

# NEW BRUNSWICK INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

August 28, 2020

The purpose of this document is to examine each of the 16 NBIAA activities and their return to high school sports in New Brunswick for the 2020-2021 school season, while following Appendix F from EECD on Physical Education and Sports Activities.

[EECD Return to School: Directions for School Districts and Schools](#)

## **RISK MITIGATION**

The reopening of schools will significantly increase breadth and size of 'social circles' across New Brunswick. Expanding points of contact across broader social circles increases risk of potential COVID-19 transmission. Enabling interscholastic sports and activities may further expand points of contact between already larger 'social circles' across New Brunswick once schools reopen. This incurs greater risk. Additionally, evidence on COVID-19 transmission pathways indicates that risk may be greater during physical activity, or otherwise during activities that increase respiration. Due to this, a modified approach to physical education, interscholastic, and otherwise school sport and physical activity is warranted.

Please note that a layered approach to risk mitigation is most effective in the context of COVID-19. All recommendations listed below that pertain to physical distancing (2 metres/6 feet) during sport and physical activity are prefaced with the understanding that *some degree of physical contact during sport play is inevitable and acceptable*. Sport and game play must be modified to better accommodate physical distancing and effectively reduce contact; a modification that has already been successfully accommodated by many Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) in New Brunswick.

## **RETURNING TO HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS**

Resuming activities in our format pre-COVID-19 may not be possible until there is a vaccine and when New Brunswick enters the Green phase. In the meantime, we will make efforts to adapt rules & regulations to some of our school sport activities for our member schools, student athletes, coaches, and officials to return with the safety protocols in place. It is critical that we continue to adhere to the public health measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19. These guidelines are not all-encompassing; therefore, schools will need to make additional modifications specific to their own facility to ensure they meet or exceed the requirements mandated by the Province of New Brunswick. The safety and health of all involved will be first and foremost in our decision-making process.

Since the shut down of NBIAA school sports back in March 2020, due to COVID-19, the following factors will be examined on a regular basis for the return of high school sports:

1. State of health in our province, as well as in each zone as outlined by the Government of New Brunswick;
2. Approval from Public Health, the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development, NBIAA Executive Members, and NBIAA member schools to allow students and staff to participate in extra-curricular activities;
3. Availability, cleaning and disinfection of equipment and facilities in accordance with standards set by Public Health;
4. Modifications to activities will be revised while adhering to the above three factors and ability to modify sport/activity to achieve the public health measures (e.g., physical distancing, hygiene etiquette, cleaning and disinfection as noted above, staying home when sick or required to self-isolate protocol, etc.).

The following parameters must be implemented for all return to school sport activities until [Public Health Orders](#) related to COVID-19 are lifted:

- Physical distancing of 2 metres must be enforced by all participants.
- Community face mask where physical distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained is required for all spectators, athletes not involved in play, coaches and volunteers (while noting that the use of face masks and other public health measures do not *replace* physical distancing requirements).
- Self-screening and staying home when sick
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of equipment (before, during, after) as per the Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) Guidelines and limiting use of shared equipment where possible, and otherwise cleaning/disinfecting between use.
- Enabling hand and respiratory hygiene (e.g., ensuring provision of hand-wash opportunities and/or availability of hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol content; providing tissues and disposal bins).
- Utilize posters of Public Health Measures to passively reinforce understanding of symptoms, screening criteria, reminders of physical distancing requirements, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and risks associated with COVID-19, as well as content on factors that increase vulnerability to COVID-19, where such factors include older

age, underlying chronic health conditions, and/or being immunocompromised (communicate risk, but do not discriminate or force divulgence of personal health information).

- Pre-screening checklist and questionnaire for COVID-19 health monitoring is required by all participants and spectators.
- No sharing of personal equipment.
- Encourage the use of personal water bottles.
- Limit opportunity for injury.
- Students should only be part of one NBIAA sport at a time.
- Team roster maximums will be set by the NBIAA per sport in accordance with modifications to game play to support the public health measures including physical distancing (while noting that some degree of brief contact is acceptable during game play, but play must be modified to effectively minimize and reduce contact).
- Attendance of all participants / spectators must be taken at each practice/game for contact tracing, as well as when a school hosts an event. The documentation must be stored in a secure location and available upon request.
- Maintaining consistency when grouping student athletes, coaches and volunteers during training and competition, as per each Provincial Sport Organization recommendations. Schools may have multiple groups within an activity to provide an opportunity to as many students as possible.
- Pre- & Post Competition Protocols are to be in place; there shall be no unnecessary physical contact (high-fives, handshakes, fist bumps, etc.) with opponents.
- Everyone should attempt to provide their own transportation when travelling to an event and when carpooling, follow risk mitigation measures such as use of face covering when possible and where required.
- Participants should arrive ready to participate, as changing rooms will not be available without each school outlining it in their COVID-19 operational plan; where changing rooms are used, adjust occupancy to enable physical distancing within the changing room and minimize time spent within group settings in confined indoor spaces (e.g., such as some changing room formats).
- Team & coach meetings should be conducted virtually or must follow health and safety requirements of distancing and mask use when in person.
- Verbal recognition of awards are permitted post-competition, but no physical awards are to be presented (could be shipped at a later time). Promote clapping rather than cheering/shouting to reduce potential for COVID-19 transmission.
- At this time, there will be no spectators at indoor sporting events.
- Events occurring outdoors will be limited to a maximum of 50 spectators, while ensuring physical distancing of two (2) metres. It should be encouraged to limit parent attendance to one per player.

## **NBIAA HIGH SCHOOL SPORT PHASES**

The phases of NBIAA High School sport re-introduction will need to follow the guidelines, recommendations and Public Health Orders of New Brunswick. Following the guidelines and policies of the NBIAA, the decision to participate in high school sport activities will be left to the member schools, student-athletes, coaches, and officials.

**Note:** Within the phases outlined below, certain activities may be at different phases than other activities, as well as certain zones within the province.

### **PHASE 1: RETURN TO PLAN** (NB Yellow Phase)

Promotion of high school sport opportunities

- Awareness of Public Health Orders and Recommendations
- Education of expectations for permitted high school sports per season
- Awareness of Provincial Sport Organization's Return-to-Play-Plans
- Promotion and application of required game modifications

### **PHASE 2: RETURN TO PRACTICE** (NB Yellow Phase) may only begin on **September 14<sup>th</sup>**

School training within the NBIAA season of play

- Promotion of skill development within your school sport
- Promotion of intramurals within your school sport
- Additional coaches may be required per team to assist with training

### **PHASE 3: RETURN TO CONFERENCE PLAY** (NB Yellow Phase and approval by Public Health & EECD)

Controlled scrimmage/competition within the NBIAA season of play

- Controlled scrimmage/competition only within your conference with recommended modifications
- Competition may occur once every 5 days

- Local certified officiating is recommended to minimize interaction with those outside of the conference

#### **PHASE 4: RETURN TO REGIONAL PLAY** (NB Yellow Phase and approval by Public Health & EECD)

Controlled scrimmage/competition within NBIAA season of play

- Controlled scrimmage/competition only within your region/classification with recommended modifications
- Local certified officiating required where possible to minimize interaction with those outside of the region

#### **PHASE 5: RETURN TO PROVINCIAL PLAY** (NB Yellow Phase and approval by Public Health & EECD)

Competition leading to Provincial Championships

Championships may need to be modified sport by sport:

- Competition may need to be held in various locations
- Competition may need to be held over various days
- No overnight accommodations
- Limiting the number of participants at the event, at any one time
- No, or limited, spectator attendance

#### **PHASE 6: RETURN TO 'NEW NORMAL'** (NB Green Phase with all Public Health Orders related to COVID 19 lifted)

Competition without boundaries or restrictions

- NBIAA activities resume with possible new adaptations.

The NBIAA will be referring to each available Provincial Sport Organization when modifying rules & regulations for each sport within the plan to return to high school sports.

- **Golf** – NBIAA **Phase 5**, while following [Golf NB's Return to Play Plan](#).  
\*Max team roster of 6 athletes.
- **Baseball** – NBIAA **Phase 3**, while following [Baseball NB's Return to Play Plan](#).  
\*Max team roster of 15 athletes.
- **Softball** – NBIAA **Phase 3**, while following [Softball NB's Return to Play Plan](#).  
\*Max team roster of 15 athletes.
- **Cross Country** – NBIAA **Phase 3**, while following [Athletics NB's Return to Play Plan](#).  
\*Max team roster of 5 athletes per category = 20 total athletes.
- **Field Hockey** – NBIAA **Phase 2**, while following [Field Hockey Canada Return to Play Plan](#). The NBIAA will review again in September for a potential conference play.  
\*Max team roster of 18 athletes.
- **Soccer** – NBIAA **Phase 2**, while following [Soccer NB's Return to Play Plan](#). The NBIAA will look at moving to **Phase 3** on September 22nd.  
\*Max team roster of 18 athletes.
- **Football** – Rule modification from contact football to flag football for this fall 2020 season. NBIAA **Phase 2 for Flag Football**, while following [Football NB's Return to Play Plan](#). The NBIAA will look at moving to **Phase 3 for Flag Football** on September 22nd.  
\*Max team roster of 15 athletes – to be determined with new flag football guidelines.
- **Swimming** – NBIAA **Phase 3**, while following [Swim NB's Return to Swim Plan](#) with meet modifications.  
\*Max of 40 athletes per meet.
- **Cheerleading** – NBIAA **Phase 5** with all competitions to be done virtually, while following [Cheer NB Return to Play Plan](#).  
\*Max team roster of 15 athletes.
- **Basketball** – NBIAA **Phase 2**, while following [Basketball NB's Return to Play Plan](#). The NBIAA will review again in September.  
\*Max team roster of 12 athletes.
- **Wrestling** – To remain 'on hold' and the NBIAA will review again in September. [Wrestling NB's Return to Play Plan](#) will be followed.  
\* Max team roster will be determined.
- **Hockey** – NBIAA **Phase 2**, while following [Hockey NB's Return to Play Plan](#). The NBIAA will review again in September.  
\*Max team roster of 18 athletes.
- **Badminton** – NBIAA **Phase 3 for the Fall Season**, with a further review in January or February to potentially be able to advance to **NBIAA Phase 5** for the Spring Season.  
\*Max team roster of 6 athletes per category = 24 athletes; only 4 athletes per category for competition.

- **Volleyball** – To remain ‘on hold’ and the NBIAA will review at a later date. [VNB’s Return to Play Plan](#) will be followed.  
\*Max team roster of 10 athletes.
- **Rugby** – To remain ‘on hold’ and the NBIAA will review at a later date. [Rugby NB’s Return to Play Plan](#) will be followed.  
\*Max team roster will be determined.
- **Track & Field** – To be permitted while following [Athletics NB’s Return to Play Plan](#) and the NBIAA will review at a later date.  
\*Max team roster will to be determined.

\* **ORANGE** sports will be on hold and reviewed further, along with the Provincial Sport Organization’s plan and approval from Public Health/EECD for the 2020-2021 season.

\* **GREEN** sports will move forward with proper safety protocols and public health risk mitigation measures for COVID-19 transmission; along with the Provincial Sport Organization’s plan and approval from Public Health/EECD for the 2020-2021 season.

NBIAA High School sports will need to consider our seasons of play and the re-introduction of individualized skill development to provincial championships through specific phases. Cancelling, delaying, compressing, or moving sports within seasons of play may have adverse effects on schools and their student athletes. The NBIAA Executive plan to make decisions throughout the year as conditions change and Public Health Orders are altered. Once changes are approved by the NBIAA Executives, the information will be communicated to our membership and through our social media outlets.

With each province having different Public Health Orders and Recommendations, the NBIAA will support School Sport Canada members by not permitting inter-provincial events during the 2020-2021 school year. A review will occur when Public Health Orders related to COVID-19 have been lifted by respective Provincial Governments.

## **NB RESOURCES:**

All resources can be found on the [GNB COVID-19](#) website.

[Self-Monitor Poster](#)

[Hand Washing Poster](#)

[Protect Yourself and Others from Getting Sick Poster](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfection Info Sheet](#)

[Self-Isolation Poster](#)

[Hand Sanitizer Poster](#)

[Non-Medical Masks or Face Coverings](#)

[COVID-19 Screening Tool](#)