



**PELHAM HIGH  
ATHLETICS HIGH RISK  
SPORTS RETURN TO  
COMPETITION**

## **PREFACE:**

The following proposal is put forth on behalf of Pelham High Athletics to assist the Pelham School Board and the Superintendent in determining the best possible approach to the upcoming Fall 2020 athletic season.

The uncertainty that exists at this time creates a challenge as to whether or not to return to competition under the NHIAA Phase 3 Guidelines. Pelham High School acknowledges that athletic participation is voluntary, and for many, it is a critical part of the educational experience for both physical and psychological development and well-being.

The Pelham High Athletic Dept. has considered several factors when making the decision as to whether or not to return to competition this Fall. The safety of our athletes, coaches and spectators is our top priority.

- Considering the current active cases in our area, what is the current risk of contracting COVID-19 for our student-athletes? Coaches? In our community? At other schools?
- What are the risks to the health of our student-athletes if they don't have athletics?
  1. Grades decline
  2. Mental Health (depression, anxiety)
  3. Unhealthy lifestyle, weight gain
  4. Social development

Currently statewide athletics and athletic competitions within New Hampshire are allowed under the Governor's Youth Sports NH Guidelines. Additionally, we believe that our student-athletes will benefit more both physically and mentally by playing for PHS, being a Python again.

- We will monitor practices for safety protocols
- We will educate our coaching staffs correctly
- We will control physical distancing whenever possible
- We will decrease the amount of exposure they have to outside communities by creating a regional, limited schedule.

**The Pelham High Athletic Department recognizes that accurate and prompt communication between athletes, families, coaching staffs, administration, superintendent and town health officials is vital to the success of this plan.**

# Protocol: Regards Covid Positive Student Athlete

## Proper Reporting, Documentation, and Communication

**Safety is our primary concern. It is imperative that we have the correct documentation and information for our student athletes. This will allow us to communicate in a timely and consistent method.**

### We will use the following practice:

1. The coach will have the following information readily available: the student athlete's email, the student athlete's cell phone number, the parent of the student athlete's email, a home phone number, and a parent's cell phone number.
2. Upon a student athlete or family confirming a positive test or symptoms, the coach will immediately contact the Athletic Director. If not available, contact the Principal.
3. The coach will provide the Athletic Director with a list of student athletes in the 'pod' that had contact with or exposure to the 'positive' student athlete.
4. The AD or principal will coordinate with the Superintendent (or designee) who works with Pelham Public Health to determine a course of action.
5. The Athletic Director will contact all student athletes that were possibly exposed and their parents. **An email with:** the Superintendent's letter, a summary of the safety protocols and practices that have been used by the team, and any other pertinent and shareable information about potential risk of exposure. This will be sent to all student athletes and their parents.
6. The Athletic Director will contact via phone call all above mentioned parties.
7. The Athletic Director will meet with the identified Coach and Team after quarantine to review all protocols.
8. A coaches meeting to review safety protocols, face coverings, and physical distancing will be scheduled by the Athletic Director for the week of August 24th. The Principal will be in attendance.

# **Protocol: Documentation of Athletes - Preseason, During Season, and Postseason**

## **Documentation and Communication**

**It is imperative that we have the correct documentation and information for our student athletes. This will allow us to communicate in a timely and consistent method.**

1. As of 8/19/2020 the expectation is that any student athlete participating in a practice and/or workout on campus whether it be preseason, during season, or post season will provide the coach or supervisor the following information: student email, student cell phone number, parent email, a parent cell phone number, and a home phone number.
2. This information will be shared with the Athletic Director who will keep a master list and provide a copy to the Office of the Principal (or designee).
3. Coaches are responsible for having this information available at all times.
4. Any injury or illness will be communicated to the Athletic Director who will follow the protocol in place for communication and dissemination of information.

## **NHIAA HIGH RISK SPORTS**

### **FOOTBALL:**

Pelham High Athletics understands that at times football does not allow for physical distancing. Nevertheless, NHIAA and NH DHHS both support our position that screening, physical distancing when possible, educated coaching staff and cleaning protocols will be sufficient for student-athletes to be safe. Steps that Pelham High Athletics will take to minimize the risks associated with football will be:

- Schedule as regional a schedule as possible, still allowing for fair and safe competition.

- Limit practice sessions to a 2 hour maximum, allowing for sanitizing and hydration breaks.
- Require athletes to wear masks while changing in the locker room, heading out to practice and leaving practice.
- Require coaches to wear masks when they have to address/work with athletes closer than 6 feet.
- Do not allow athletes to re-enter the locker room after practices, but to go immediately home.
- Have coaches run physical distancing drills and exercises in practice, whenever possible.
- Limit the weight room to 50% capacity and require athletes and coaches to wear masks unless they are the one on the apparatus. Follow NHIAA protocols for spotting to be done from the sides and not behind the active lifter.
- Assign Mondays to be a full social distance practice each week with no contact, game film (via zoom meeting), weight room and cardio drills allowed with social distancing in place throughout.
- Limit the football team to travel with 40 or less athletes to away games, 20 per bus maximum. Require masks, as is true for all our fall teams.
- Assign one coach to be responsible for physical distancing at home games. Require each athlete to stand 6 feet from each other while not on the field of play.
- Do not allow sharing of water bottles or community water stations.
- Disinfect all shared equipment after each practice session.

### **FALL COMPETITION CHEERLEADING:**

Pelham High Athletics understands that at times competition cheer does not allow for full physical distancing. Nevertheless, NHIAA and NH DHHS both support our position that screening, physical distancing when possible, educated coaching staff and cleaning protocols will be sufficient for student-athletes to be safe. Steps that Pelham High Athletics will take to minimize the risks associated with competition cheer will be:

- Require athletes to wear masks while changing, walking into practice and when leaving practice.
- All practices will take place either outside or in the Pelham High gymnasium to maximize space. No cafeteria or hallway practices will be allowed.
- Require coaches to wear masks at practices when they can not maintain physical distancing from their athletes.
- Limit practice sessions to a 2 hour maximum, allowing for sanitizing and hydration breaks.

- After stunting, each member of any stunt group must either wash their hands or sanitize their hands immediately before returning to the mat.
- Stunt groups should be kept consistent once the coach has decided on them for the season. This will limit exposure within each practice.
- Stunting will be limited to 2 practices a week.
- Coaches will run physical distancing drills and exercises in practice, whenever possible.
- Do not allow sharing of water bottles or community water stations.
- Do not allow athletes to re-enter the locker room after practices, but to go immediately home.
- Cheer mats will be disinfected each day after practice.
- Cheerleaders will not cheer at away football games. At home football games they will sideline cheer with no stunting while maintaining physical distancing.

## **Participation in Pelham High Athletics**

### **Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Form**

*No student will be allowed to participate in athletics until this form is returned to the coach or Athletic Director.*

As the parent/ legal guardian I authorize my child's full participation in athletics, band, chorus, and other extracurricular activities (collectively, "activities") at Pelham High School and acknowledge that participation in these activities is completely voluntary. I further understand that my or my child's failure to comply with the guidelines established by Pelham School District regarding safety, including guidelines related to limiting the spread of COVID-19, or to comply with the instructions of coaches, trainers, advisors, and activity leaders regarding such guidelines, will result in my child's removal from participation in these activities at Pelham High School.

#### **Assumption of Risk and Medical Clearance**

I agree and understand that participating in activities with other students carries inherent risks including potential exposure to or contraction of COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, injuries (whether severe or minor), permanent damage, or even death. This assumption of risk includes participation in activities on or off the campus of Pelham School District, and includes the risks associated with participation athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic. My child is covered with family insurance in the event of an accident or injury. I attest my child is in good health and has no restrictions covering participation in the activities, including any symptoms of COVID-19. I agree that if my child experiences any symptoms related to COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, nasal congestion, fatigue, fever, chills, muscle aches, headaches, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and/or loss of taste or smell, my child will not participate in activities until their symptoms have cleared and they produce a negative test for COVID-19.

I agree and understand there are specific guidelines in place in order to participate in activities and understand that even if coaches, trainers, advisors, activity leaders, and students follow these guidelines, Pelham School District cannot guarantee that students will not contract COVID-19 while participating in activities.

## **Release, Waiver, and Hold Harmless Agreement**

In consideration for my child's participation in activities at Pelham High School, I, (for myself and on behalf of my minor child), agree to forever release and discharge Pelham School District and its Administration, faculty, employees, volunteers and other agents and representatives (together, the "Released Parties") from, and agree not to sue for any and all liability or claims I (or my child) may have for any causes of action, liability, losses, or damages arising or resulting from property damage and loss, personal injury, emotional distress, illness, disability, or death, related to my child's participation in activities, including participation in activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This release, waiver and hold harmless agreement is for any type of claim, including breach of contract, negligence, fraud, or any other type of suit and includes losses alleged to be caused by the negligence of Pelham School District and the Released Parties, to the fullest extent permitted by law but does not include claims for intentional wrongdoing.

Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_