

Friday, July 31, 2020
Administrator Update

Ohio High School Athletic Association



TO: OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
FR: Bob Goldring, Interim Executive Director

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of Directors today reaffirmed their position that the OHSAA fall sports seasons will go forward as planned. That means low/non-contact sports and contact sports will be permitted to begin official practices tomorrow (August 1) as had been previously announced. Additional details on the fall sports seasons are below.

"It is important to keep athletic activity moving forward," said Dan Leffingwell, president of the OHSAA Board of Directors and superintendent of the Noble Local Schools in Sarahsville. "And with that, we believe our member schools provide our student-athletes with the safest possible environment to return to play and that our school programs are the best avenue to help students learn lifelong lessons and provide social, emotional and physical benefits that other programs cannot. Moving forward allows those students to continue to be engaged with their school coaches and teammates. Membership data also supports this decision.

"If we were to delay, our students will find opportunities to compete in sports through non-school programs that may not be focused on safety and are not education-based," Leffingwell said. "Should data on COVID-19 change and/or the Governor's Office makes changes to our plan, we have flexibility that would allow us to look at implementing other models for our seasons."

Low/Non-Contact Sports (Golf, Girls Tennis, Volleyball)

- Official practices may begin on Saturday, Aug. 1.
- School vs. school scrimmages and/or contests will follow per their normal OHSAA permissible dates and regulations.
- *Golf* – 1 scrimmage permitted any time during season; first contest Aug. 5.
- *Girls Tennis* – 1 scrimmage permitted after practice begins and prior to first match; first contest Aug. 7.
- *Volleyball* – 5 scrimmages and 1 preview permitted after practice begins; first contest Aug. 21.

Football

- Official practices will begin on Saturday, Aug. 1, with the normal acclimatization period in place.
- No school vs. school scrimmages are permitted.
- School vs. school contests will follow per their normal OHSAA permissible dates and regulations with a target date of the week of Monday, Aug. 24 (**Note:** *This date is subject to change and subject to the approval from the Governor's Office/Ohio Department of Health and with the stipulation that COVID-19 testing will not be required*).

Other Contact Sports (Soccer, Field Hockey, Cross Country)

- Practices will begin on Saturday, Aug. 1, with the normal acclimatization period in place for cross country.
- No school vs. school scrimmages are permitted in soccer or field hockey.
- School vs. school contests will follow per their normal OHSAA permissible dates and regulations with a target date of Friday, Aug. 21, for soccer and field hockey and Monday, Aug. 24, for cross country (**Note:** *These dates are subject to change and subject to the approval from the Governor's Office/Ohio Department of Health and with the stipulation that COVID-19 testing will not be required*).

Additional Notes

- If contact sports are not approved for school vs. school competition by Friday, September 4, fall contact sports and remaining winter and spring sports will move to a condensed schedule that will take place between mid-December and the end of June. Fall non-contact sports would move forward as scheduled.
- If the fall seasons begin and, for some reason, are stopped but then resume, the OHSAA has plans to move to a modified fall sports season.
- If contact sports are approved for school vs. school competition, the OHSAA is prepared to set COVID-19-related requirements for schools to follow for competitions as requested by the Governor's Office. The OHSAA will govern and issue consequences for the violation of these requirements as prescribed in OHSAA Bylaw 11, Penalties.
- Conversations with the Governor's Office/Ohio Department of Health continue regarding the status of field hockey and/or cross country being placed into the low/non-contact category. The membership will be updated if that changes for either or both sports.
- The OHSAA continues with conversations with the Governor's Office on its plans to ensure we are in concert.

NOTE: At this time, the OHSAA is finalizing a series of Questions and Answers that have come up in recent days, and we will be forwarding that document to school administrators later Friday afternoon.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time, and we will continue to provide updates as they become available!