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DATE: January 6, 2022

TO: High School families, students, and staff

FROM: Jeff Lowell, District Athletics and Activities Director

RE: High school athletics and activities update [Chinese](#) | [Spanish](#)

As winter sports continue, we continue to follow guidance set by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), Public Health of Seattle King County (PHSKC), and the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA). Current guidance includes updates set in December 2021 in response to “recent sports-related outbreaks” and are intended to limit such outbreaks moving forward. The updated guidance can be found at this link: [K-12 Schools Requirements 2021-2022](#). Should there be a change in this guidance, those changes will be communicated with families, students, coaches, and staff. Included below is a summary of the following measures currently in place:

1. [Screening Testing Protocols](#)
2. [Testing Consent](#)
3. [Low and Moderate Risk Sports](#)
4. [Positive Tests](#)
5. [Close Contacts](#)
6. [Community Support](#)

### 1. **Screening Testing Protocols**

We continue to screen test ***all athletes, coaches, trainers, and other personnel who work with athletes*** in high-risk indoor sports and activities (basketball, wrestling, water polo, and indoor cheer), ***regardless of vaccination status***. Screening testing of participants is set on a ***designated cadence 3 times per week*** using a molecular or antigen test.

Whenever possible, pre-competition testing should be performed the day of the event. Building athletic directors and select staff will implement the testing protocols at their schools.

### 2. **Testing Consent**

Screening testing only occurs when the Bellevue School District obtains consent to test. Our website includes information on [Testing Consent](#). To assist families with this function of the testing requirement, there is an on-line [COVID Testing Consent Form](#). There are separate forms for Student and Staff consent. For a participant in a high-risk sport to participate, the District must obtain consent for ***individual*** testing.

**For the purposes of athletic participation there is no requirement to consent to pooled testing.** Additionally, once an individual consents to either individual or pooled testing, at any time, the individual may return to their form and withdraw consent.

### 3. **Low and Moderate Risk Sports**

There is no change for athletes, coaches, trainers, and support personnel participating in indoor low or moderate risk sports. While testing is recommended, we are not requiring testing for the low/moderate risk sports of gymnastics and swim/dive during the winter season at this time.

### 4. **Positive Tests**

Any athlete with a positive test must be excluded from the event and removed from the venue. When we receive a positive test, we will follow our established contact tracing and reporting processes. District processes are outlined at this link: <https://bsd405.org/services/health/covid-19-health-and-safety/closure-protocols-and-reporting/>.

### 5. **Close Contacts**

- a. "Unvaccinated athletes, coaches, athletic trainers and other support personnel identified as close contacts should quarantine immediately, even if they recently had a negative test. Unvaccinated close contacts are recommended to get tested immediately and at 5-7 days post-exposure while they quarantine."
- b. "Fully vaccinated athletes, coaches, athletic trainers and other support personnel identified as close contacts do not need to quarantine but should be tested 5-7 days following a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wear a mask for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. They should isolate and follow appropriate guidance if they test positive."
- c. If they (close contacts) develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they (close contacts) should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2 if indicated. The symptomatic fully vaccinated person should inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

We continue to emphasize that "the best way we can protect kids and keep them in school is for everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated. The more of us that are vaccinated, the less COVID-19 will spread, no matter what the setting. If fully vaccinated individuals are eligible for a booster dose, encourage them to get that done promptly."

### 6. **Community Support**

We are asking for individuals to assist us in protecting students and keep them in school participating in their activities in the following ways:

- Spectators: **Masking is required universally for all spectators attending indoor K-12 sporting activities, regardless of vaccination status.** At athletic contests the crowd should be seated in "family units" and those small groups should be spaced at least 3 feet apart. Should individuals refuse to comply with this directive, it may lead to the postponement of a contest. Please, if you attend an event, mask up and distance as possible.
- Travel Requirements
  - Participants, staff, and volunteers must follow CDC's order for all riders and drivers on trips to wear a mask on buses or other public transportation, regardless of vaccination status.
  - Cohorts sit together on the bus and cohorts are separated by at least 3 feet to the degree possible.
  - Ventilation will be increased by opening windows as weather permits.
  - ***No eating or drinking*** while on the bus.
- Coaches continue to protect students by adhering to other safety measures:
  - Taking attendance each day there is a practice or contest and **recording attendance in FinalForms.**
  - Developing practice plans that utilize a 'cohort' model to minimize the number of close contacts within a program (i.e., separate varsity and JV practices).
  - Providing hand sanitizer to emphasize hand hygiene, both scheduled and as needed.
  - Utilizing cleaning supplies to disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
  - Training, teaching, reminders, and reinforcement of all the above.
  - Not sharing water bottles, uniforms, towels, or snacks and no spitting (saliva, sunflower seeds, etc.).

If you have additional questions, please contact your athletic director, or the Athletics and Activities Department by email ([lowellj@bsd405.org](mailto:lowellj@bsd405.org) or [arnonea@bsd405.org](mailto:arnonea@bsd405.org)), phone (425-456-4010 or 425-456-4050) or [Let's Talk](#).

In partnership

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Lowell'.

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<https://bsd405.org/departments/athletics-activities/>