

PELHAM HIGH SCHOOL
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NHIAA PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES ALREADY IN PLACE:

1. First day to practice/tryout will be Tuesday, Sept. 8
2. First day to compete will most likely be Friday, Sept. 19
3. In all sports, whenever possible, we must social distance 6 feet. This includes on sidelines, spectators, in practices, pre-game warmups, after game ceremonies, awards, etc.
4. Each day athletes and coaches will be asked to pre-screen for COVID symptoms and are asked to stay home if they are feeling ill.
5. Home Team will dictate the protocols and guidelines for each event. If districts have different rules, the home team's rules are to be followed.
6. All shared equipment must be disinfected after each use. This includes game balls. During contests, game balls should be rotated out as much as possible and used ball should be disinfected immediately.
7. Teams should show up to events ready to play. No visiting locker rooms should be made available unless absolutely necessary.
8. Inside venues and stadiums will be at 50% capacity at most. This means limiting inside and big event crowds for certain sports. At all sporting events spectators will be asked to social distance. As we did for graduation, we can limit seating in the gym, on the football bleachers and for soccer keep families in their own "Pod". Most likely looking at immediate family members only for home events.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO POTENTIAL SCHEDULES:

1. Schools will develop new, amended schedules that are based on geographic region rather than size and division. This is for expected travel issues with bus restrictions and afternoon availability. Many high school events will be moved to nights or weekends to accommodate travel needs.
2. Each sport will most likely offer an "open" tournament at seasons end for each division. This means no matter who you play during your season and what your record is, you will have a chance to compete within your division for a state championship.
3. If at any time either of the competing teams feels that they cannot or should not compete that day, then the game will be cancelled with no penalty associated with that decision. There are no forfeit wins.

FOUR POTENTIAL OPTIONS THAT WE ARE LOOKING AT:

(this can be for all sports collectively or each sport individually)

1. **Interscholastic:** Play NHIAA schedule following NHIAA Phase 3 Guidelines, and each sport's individual set of regulations, which can be found on the NHIAA webpage under fall sports.
2. **Inter-Murals:** Play in-district only. (certain sports would have potential modifications, such as but not limited to, 7 v 7 flag football, 7 v 7 for soccer and field hockey to spread out field, 3-foot line in volleyball to keep them away from net, staggered start in XC) This option would mean our athletes would only be competing against our athletes. Less exposure to potential carriers from other towns. Other sports could also be offered in this format, such as tennis and dance.
3. **Skill Development:** Allow coaches to continue to work with their athletes in small groups. This is where we are right now.
4. **Remote:** Team Meetings remotely, home workouts like in the spring.

HURDLES WE WILL FACE IN ORDER TO COMPETE THIS FALL:

1. Travel Availability. Do we have buses and drivers available to take our teams to their away venues, and if so when? Also only putting 24-26 on a bus including coaches will mean 2-3 of our teams will need two buses or possible other options?
2. Limiting spectators at certain events to insure social distancing. Policing this will be a challenge, especially if we are letting visiting crowds attend. Even for sports that draw less of a crowd, how do we approximate for visiting spectators?
3. Disinfecting after each practice/game and game balls during games. An example is Volleyball uses two game balls each match, and now they are requiring 4-6 be available to rotate out and clean at each timeout/new game during the match. Same will go for all other "ball" sports. We will need people in charge of that task.
4. Educating coaches, athletes and parents on the necessary expectations of social distancing behaviors before, during and after games. There will be no team huddles, captain's meetings with refs, high 5's, hugs after goals, pre and postgame handshakes, drinking out of coolers or community water stations, no congregating before and especially after games, and team social distancing on the sidelines to name a few of the "new norms". All of these changes will take time and repetition training in practice to break some old habits that we have been allowed to do for years and years.

Most regional districts are waiting 1-2 more weeks to make final decisions. New schedules are due to the NHIAA by the 14th right now, so we still have a window to see where we are at that time. Student/Athlete safety will as always be our top

priority. Currently the most popular answer around the region is no contact sports allowed. That only leaves Golf and XC for us. Most of those districts are leaving their window open to make adjustments if possible over the next 10 days. I think we need to keep options open as well for the athlete's benefit. If we can safely play sports, whether it be vs. an opponent or just against our own school, we owe it to these kids to try everything we can, unless we are mandated otherwise by the state.