parents are required to sign a waiver prior. All coaches and athletes are required to have their temperature taken upon arrival, as well as being asked if they are showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Athletes will be excused from activities without repercussions or penalty for any sickness related to COVID-19. Individuals are required to stay at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a healthcare provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household.
- Individuals may only return to workouts when they have met the requirements identified in the Protocols for Exposure section, and cleared through the school nurse and athletic trainer.
- Individuals should seek more information from their healthcare provider, who should work with an infectious disease expert at the local health department to determine if an individual is likely to spread COVID-19 to others and need to stay home longer.
- Individuals with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions are encouraged not to participate in athletic programming.
- In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, school administrators should notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

# RETURN TO PLAY

Athletes with a prior COVID-19 diagnosis should undergo a medical assessment before returning to exercise.

Every student athlete with a prior COVID-19 diagnosis, COVID-19 like symptoms, or a primary exposure to COVID-19, should contact their medical provider to determine if further evaluation is warranted prior to returning to sports.

A medical evaluation is required for student athletes who receive a positive COVID-19 test.

- This may include additional cardiac, such as an electrocardiogram (ECG), pulmonary, and kidney function testing as determined by the physician.
- Documentation clearing student athletes for athletic participation is required to return to sports.

Those at greater risk for developing severe COVID-19 or complications should undergo an informed decision-making process with their medical provider before a return to sports as exposure to teammates and opponents may increase their risk of becoming infected. Individuals at higher risk of severe COVID-19 include: those with a serious heart condition, uncontrolled or moderate to severe asthma, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, pre-existing kidney disease, or a weakened immune system.

- Although the CDC states patients with these conditions may be at greater risk for more severe disease, there is limited published data in young athletes to support this determination at this time.

All athletes who receive a positive COVID-19 test should be monitored for ongoing symptoms of chest pain/pressure with exercise, difficulty breathing or dizziness with exercise, or decreased exercise tolerance.

# SAFEGUARDS AT ATHLETICS

## **CLEANING + DISINFECTION**

Coaches and athletes are required to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces within the facilities at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use. Facilities shall be cleaned between cohorts or groups. Cleaning products should be used in a manner allowing for adequate ventilation and in a way to prevent individuals from inhaling toxic fumes. Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment. Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product.

## **DROP-OFF + PICK-UP**

Athletes and parents are encouraged to drop off in a manner which promotes social distancing among all participants.

## **FACE COVERINGS**

Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

### ***WEAR YOUR FACE COVERING CORRECTLY***

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily

### ***TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTH FACE COVERING CAREFULLY, WHEN YOU'RE HOME***

- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Place covering in the washing machine
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth when removing, and wash hands immediately after removing.

# SAFEGUARDS AT ATHLETICS

## HYGIENE

Individuals are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially upon arrival, switching activities and after using the restroom. All individuals to the facilities are required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations in the facilities so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

Individuals are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Individuals are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

## MODIFIED LAYOUTS

Individuals should be at least 6 feet apart or wearing a face covering when possible. When social distancing is not possible groups will be monitored to minimize and contain exposure.

## WATER

Water fountains will not be used. Staff and students are required to bring their own water. Touchless water fill stations are limitedly available in the gym and school.

# COMMUNICATION

The Return to Athletics Plan was communicated through parent meetings and emails to all individuals and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by frequent verbal reminders and announcements.

Administrators and coaches are expected to monitor how effective the program has been implemented and address noncompliance when necessary. All coaches and athletes are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan, and update the protections, protocols, and training as necessary.

The Return to Athletics Plan has been approved by BMCHS administration, and will be updated as necessary by the principal.