



Oregon School Activities Association

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The following FAQ's are provided to help guide schools as they return to school sports and activities. This document will be updated frequently and is subject to change as additional guidance is released from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Governor's Office and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Note that these FAQs are subject to change based upon changes to national, state or local guidelines/directives.

Guidelines for K-12 School Sports are based on a [county's COVID-19 risk level](#) (lower, moderate, high, extreme). Guidelines for K-12 School Sports is not tied to a school's instructional model. Refer to [ODE guidance for reopening to in-person instruction](#) for additional information on school operations.

County Risk Level Guidance

- Q. Can the OSAA Executive Director or OSAA Executive Board modify, waive or provide exceptions to the Governor's or OHA Guidance?**
- A. No. The OSAA and its member schools are bound by the guidance and are unable to modify, waive or provide exceptions.
- Q. When does the "[Sector Risk Level Guidance](#)" take effect?**
- A. The Sector Risk Level Guidance began on December 3, 2020.
- Q. Are recreational sports and K-12 sports separated in the guidance?**
- A. No, recreational sports and K-12 sports are now under the same indoor recreation or outdoor recreation guidance provided by OHA.
- Q. What is the timeline for a school to implement changes when a county's risk level status moves (i.e. from moderate risk to high risk)?**
- A. Every Tuesday the OHA releases data from the previous two weeks regarding each county's risk level. The weeks alternate between "Warning Weeks" and "Movement Weeks." During a "Warning Week," the OHA provides schools and other entities linked to county risk level metrics a warning so they can plan for a potential move in status the following week. During a "Movement Week," if the information released on Tuesday moves a county from one risk level to another (i.e. from moderate risk to high risk), the school has until that Friday to implement the necessary protocols related to that new county risk level. In this example, if a county moved from high risk to extreme risk a school in that county would have to cease all indoor sports activity starting that Friday as indoor sports activities are prohibited in extreme risk counties – ["County Risk Level Information"](#).
- Q: Are all sports and activities able to take place if a school opens since the reopening metrics set forth by the Governor are now advisory?**
- A: No, even though a school may reopen, K-12 school sports are still under the OHA's "[Sector Guidance – Indoor Recreation and Indoor Fitness Establishments](#)," "[Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Fitness Establishments](#)," and "[Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#)."
- Q: If our school sends a team out of state for a competition, do they need to quarantine upon returning?**
- A: No, participation in K-12 school sports is considered "essential travel" per the state guidance. Visit "[Statewide Guidance for Travel](#)" for more information.
- Q: If a student goes out of state for non-essential travel, should they quarantine upon returning?**
- A: It's important to communicate to all students and their families that departure from the state for any amount of time may compromise their ability to participate upon their return for the following 7-14 days. Visit "[Statewide Guidance for Travel](#)" for more information.
- Q. Must masks be worn at all times, indoor and outdoor, even during exercise / competition?**

A. Statewide, masks, face coverings or face shields are required to be worn by all individuals at all times unless the individual: Is outdoors, competing in or practicing a non-contact sport, and maintains at least six (6) feet of distance from individuals outside of their household.

Non-contact sports include but are not limited to tennis, swimming, cross-country, track and field, sideline/no-contact cheer and dance. Golf is also considered a non-contact sport. This does not apply to baseball and softball which are designated by OHA as minimal/medium contact sports.

Q. Can a student wear a face shield instead of a face covering while participating in training, practice & competition?

A. No, a face shield cannot be worn as a face covering by itself. Participants must wear a cloth, polypropylene, paper, or other face covering that covers the nose and mouth and that rests snugly above the nose, below the mouth, and on the sides of the face, "[Statewide Reopening Guidance – Masks, Face Coverings, Face Shields.](#)"

Q. Does 7-on-7 football fall in the same category as Flag Football?

A. Yes, provided there is no contact and no protective equipment is used.

Q. Does the OSAA have any stance on middle school activities?

A. The Governor's and OHA's "[Sector Guidance – Indoor Recreation and Indoor Fitness Establishments,](#)" "[Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Fitness Establishments,](#)" and "[Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#)" applies to all levels of activities.

Q. How do cohort groups apply to sport teams / sport transportation?

A. According to ODE, athletics are separated from the daytime and transportation cohorts.

Sector Guidance – Indoor Recreation

Q. What are the gathering limits for indoor recreation activities?

A. Please reference the [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#) under Indoor Recreation and Fitness Establishments.

Q. How long can an athlete participate in an indoor workout if my county is in the Extreme Risk Level?

A. Students are limited to a maximum of 45 minutes for participating in indoor recreation and/or fitness activities per day. Coaches do not have a daily limit.

Q. Do coaches, participants, and event management apply when calculating the maximum?

A. Yes, all individuals in a facility count towards the capacity maximum in indoor activities.

Q. Can I participate in indoor recreation activities if my county is in the Extreme Risk Level?

A. Yes, if a school's facility is larger than 500 sq ft, they can have a maximum of six (6) people total (not including coaches). Limit capacity to four (4) separate groups, up to six (6) people in each group (not counting coaches). Each group must participate in a separate location within the establishment, which means an enclosed area within the establishment (i.e. main gym, weight room, batting cages, and wrestling room, etc.) Ensure athletes do not use areas at the same time, including but not limited to restrooms and locker rooms. If a school's facility is smaller than 500 sq. ft. than a maximum of one (1) person and a maximum of one (1) coach is allowed. [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#)

Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation

Q. What are the gathering limits for outdoor recreation activities?

A. Please reference the [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#) under Indoor Recreation and Fitness Establishments.

Q. Do coaches, participants, and event management apply when calculating the maximum?

A. Yes. When calculating the facility maximums schools would need to reference the [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#). For outdoor activities the field (for track the exterior boundary of lane 8), please reference the Outdoor Fitness and Recreation row. Immediately below that, for spectator areas, please reference the Outdoor Entertainment row for guidance on how many people you can have at an outdoor venue.

Q. What defines "outdoor"?

A. "Outdoor" as defined by OHA means any open-air space including any space which may have a temporary or fixed cover (e.g. awning or roof) and at least **fifty** percent of the square footage of its sides open for airflow such that open sides are not adjacent to each other.

Academic Eligibility

- Q. If a school has changed their grading system (i.e. traditional semesters to quarters) or because of cohorting, FTE issues, etc., has an academic plan that doesn't fit within current OSAA eligibility guidelines, how should the school proceed to make sure its students are remaining academically eligible to participate?**
- A. The OSAA understands that schools have had to get creative with scheduling for grading periods during the pandemic and that this may lead to conflicts with traditional OSAA requirements for academic eligibility. The Executive Board has instructed staff to be flexible in working with schools in this area. Athletic Directors should contact Peter Weber at the OSAA to explain their school's particular approach for the 2020-21 school year so we can work together on a resolution.
- Q. If a senior completes their courses and graduates early (end of January/1st Semester/1st Trimester), can they participate after that point?**
- A. Rule 6.10 is interpreted for the 2020-2021 school year to allow students who graduate during a season to be eligible to compete for their school through the end of that season (i.e. if a student graduates at the end of the 3rd quarter on April 8th, that student would be eligible to complete Season 3, but not be eligible for Season4).
- Q. Do seniors need to be enrolled full time to participate?**
- A. Yes, all students must be fully enrolled in and passing the appropriate number of classes/earning enough credits in order to be eligible.
- Q. If a school is reducing their number of classes per semester, how does that effect eligibility?**
- A. Please reference the Full Time Enrollment Chart in the OSAA Handbook to review the minimum number of classes needed to pass along with the minimum number of credits that need to be earned. Contact OSAA staff with questions.
- Q. Can a student take this year off and get an extra year of eligibility?**
- A. No, a student's eligibility is four consecutive years from initial enrollment in the 9th grade.
- Q. What adjustments have been made to eligibility requirements for the preceding transcribed grading period?**
- A. In alignment with ODE's Safeguarding Student Opportunity Clause, the OSAA Executive Board has amended the academic waiver process for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. Schools will be able to use transcribed grades from the grading period prior to the COVID-19 shutdown to determine eligibility for students that are academically ineligible based on incompletes from the final grading period of 2019-20. These students will not be denied access to school sports and activities provided that the student was eligible entering the final grading period of 2019-20, the school has a Credit-Earning Assurance Plan in place for that student and the student maintains eligibility in the current 2020-21 grading period based on progress reports.
- Q. What adjustments have been made to eligibility requirements for Satisfactory Progress Toward Graduation?**
- A. In alignment with ODE's Safeguarding Student Opportunity Clause, the OSAA Executive Board has amended the academic waiver process for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. Schools will be able to use a student's progress toward graduation prior to the COVID-19 shutdown to determine eligibility for students that are not on track based on incompletes from the final grading period of 2019-20. These students will not be denied access to school sports and activities provided that the student was on track to graduate entering the final grading period of 2019-20, the school has a Credit-Earning Assurance Plan in place for that student and the student maintains eligibility in the current 2020-21 grading period based on progress reports.
- Q. Does a student who doesn't plan to participate until Season 4 need to be eligible throughout the year?**
- A. Yes, students need to be academically eligible in both the current and previous grading period to be eligible.
- Q. As school districts offer additional online/virtual options, how is a student's eligibility at my school determined?**
- A. It depends on how the online school is structured in a district. If a school is opening under a separate School Institution ID# through ODE then they would need to become an Associate Member of the OSAA and those students would only be eligible back at their resident public school. If a school district is opening online options as programs and not a separate School Institution ID#, then the student is considered a part of the full member school for eligibility. During the pandemic, it will be imperative for schools to understand where students reside and where they are eligible.
- Q. If a school adjusts the minimum number of credits to graduate after a student has begun high school, is the student held to the minimum number of credits from when they enrolled or the modified credit requirements?**
- A. The student would be held to the most up to date / revised minimum number of credits to graduate.
- Q. If a school changes its structure to transcribing on a quarterly basis for 2020-21 and quarter two is transcribed before the start of Season 2, did the student need to be eligible in quarter one?**

A. No. To be academically eligible a student needs to be on track to graduate, currently enrolled in and passing and previously enrolled in and passing the appropriate number of classes. In this example, quarter one was not the previously transcribed grading period.

Q. What does a home school student need to do to be eligible?

A. A homeschool student must register with the local ESD and take an approved home school test by August 15 in order to be eligible to compete for their resident public school (or a private school physically located within the resident public school attendance boundary). (NOTE: The test is NOT required of students prior to entering the 9th grade for the first time or for students who transfer to home school between school years after previously being eligible at a member school.)

Q. What is the difference between being home schooled and schooled from home?

A. The biggest difference is how and where the education is being delivered. Home school students must have registered with their local ESD as a home school student and taken the test prior to August 15 in order to be eligible at their resident public school or a private school within that public school's attendance boundary. A student being schooled from home is taking online courses from a non-full member school based in Oregon (public, private or charter). For a schooled from home student to be eligible back at their resident public school that school must be an Associate Member of the OSAA.

Q. How do I determine academic eligibility if my school is using Pass (P), Fail (F), and Incomplete (I) marks within the grading system?

A. Regardless of the type of mark, if academic credit is awarded then it will count towards OSAA eligibility requirements.

Q. Does the OSAA have policy that outlines the maximum time period allowed to transcript credits to a previous grading period?

A. No, school districts have the autonomy to determine when and how to grant credit.

Coaching Restrictions / Requirements

Q. Can a team have multiple practices in the same day?

A. No, multiple practice sessions on the same day are prohibited for 2020-21. For single practice sessions: No single practice session shall be longer than three hours, including warm-up and cool down. On days with a single practice session, students are limited to a maximum of one hour of weight training either before or after practice but not both.

Q. What is the best way to handle coach contracts for this year?

A. Coach contracts are a local school district decision. We encourage schools to communicate within their league, classification and region for best practices amongst schools.

Transfers

Note: All OSAA Transfer Policies remain in effect for the 2020-21 school year.

Q. If a student transfers out of state, can they come back and participate in Oregon later in the school year?

A. OSAA policy does not prohibit a student from leaving the state for participation purposes. With this move the student will likely jeopardize their eligibility upon returning due to OSAA rules such as affiliation, mid-year transfer, etc.

Q. If a student transfers to an online school, how is their eligibility determined?

A. Complete a [School Representation Eligibility Certificate](#) with the student and their family to determine eligibility.

Event / Facility Protocol & Considerations

Q. Can a school run an indoor event with more than one other team at a venue (i.e. Tournaments, Invitationals etc.)?

A. Yes as long as an event stays within the facility maximums as described on that [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#).

Q. Can a school run an outdoor event with more than one other team at a venue (i.e. Tournaments, Invitationals etc.)?

- A. There is no limit on the number of schools that can participate at an event. The maximum gathering size may guide an event on the number of schools able to come. See [Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation and Indoor Fitness Establishments](#) and the [Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#).
- Q. Will the OSAA be issuing guidance on scheduling for the 2020-21 year?**
- A. The OSAA has provided guidance that league/conference affiliation is not required for 2020-21 and the rankings will not be used or considered for any possible culminating event. Schools are strongly encouraged to play locally and regionally as much as possible.
- Q. Do district/league culminating events count towards participation limitations?**
- A. No, events to qualify into a culminating event do not count towards participation limitations.
- Q. Does the OSAA offer any suggestions on how to regulate sports not listed in the “[Sector Guidance – Indoor Recreation and Indoor Fitness Establishments](#),” “[Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation and Indoor Fitness Establishments](#),” and “[Sector Risk Level Guidance Chart](#)?”**
- A. The OSAA does not regulate activities outside those currently sanctioned. The OSAA suggests following guidance provided by the Governor and use their best judgement in applying the low, minimal/medium, high contact designation to determine participation. Contact the OSAA staff with questions.
- Q. If a student is looking to participate in Season 4 but they participated in a sport in Season 3, do they need the five days of practice before competition in Season 4?**
- A. No, the required five days of practice would be waived.
- Q. What is an “interscholastic competition?”**
- A. When two or more member schools participate against each other. Member schools are not allowed to participate against club or unaffiliated groups in an OSAA-sanctioned activity.
- Q. For outdoor facilities, does a school need to monitor the maximum number of people regardless of location?**
- A. Yes, please reference the Governor’s guidance on large event / gatherings set forth in the “[Sector Guidance – Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Fitness Establishments](#).”
- Q. What is the difference between a school team and a club team?**
- A. Schools need to be aware of the differences between school and club teams. Though not exhaustive school teams typically involve members of the school’s coaching staff, only students from that school, use of school facilities, use of school equipment/uniforms, and use of school transportation. Club teams may be coached members of the school’s coaching staff, include students from your school and rent school facilities but would not typically have access to school equipment/uniforms and school transportation. These distinctions are important when it comes to facility usage best practices, insurance liability, and what is allowed to occur per directives from OHA, the Governor’s Office and OSAA.

Officials

- Q. Do schools need certified officials in the activities permitted by the state guidance that have officials (i.e. Soccer, Baseball, Softball)?**
- A. Yes, please contact your local official’s association to schedule. This includes Season 1 contests.
- Q. Do schools need to go through their local official’s association to get certified officials?**
- A. Yes.

Medical

- Q. Must a mask or face covering be worn even while outdoors?**
- A. Statewide, masks, face coverings or face shields are required to be worn by all individuals at all times unless the individual: Is outdoors, competing in or practicing a non-contact sport, and maintains at least six (6) feet of distance from individuals outside of their household.

Non-contact sports include but are not limited to tennis, swimming, cross-country, track and field, sideline/no-contact cheer and dance. Golf is also considered a non-contact sport. This does not apply to baseball and softball which are designated by OHA as minimal/medium contact sports.

Q. What is best practice if a coach or student-athlete is not feeling well?

A. Coaches or students not feeling well should be referred to their medical provider for possible COVID-19 testing if they present with any of the following symptoms: fever, new cough, difficulty breathing, shaking chills, chest pain, gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea), loss of taste or smell, sore throat, or an unusual rash or painful discoloration of the fingers or toes.

Q. What is the protocol if a student-athlete participating in athletics or activities tests positive for COVID-19?

A. Per the OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and American Medical Society for Sports Medicine it's recommended that schools require any athlete with a COVID-19 infection to be cleared by his or her primary care provider prior to return to activity, [Guidance for Pediatric and Adolescent Athletes for Return to Sport Following Infection with COVID-19](#).

Q. How should schools respond to COVID-19 related illness events?

A. Schools should work with the local public health authority and utilize ODE's toolkit, [Planning for COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools](#). The toolkit details specific scenarios and immediate action steps required to respond and communicate when a student or staff member: is exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19; becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms; tests positive for COVID-19; tests negative for COVID-19 or does not get tested for COVID-19.

Q. Is creating some type of "tracking tool" to ensure students are appropriately self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms of COVID-19 required?

A. It is suggested that school create a response team to implement policies and procedures for a safe return to sports. Policy plans developed by the response team should address a system to monitor coach and student-athlete contact, symptom screening process, and reporting requirements.

Q. Should student-athletes refrain from wearing tooth and mouth protectors if not required by NFHS rules?

A. While saliva from mouthguards is not likely to be a source of significant infection transmission, we can take precautions to mitigate issues. Athletes should refrain from removing the mouthguard while on the playing field, court, or mat. When mouthguards are removed on the sidelines or the bench area, the student-athlete should use hand sanitizer each time after touching the mouthguard before returning to play.

Q. Can a student-athlete wear a face covering or plastic shield on the outside of any football face mask?

A. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has indicated that cloth face coverings (that tie to the head or loop around the ears under the helmet) are permissible. No face mask should be worn outside of the facemask – including "neck gaiter" style face covering that pull up over the face because of concerns related to neck/tracheal/laryngeal injury potential. Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the facemask and attached to the helmet and clear without any presence of any tint) are not allowed during any football contest. Member schools are encouraged to check with the manufacturer prior to attaching any third-party product to a helmet to verify that the helmet will continue to comply with NOCSAE standards.

Q. Has the NFHS approved any type of helmet attachment related to face coverings?

A. The NFHS has approved the Schutt Sports – Flexible 2-piece "Splash Shield" (clear) and the Actuated Medical Inc – Polycarbonate 2-piece Face Shield (clear) for use on helmets. This can be used in addition to, but not replacement of, a face covering (as defined above).

Q. May a student participating in multiple sports/activities at the same time, divide their maximum of three (3) hours of practice in a day?

A. Yes, a student has a maximum of three (3) hours per day of practice. This can be divided between multiple sports provided that the student doesn't exceed three (3) hours in a day. NOTE: Students are limited to a maximum of one hour of weight training either before or after practice but not both.

Q. If a school decides to have virtual workouts or practices, what information does a school need from the student prior to that engagement?

A. It's important for the school or a school representative to know where each student is physically participating in the virtual workout or practice to allow EMS response in case of medical emergency.