

Section One Executive Committee delays start of low/moderate risk winter sports

HARRISON, N.Y. — On Friday, November 20, 2020, the Executive Committee of Section One, Inc., of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) met for the fifth time this year. The purpose of the meeting was to continue discussions pertaining to the start of the winter 2020-21 interscholastic athletics season for the 82 member schools in the region.

On Tuesday, November 17, 2020, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) announced that pending authorization from state officials, high risk sports (basketball, competitive cheer, ice hockey, and wrestling) would begin on January 4, 2021.

Through extensive discussion and the planning efforts of the Section One Athletic Council, the feasibility of the previously established November 30th winter start date for low and moderate risk sports was examined. At today's meeting, the Executive Committee engaged in a thorough review of the information provided by Athletic Directors and Superintendents. As a result, there was evidence of a clear desire on the part of the Section One member schools to delay the start of low and moderate risk winter sports.

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

- Low and moderate risk high school sports (bowling, fencing, gymnastics, skiing, boys swimming and indoor track and field) will begin on Monday, January 4, 2021.
- All modified winter sports are now scheduled to begin on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. This date will continue to be monitored and will be reevaluated prior to the start of the season.
- As always, based on their individual needs, a district may choose to be more restrictive and further delay the start of their season. In addition, the Section One Executive Committee respects that individual districts are faced with a wide range of challenges which may impact their ability to offer programs.

“The success of Fall Season I has been made possible by the support of individual school district superintendents and boards of education. The hard work, commitment to minimizing risk, and the determination of Athletic Directors, coaches and student-athletes throughout Section One have been instrumental,” said Todd Santabarbara, Section One Executive Director. “Today’s decision to delay the start of low and moderate risk winter sports affords school districts additional time to effectively transition and plan for the start of a winter season in a safe and responsible manner.”

The Section One Executive Committee remains focused on the health and safety of the student-athletes throughout the Lower Hudson Valley. The Committee will continue to monitor any guidance released from the Governor’s Office, NYSDOH, NYSPHSAA and NYSED, and will assess the potential impact it has on interscholastic athletics during this ever-changing climate.

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.