

February 1, 2021

Dear Haldane Community,

The anticipated approval of “high risk” sports (i.e. basketball, volleyball, and football) has been a point of confusion over the past two weeks. On January 22, Governor Cuomo announced that schools had permission to begin high risk sports with the approval of local departments of health. Last week, the local county executives issued a press release stating their support for the resumption of high risk sports, yet the Putnam County Department of Health still had not given the approval for high risk sports to begin.

Yesterday, I received the attached message from the County Executive’s office, which states that high risk sports may begin if school districts approve them. I notified Mr. Romanino, our Interim Director of Athletics, that high risk sports could begin formal practices immediately once we return to school.

I found the communication surrounding this matter confusing, to say the least. Yet, I can assure you that we have done everything needed to commence a safe start to the winter season in anticipation of such an announcement.

Naturally, this decision prompted questions regarding other “high risk” activities that have been limited under the current Covid guidelines, including the performing arts. At this time there have been no changes to the guidelines regarding these activities. I do anticipate that the coming weeks and months will bring additional notifications, at times impromptu, that previously restricted activities are permitted with caveats. Our district staff will continue to work with our county-level partners to keep our school community informed of any implications for our students and staff.

If you have any questions related to athletics, please feel free to contact Mr. Romanino at eromanino@haldaneschool.org or your child’s coach.

Sincerely,

Phil Benante, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Estimada comunidad de Haldane,

La aprobación anticipada de deportes de “alto riesgo” (es decir, baloncesto, voleibol y fútbol) ha sido un punto de confusión durante las últimas dos semanas. El 22 de enero, el gobernador Cuomo anunció que las escuelas tenían permiso para iniciar deportes de alto riesgo con la aprobación de los departamentos de salud locales. La semana pasada, los ejecutivos locales del condado emitieron un comunicado de prensa en el que expresaban su apoyo a la

reanudación de los deportes de alto riesgo, pero el Departamento de Salud del condado de Putnam aún no había dado la aprobación para que comenzaran los deportes de alto riesgo.

Ayer recibí el mensaje adjunto de la oficina del Ejecutivo del Condado, que establece que los deportes de alto riesgo pueden comenzar si los distritos escolares los aprueban. Notifiqué al Sr. Romanino, nuestro Director Interino de Atletismo, que los deportes de alto riesgo podrían comenzar las prácticas formales inmediatamente una vez que regresemos a la escuela.

Encontré la comunicación en torno a este asunto confusa, por decir lo menos. Sin embargo, puedo asegurarles que hemos hecho todo lo necesario para comenzar de manera segura la temporada de invierno en previsión de tal anuncio.

Naturalmente, esta decisión generó preguntas con respecto a otras actividades de "alto riesgo" que han sido limitadas bajo las pautas actuales de Covid, incluidas las artes escénicas. En este momento no ha habido cambios en las pautas con respecto a estas actividades. Anticipo que las próximas semanas y meses traerán notificaciones adicionales, a veces improvisadas, de que se permiten actividades previamente restringidas con salvedades. Nuestro personal del distrito continuará trabajando con nuestros socios a nivel de condado para mantener informada a nuestra comunidad escolar de cualquier implicación para nuestros estudiantes y personal.

Si tiene alguna pregunta relacionada con el atletismo, no dude en comunicarse con el Sr. Romanino en eromanino@haldaneschool.org o con el entrenador de su hijo.

Sinceramente,

Phil Benante, Ed. RE.
Superintendente de escuelas



Putnam County Statement: NYS Resumption of High-Risk Sports

1 message



PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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A PHAB-ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MaryEllen Odell

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD

COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

To: Putnam County School Superintendents

From: County Executive MaryEllen Odell and Health Commissioner Michael Nesheiwat, MD

RE: Local Health Department Statement on NYS Resumption of High-Risk Sports

Date: January 31, 2021

Nearly one year ago we began working together to address the impacts of this pandemic on our school communities. While we all continue to face challenges due to COVID-19 and the physical, mental, social-emotional and economic effects, we remain focused on the health and safety of all our residents.

With New York State's announcement that high-risk sports may resume, the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) is authorizing Putnam schools to make the decision to commence seasonal sports. In order to assist districts as they weigh this decision, PCDOH will be sharing documents that can inform discussions and planning. This authorization was made in conjunction with Local Health Departments across the Mid-Hudson Region. A memo to schools from the regional health commissioners is forthcoming.

Along with that memo, school districts will receive:

- Health Risk Communication which must be disseminated to all parents of student athletes, and athletic staff (at a minimum)
- Code of Conduct for Student Athletes
- "Best Practices" (to be considered along with NYS Requirements)

Should you choose to permit some or all seasonal sports, your district must create additional documents including but not limited to informed consent for athletes and additional safety plans specifically addressing high-risk sports.

High-risk sports are, by definition, not considered safe at this time. The PCDOH recognizes that for some families and individuals, the benefits may outweigh the risks. As long as there is informed consent of both known and unknown risks, families may choose to permit their child(ren) to participate in such activities. School districts are encouraged to consider the needs of all students as they plan possible resumption of other previously side-lined activities such as extra-curricular clubs, enrichment activities, and arts programs. The resumption of athletics and other moderate to high-risk activities is happening at a time when local and regional case numbers are trending downward (data that will be closely monitored). Additionally, promising news of expanded vaccine availability is a significant step toward a return to a more familiar "normal". The reopening of the county, the state, and the nation will be approached with caution as well as optimism for what the future holds.