



Oregon School Activities Association

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April 18, 2021

To: Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, Coaches, and Officials
From: OSAA Executive Board
Subject: Compliance with State's Face Coverings Requirements

The OSAA Executive Board instructed staff to send this memo to member schools and officials on their behalf regarding compliance with the face coverings requirement mandated by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Governor's Office.

OHA and the Governor's Office mandate that "masks, or face coverings, are required to be worn by individuals at all times even while participating in activities." The state's guidance clearly outlines the expectations related to face coverings for participation in activities and those same expectations have been communicated to all OSAA member schools, their respective coaching staffs, and all officials associations on multiple occasions.

This past week, and previously during Season 2, we've seen thousands of students have the opportunity to participate in competitions throughout the state. This progression toward a sense of normalcy for students has had a tremendous positive impact on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of students. It has also brought about significant challenges and responsibilities for member schools, particularly in relation to the state's face coverings mandate.

Based on e-mails, news clippings, social media posts,, and concerns received by the OSAA staff during the final weeks of Season 2 and first week of Season 3 competitions, this state mandate continues to be an area of contention at interscholastic events and point of conflict between schools. While compliance with the state's face covering mandate is required for participants, coaches, officials, and spectators, it is clear that in some situations we have administrators, coaches, and officials who are failing to enforce it. This has led to a number of issues, especially when participating against schools who are complying, and makes it impossible to create a level playing field.

Schools must work collaboratively to communicate prior to, and during, events regarding expectations and how to address issues that may arise. We understand there is frustration with the state's face covering requirement, but that is the current requirement and believe it's critical that our adults – administrators, coaches, and officials – set the example for students by modeling adherence:

- Administrators must communicate clear expectations to their coaches and students.
- Coaches have significant influence on students adhering to the requirement and must hold students accountable during practices which translates to greater accountability during competitions.
- Schools must communicate concerns to contest officials and work together to address the concerns appropriately.
- Officials must accept their role in this area and follow established protocols outlined to address mask issues for their sport.

All involved at an interscholastic event – administrators, coaches, officials, and participants – have a collective responsibility to ensure the state's face covering requirements are followed so these activities may continue occurring.

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of the students in our state.