



## **Suburban Council Return to Interscholastic Athletics Standard Operating Procedures for Winter High Risk Sports 2021**

On Friday, January 22, 2021 Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that school-sponsored “high risk” sports in all regions may begin to practice and play beginning February 1st with local county health department approval.

See Page 5 of the [NYS Interim Guidance for Sport and Recreation](#) for further details.

[2021 January NYSPHSAA Return to Interscholastic Athletics](#)

[Additional NYSPHSAA Guidance](#)

[Local County DOH Guidance](#)

NOW, THEREFORE, the Suburban Scholastic Council Board of Directors also resolves as follows:

1. In an effort to comply with school/interscholastic athletics reopening requirements and the unprecedented situation presented by COVID-19, the Board of Directors hereby temporarily suspends, until further action, any Suburban Scholastic Council Handbook policy or procedure that directly conflicts with any current or future NYSPHSAA guidance, Section 2 regulation, executive order, or guidance released for the purpose of

reopening of schools/interscholastic athletics during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic as is required by any such laws, regulation, orders, or guidance.

2. Furthermore, member schools will adhere to **Suburban Council Return to Interscholastic Athletics Standard Operating Procedures for Winter 2021** until Covid-19 interscholastic athletic restrictions are dated to expire.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

Outlined below is a plan for the member schools of The Suburban Scholastic Council and its return to Interscholastic Athletics for High Risk Winter Sports.

**In lieu of considering the 7 day rolling average metric of 4% member schools would implement the following protocols:**

#### **Testing**

- **Members schools will implement weekly COVID-19 testing for student-athletes, coaches, managers, or other individuals associated with the higher-risk sport as determined by the district.**
- **Member schools must test a minimum random sample of 30% of all participating student-athletes, coaches, managers, or other individuals associated with the higher-risk sport on a weekly basis.**
- **Testing could be arranged or conducted by member schools.**
- **The member schools must report patient-specific results (positive or negative) to the LHD where the individual resides.**

- **If an individual has documentation of a positive COVID-19 test within the previous 90 days they are exempt from testing.**

***\*\*The member schools in Rensselaer County (Averill Park, Columbia, Troy) are exempt due to their County Department of Health approving High Risk on January 28, 2021.\*\****

**Health Screening** - The NYSED has extended the validity of school sport physicals through the end of the 2021 school year. Any student-athlete who had a physical in the 2018-19 or 2019-20 sport seasons can get medically cleared for Winter 2021 with an updated Interval Health History form to be submitted within 30 days of the start of the season. Any student-athlete who did not have a sport physical during that time frame **MUST** obtain a new one.

**Health History** - Beginning with the Fall 2020 season, member schools should update their health history **documents to include questions regarding Covid-19 infections and diagnosis**. These questions will be used by the school health care providers to identify those student-athletes who may require additional medical screening before being cleared for sports. Recommendations for these changes can be found in the NYSPHSAA “Return to Athletics” document.

**Winter High Risk Sports Season** - The Winter 2021 sports season for High Risk sports will commence on Monday, February 1st and will conclude on March 13, 2021. Seasons will conclude with a Suburban Council championship tournament in each sport, if applicable. ***Section 2 Athletics has determined that during the Winter 2021 sports season, no sectionals will be conducted.***

**Schedules** - as part of the return the play protocols for the Winter 2021 High Risk sports season, the Suburban Council has reduced league schedules to the following number of scheduled contests:

Boys and Girls Basketball - max of 14 league games plus tournament  
Ice Hockey - max of 12 league games plus tournament  
Cheerleading - 4 competitions max  
Wrestling - TBD

**Declaration of Intent to Play** - All schools need to submit their intent to play to the President of Athletics and league schedulers no later than 12:00 pm on Thursday, January 28th so that schedules can be built.

Any school who chooses to participate in any sport after the January 28th deadline has passed will have the responsibility to fill their own schedule.

[Declaration of Intent to Play](#)

[School District Questions - High Risk Winter Sports](#)

**Sub-Varsity Competition** - for the Winter 2021 High Risk sports season, the Suburban Council will only offer junior varsity schedules in addition to varsity. The scheduling of freshmen and modified games has been suspended for the Winter 2021 season. Member schools may offer freshmen and modified sports, but will not be provided league schedules.

[Modified and Freshmen Sports](#)

**Play Dates** - league schedules will focus on having member schools play 3 days a week for boys and girls basketball, 2 days in hockey, 2 days in wrestling and 1 day in cheerleading.

Standardized start times will be:

**Boys and Girls Basketball:** Weekday start times will be 4:30 for Junior Varsity and 6:15 pm for Varsity. Saturday game times will be standardized as 11am and 12:45pm for Junior Varsity and Varsity Games

**Wrestling** - 4:30 pm for JV and 6 pm for Varsity

**Ice Hockey** - TBD depending on availability of rink time.

**Cheerleading** - TBD

***Games times can be changed by mutual agreement of member schools.***

***The Seven Day Rule has been waived by NYSPHSAA for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year.***

**Honoring the Schedule:** It is the expectation of member schools to work to honor all games in a schedule during the course of the season.

**Out of Section Games** - For the Winter 2021 season, Suburban Council member schools have agreed all games to be played inside the boundaries of Section 2.

**Transportation** - all schools must follow their district procedures for transportation of students to and from a sporting event. It is the responsibility of the traveling school to ensure that all policy and procedures regarding transportation are being followed.

**Arrival at Facility** - Teams should arrive at a visiting facility no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled contest. All visiting players, coaches and team personnel should be wearing masks and adhering to proper social distancing guidelines. To the best of their ability, teams should come ready to play and in uniform.

**Hosting a Competition:** Each School/Athletic Office/ Coach needs to make sure to have an administrative contact (cell number and email address) for all events. Each school should communicate ahead of time with the incoming schools and officials about procedures, policies and guidelines.

Examples to be covered include but not limited to, the following:

- Parking
- Where to enter facility;
- What equipment should the visiting team bring;
- Water availability
- Bench area seating (how many players can be accommodated to maintain social distancing);
- Locker room availability and resources;
- Emergency action plans;
- How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange of information is preferred).

The coach of the home team should walk their facility to ensure that it has been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment. Hand sanitizer and disposable masks is the responsibility of each team.

Exchange of rosters should be done electronically prior to the contest. Each athlete should have their own water bottle.

Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer, with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials' table. ***Visiting Team managers must follow the NYSPHSAA Guidelines.***

Pregame and postgame: There will be no shaking hands during introductions. Traditional pre-game introductions should be altered to ensure social distancing occurs. There shall be no postgame game hand shakes.

Bench Setup - All accommodations should be made for social distancing while athletes are in the bench area.

**Officials** - a member of the home team should greet officials and inform them of any individual's school procedures or policies. Officials are encouraged to come dressed to officiate. Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines such as social distancing and mask wearing. Officials will be required to self certify per the requirements of the host school.

**Spectators** - Schools must follow the Department of Health's guidance for the conduct of their school sports as it pertains to spectators. Schools agree to follow Suburban Council school district and county health department protocols regarding spectators.

***As of January 26th, all Suburban Council athletic contests held indoors will be conducted without spectators. The issue of allowing limited spectators will be reviewed at a later date***

**Exception:** Each team in each high risk sport will be allowed to conduct one senior recognition ceremony prior to February 21st. The structure of the senior recognition ceremony should follow established SC Athletics Guidelines. All social distancing guidelines will be in effect for these ceremonies. Only senior parents/guardians of the home team may attend.

**Roster Size** - For the Winter 2021 season, member schools are responsible for their team roster size and should consider limiting the travel party for each sport. Each school agrees that only 3 non athletes or coaches (scorekeeper, statisticians) will be allowed to accompany teams.

**Promotion:** For the Winter 2021 season, it is recommended that once the first league game starts, coaches at each school track all promotions to ensure proper contact tracing should it be needed. ***The Suburban Council Promotion rule is suspended for the Winter 2021 season.***

### **Winter 2021 Sports - Rules and Regulations during COVID-19**

For the following sports please see the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Return to Interscholastic Athletics for individual consideration for running a contest in each of the following sports

#### [2021 January NYPHSAA Return to Interscholastic Athletics](#)

All Coaches in the Suburban Council will be required to attend a pre-season meeting to review sport specific safety protocols as well as consistent game day procedures.

- [Boys and Girls Basketball](#)
- [Wrestling](#)
- [Ice Hockey](#)
- [Cheerleading](#)

