

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 40

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RSU 40 Return to Winter Athletics Plan

Medomak Middle School

Basketball and Cheering for girls and boys will be offered for nine weeks beginning on December 14 and running through February 12. From December 14-January 3, coaches will be able to send student-athletes workouts to do at home and hold team meetings virtually. In-person practices begin on January 4 and will conclude on February 12. January 8-12 will be conditioning and individual skills only. Beginning on January 11 coaches can introduce team competitive drills, while continuing to focus on conditioning and individual skills. Basketball coaches will build up to 3 v 3 and intrasquad scrimmages. Teams will meet 2-3 days a week after school with no Wednesday or Saturday practices. The possibility of any scrimmages with local Busline League Schools toward the end of the season will be at the discretion of Administration. Any cheering competitions will be done virtually, following MPA/State guidelines, that have yet to be developed. MMS Wrestling will depend on whether or not the MPA moves forward with their delayed season in late February-March. As a high risk sport, the state guidelines need to change in order for a middle school wrestling season to occur.

Medomak Valley High School

The following high school sports will begin with virtual workouts/meetings on December 7 and in-person tryouts on December 14:

Basketball

Girls Basketball will include JV and Varsity teams. Boys Basketball will include Freshman, JV, and Varsity teams. Schools are allowed up to 12 games per team in a seven-week season that runs from Jan 11-February 27. As a moderate risk sport, schools are limited to Level 4 competition, which include those schools in the same geographic area (same county or adjacent counties). Potential opponents would include Belfast, Boothbay, Camden Hills, Erskine Academy, Lincoln Academy, Morse, Mt. View, and Oceanside. A final postseason plan has not been adopted by the MPA as presently there is no state-wide competition.

Cheering

One Varsity cheering squad will be sponsored. Currently, there are no in-person competitions scheduled during the 2020-2021 season. Although final plans have yet to be finalized, it appears that any KVAC or MPA competitions will be conducted virtually. Dates on those proposed competitions are to be determined. Cheering is also a moderate risk sport per Maine DHHS and CDC.

Wrestling

One Varsity wrestling squad will be sponsored if the MPA/State guidelines allow for a 2020-2021 season. Wrestling is a high risk sport, which unless guidelines change, only allows for Level 1 and 2 activity. Level 1 is skill-building and conditioning only. Level 2 consists of team-based practice with physically distanced groups. Currently, alpha-weigh-ins will be on February 1 with competition starting on February 22. As the MPA/State provide more information, a determination on a possible start of workouts will be decided.

The purpose of this document is to outline the winter protocols for Medomak Valley High School and Medomak Middle School with regards to COVID-19. These protocols were developed from the Maine Principals' Association's *Return to Competition for Competitive Athletics and Activities in Maine*. **This is a working document that will be revised when necessary to reflect changes that may impact the health and safety of our student-athletes and staff.**

Based on current information, the MPA Sports Advisory Committee believes that strict adherence by all individuals to these guidelines should provide a reasonably safe environment for return to school-based athletics. It is important to remember that all sports carry a potential risk of injury and illness. The risk of contracting COVID-19 illness is in addition to the underlying risks of a given sport and/or activity. It is also important to note that participation in any competitive sports is strictly voluntary. Any staff or student unwilling to follow each MPA and RSU 40 COVID-19 protocols will not be allowed to participate. Each staff member involved in this program will be required to attend a mandatory training session of MPA and RSU 40 COVID-19 protocols and the Emergency Action Plan. If Knox or Lincoln Counties are categorized as "Yellow" or "Red" by the MDOE, all sports practices and competitions will be suspended until a return to "Green" status.

Acclimatization

We understand that many student-athletes have had limited or no access to athletic facilities and organized activities for several weeks or months. Furthermore, this winter season will most likely be the first time student-athletes have had to wear face coverings 100% of the time. There will indeed be an adjustment period, especially during vigorous physical activity and competition. Staff will take this into consideration when developing workout programs for every student-athlete. During the beginning of winter practices, the emphasis will be the conditioning of each student-athlete.

Pre-Participation Symptom Screening

Those individuals at greater risk of developing severe COVID-19 or complications should undergo an informed decision-making process with their medical provider before a return to sports, as exposure to teammates may increase their risk of becoming infected. Student-athletes and staff with a higher risk of severe COVID-19 include those with moderate to severe asthma, a heart condition, diabetes, or a weakened immune system.

Student-athletes, coaches, and staff will self-screen for COVID-19 prior to each practice and contest. The following questions are required for screening:

1. Within the past 24 hours, have you had a fever (100.4 and above) or used any fever reducing medicine?
2. Do you feel sick with any of the common symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (such as cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, loss of taste and/or smell)?
3. Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19?
4. Have you traveled outside the state in the past 14 days?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, please contact Matthew Lash at 542-1475 or matthew_lash@msad40.org. Any “yes” answer may require the student-athlete or staff member to gain medical clearance prior to returning to school. Student-athletes and/or staff who show symptoms during a workout session will be required to leave the school and return only with medical clearance. Isolation areas have been designated at both schools for student-athletes and/or staff who show symptoms during practice or contests. Coaches are required to track daily attendance for record keeping purposes. Coaches will begin each practice and contest by asking team members if they have completed the daily self-screening process.

Face Coverings

Staff, student-athletes, officials, and media are required to wear a face covering 100% of the time. This includes during practices and competitions. Cloth or disposable face coverings are acceptable. Coaches will build time into practice plans where student-athletes can remove their face covering for drink and fresh air breaks. Removal of a mask requires a minimum of six feet social distancing. The use of a face covering by all involved is a requirement of the MPA, MDOE, DHHS, and RSU 40 and is non-negotiable. Having a proper face covering is the responsibility of the student-athletes and staff. RSU 40 is not responsible for providing personal protective equipment.

Attendance

Regular attendance at scheduled practices and contests is required. The MPA Bonafide Team Rule remains in effect. Furthermore, school attendance (whether in-person or remote), is required in order to be eligible to practice or compete each day. With the current changes in the school day, staff understands the many challenges facing families when it comes to transportation to after school activities. Student-athletes and parents should communicate with coaches when not able to attend a practice. In addition, student-athletes are expected to abide by the athletic code just like any non-COVID year.

Disinfectants and Hand Sanitizers

Disinfectants and hand sanitizer kits will be provided by the district. Athletes may not bring their own products to practice. All products have been approved by the Director of Facilities and are noted on the District's Data Safety Sheets (SDS). Medical, disinfectant and hand sanitizer kits will be available at each practice and contest areas at all times. Any equipment used will be sanitized after each practice. MPA in-game disinfecting protocols will also be followed. Individual student-athlete's personal towels, clothing, shoes, or sports-specific equipment cannot be shared between athletes. Student-athletes are encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning home. RSU 40 staff will disinfect all used indoor facilities daily. Only one individual will be allowed into the MVHS varsity locker rooms at a time and those facilities will be cleaned daily. MMS locker rooms are not available for use.

Practices

Staff and student-athletes must stay home if they feel ill or have any symptoms of COVID-19. Coaches will inform student-athletes of practice protocols before the first practice begins. Student-athletes should stay 6 feet apart whenever possible (e.g. during warm-up, skill building activities, simulation drills, when explaining drills, situations, or rules). In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, we are required to limit the number of individuals that can gather in a shared space. Currently,

gathering size limits are set at 50 people indoors. Players, coaches, and staff count toward the gathering limit.

Coaches will designate an area in the gym where student-athletes place their bags and water bottles before the start of practice. Each space will be 6 feet apart. Each team member is required to have a face covering and water bottle in order to participate in practice or contests. There is no sharing of water bottles. Several drink breaks must be built into each practice plan. All staff and student-athletes must use hand sanitizer prior to the start and at the conclusion of each practice. Hand sanitizer will be provided for each team. Please do not bring your own.

Practice times will vary depending on the team/day. Practices beginning at 4:00 or later will require student-athletes to leave school property and return for their designated practice time. We are not able to supervise student-athletes while waiting for practice and must also stay under the 50 person limit. Thirty-minutes between each practice will be built into schedules to allow for gym air to cycle through and avoid teams from interacting with each other. Student-athletes are not to arrive earlier than ten minutes prior to their practice. Coaches must also end their practices when scheduled in order for necessary time in-between practices. For those practices that begin immediately after school, student-athletes will be required to meet in the gym upon dismissal. Student-athletes are encouraged to come to school in their practice attire to limit the need to change after school as only one person at a time is allowed in the locker room. For MVHS, the two varsity locker rooms will be used for bathrooms and changing. The MMS lobby bathrooms will be available to MMS student-athletes. Parents must drop off their student-athlete and return at the end of practice or stay in their vehicle while waiting for practice to end. They are not allowed in the school building.

Hydration

Each student-athlete will be required to bring their own water or sports drinks daily. Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in practices or contests without their own drink container. Drinks must not be shared. It is recommended that student-athletes bring enough fluids for an entire practice or contest. MVHS has a new touchless refill station located by the gym that is available during practices and contests. New touchless water fountains will be installed at MMS prior to January 4. The beverage machines in each school will also be available. Several drink breaks will be required during each practice. It is crucial that student-athletes arrive at sessions properly hydrated. Hydration begins before, not during activities. In addition, a well-balanced diet and proper nutrition is equally important to the success of each student-athlete.

Strength Training Spotting

Any strength training that occurs in the MVHS weightroom this winter will follow strict guidelines to keep all participants safe, and will not begin until approved by the Administration and the RSU 40 Facilities Director. Face coverings must be worn at all times. Staff and student-athletes will spot from the side, with one on each end. Staff and student-athletes will disinfect each apparatus after each individual use.

Access/Egress Points

Student-athletes who do not practice immediately after school will be expected to exit as soon as possible upon dismissal. There is no congregating in the cafe, lobbies, or hallways. The only entrance that will be open at MVHS after school is the rear athletic wing doors behind the gym. Student-athletes will exit the gym through the front lobby doors by the booster's booth. The front MMS lobby doors will be used as access/egress points.

Transportation

Every attempt will be made by RSU 40 to provide transportation to and from each athletic contest. Transportation guidelines will follow those set forth by RSU 40 and the MPA. Coaches will make sure student-athletes enter the bus one at a time while social distancing. Seats will be filled from back to front, and emptied from front to back. All team personnel and the driver are required to wear a face covering while on the bus. Hand sanitizer will be provided when entering and exiting the bus. Coaches are required to ask team members if they have completed their daily self-screening prior to boarding the bus.

In the event that district transportation cannot be provided to or from an athletic contest, parents/guardians may transport their own child to/from a school sponsored event, provided they notify a school administrator in writing of their intent to do so. If transporting children other than their own, a written and signed permission slip from the parent/guardian of said child(ren) must accompany their notice of intent. It is encouraged that student-athletes who are not able to ride the bus to and from an athletic contest, do so with individuals from the same household.

Athletic Contests

Each home athletic contest will be conducted following the MPA General Recommendation for Return to Participation and individual sport recommendations. Coaches and the Athletic Administrator will hold a team educational session prior to the first contest to educate student-athletes of all rules and requirements related to competitive competition with other schools. Furthermore, the Athletic Administrator will communicate with each school regarding protocols prior to arrival and will greet

opposing coaches and student-athletes. In order to avoid exceeding the 50-person indoor limit, special considerations will be made for “game” days with regards to scheduling of times, staff, transportation, and potential holding areas of teams if necessary.

MVHS All-Sports Boosters concessions will not be served during the winter season. **Per MPA/State guidelines, no spectators will be allowed at home or away contests.** Home contests will be streamed on MVHS All-Sports Boosters Facebook Live. Student-athletes are encouraged to bring snacks as teams will not be stopping at fast food restaurants after away contests. Furthermore, there will be no team meetings, practices, or dinners outside of MVHS or MMS.

Athletic Trainer

RSU 40 Athletic Trainer, Lynsey Carr, will be on site for each practice and contest. The Athletic Trainer will tend to each injury and medical emergency. The Athletic Director and each staff member is trained in CPR/AED, Sports First Aid, Sudden Cardiac Arrest, Concussions, and Heat Illness Prevention and can also care and assist when needed. Staff members will wear face coverings at all times. The Athletic Department Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located by the gym/weight room entrance. Student-athletes are not allowed into the training room unless the athletic trainer is present. Only one student-athlete will be allowed in the training room with the Athletic Trainer.

The following link is provided to explain MPA recommendations in further detail:

[MPA Recommendations for Return to Participation](#)