



Dear Commissioner Blanford-Green,

Thank you for putting together thoughtful plans that prioritize participant and community safety for Season B high school sports. Recently, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released guidance for Winter sports, based on the latest and increasingly improving data and evidence, which we think aligns with our Colorado policy frameworks and national best practices.

We are approving your request for Season B, so long as the protocols are modified to align with the AAP guidelines. We are approving Season B to begin no earlier than January 18, 2021. Below are notes about specific modifications to be made to your protocols and at the bottom of this letter is a link to a copy of the Season B CHSSA guidance with suggested edits.

In comparing the guidance documents for skiing, wrestling, swimming, ice hockey, basketball, and spirit with youth sports guidelines issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics, we have found several areas in which the Season B Sports guidelines could be enhanced.

- 1) Individuals who test positive for COVID-19, have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 should not participate. Good language in the Skiing and Spirit guidance is excellent and could be replicated for other sports
- 2) The AAP recommends athletes wear masks during indoor competition for sports other than wrestling, spirit, and aquatics. As such, we will only exempt athletes from the statewide indoor mask order when they are actively involved in wrestling, spirit, and aquatics, and masks remain required when they are not activity participating, for example when the athlete is between events. Masks are required for athletes playing ice hockey and basketball, during play and while not actively participating. All non-athletes involved in the sport, including coaches, trainers, and officials, are required to wear masks at all times in these settings.
- 3) Improving ventilation has been shown to reduce spread in indoor environments; thus, language should be added for all indoor sports about opening windows and doors when possible to promote airflow, and to avoid using indoor spaces with poor ventilation, such as weight rooms and locker rooms.
- 4) Add language to minimize travel to other communities and regions for spirit, wrestling, and basketball. Good language for this exists in the guidance for skiing, swimming, and ice hockey that could be replicated.
- 5) Add language to encourage practicing in small consistent pods for basketball and spirit. Good language for this exists in the guidance for other sports that could be replicated.



Some additional specific recommendations by sport:

Skiing

- Include that non-athletes (coaches, officials, spectators, volunteers, etc) must wear face coverings at all times.
- Your request for 75 skiers per gender per race is approved.

Swimming/Diving

- Include that participants must wear face coverings at all times when not in the water. Consider placing face coverings near the poolside so that athletes can mask immediately upon emerging.
- Your request for a total of 50 participants during a swim/dive competition is approved.

Wrestling

- Add the appropriate general enhancements from #1, 3, and 4 as listed above.
- Remove the exception to wearing a face covering when approaching the scoring table. Participants should be masked at all times unless presently engaged in a bout.
- Your request for all practice to occur with no more than 25 student-athletes in a gym at one time is approved. However, we are concerned about the request for over 100 athletes in a tournament, so would like to ask you to revise that number down and resubmit for approval.

Ice Hockey

- Add the appropriate general enhancements from #1, 2, and 3 as listed above.
- Your request for a total of 20 student-athletes per roster, 40 total, is approved.

Cheer and Dance

- Add the appropriate general enhancements from #3, 4, and 5 listed above.
- Your request for a total of 28 students per roster, or 56 total, is approved.

Basketball

- Add the appropriate general enhancements from #1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 as listed above.
- Eliminate the “mask timeout” - instead encourage participants to step outside individually during rest times if they want to lower or remove their masks.
- Your request for all practices to occur with no more than 25 student-athletes and all games to occur with no more than 24 student athletes is approved.

In all sports, spectators must follow the Indoor/Outdoor event guidance for the dial-level of the county.



COLORADO
Governor Jared Polis



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Department of Public
Health & Environment

Once again, thank you for putting safety first for our participants and communities. I'll finally add that the Governor has indicated that a return to in-person or hybrid learning should precede the commencement of extracurriculars like athletics. It is critical that Colorado's students are able to resume in person education. We appreciate and applaud CHSAA for your work with school districts to support that goal during this difficult time, and thank you for your partnership in this critical moment where many schools are returning to in-person learning. While conditions are far from ideal, organized sports present incredibly valuable and enriching experiences for young people in our state. We appreciate and thank you for the additional effort that is required to keep these opportunities available and sustainable during this pandemic.

[Guidance Submitted with Suggested Changes](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Hunsaker Ryan".

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment