

Manlius Pebble Hill School

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Health and Safety Protocols for Athletics

(DRAFT – Updated 9/21/20)

Overview

As MPH plans to embark on an abbreviated fall season, we are committed to following the health and safety protocols that are outlined in [The MPH Social Compact and Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year](#) and [Health Protocols](#). Our procedures are also informed by the NYSDOH, NYSPHSAA, Onondaga County Department of Health, and the OHSL. The following protocols include, but are not limited to individual sports guidelines, PPE, procedures for players and coaches, transportation, spectators, and guidelines for practices and games.

We hope that after reading through this document, many of your questions will be answered. While we are attempting to control many variables, we certainly cannot control every possible scenario. Nevertheless, we will do our absolute best to adhere to these health and safety protocols that will enable us to have a successful athletic experience in the midst of the COVID-19 public health crisis. While much of this year's athletic experience will not be what anyone expected, we are glad to have the ability to offer our student athletes opportunities to be physically active, train with their teams, develop their skills, and play and compete as safely as possible.

Individual Sport Protocols

Just as our students have returned to on-campus learning and have necessarily adapted to unfamiliar health and safety protocols, our student athletes will be required to adhere to new protocols that will make their participation in athletics possible. The precautions are necessary and mandatory; without these protocols in place, we would not be able to offer a return to athletics this fall. **We will adhere to these health and safety protocols, not only**

for our student athletes, but for the health and well-being of the entire MPH community of which they are a part.

MPH Cross Country

- MPH always requires masks to be worn unless six feet of physical distance can be maintained, and 12 feet of distance can be maintained when engaged in aerobic activity.
- MPH requires that face coverings be worn at the starting line. After runners get out on the course and physically distanced, face coverings can be taken off. Face coverings must go back on at the finish line.
- MPH runners will not participate in hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- MPH will use a safe course layout, the use of waves, and social distancing in consideration of determining the size of a meet.
- MPH, if hosting, will have athletes wear numbers for easy identification.
- MPH Coaches will:
 - Communicate guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
 - Conduct workouts in “cohorts” of six or less when training together in practice to ensure more limited exposure to infection.
 - Keep accurate records of those athletes who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- MPH student athletes will:
 - Be responsible for their own supplies and equipment.
 - Wear their own appropriate workout clothing (no sharing of clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
 - Bring their own water bottle(s) appropriately labeled.
- Pre- and Post- meet:
 - The OHSL is limiting travel rosters to ten per team to limit the number of runners at the race. This *could* impact either MPH boys’ or girls’ program.
 - MPH, if hosting, will always practice specific physical distancing protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.
 - MPH will not use team tents this season.
 - Teams are expected to provide individual water for their athletes, and there will be no use of water stations and open cups during practices and races.

MPH Soccer

- MPH always requires masks to be worn unless six feet of physical distance can be maintained, and 12 feet of distance can be maintained when engaged in aerobic activity.
- MPH will provide appropriate mask breaks during regular practice times.
- MPH athletes will not participate in hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.

- MPH is suspending post-game protocol of shaking hands. This can be replaced with a wave or some other *positive* hand gesture.
- MPH coaching staff will:
 - Communicate our guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
 - Conduct workouts in “cohorts” of 6 players or less of the same students, always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure.
 - Keep records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- MPH student athletes will:
 - Be responsible for their own supplies and equipment.
 - Wear their own workout clothing (do not share clothing).
 - Clean their individual clothing after every workout immediately upon returning home.
 - Bring their own water bottle(s).
- MPH game play:
 - During game play, the OHSL mandates at least a thirty (30) second mask break to be taken every ten minutes. Players must stay on the field during the break and may remove their mask as long as they maintain physical distancing of 12 feet. Substitutes who report to the table prior to the break taking place, may enter the game following the break.
- Team Benches during games
 - There will be no linear bench areas. We will adjust backward from the touch line to allow proper physical distancing.
 - There will be substitutions during any dead ball situation. This will allow mask breaks also.

MPH Tennis

- MPH always requires masks to be worn unless six feet of physical distance can be maintained, and 12 feet of distance can be maintained when engaged in aerobic activity.
 - Doubles partners are always required to wear masks.
- MPH will use new balls on a regular basis.
- MPH coaches will:
 - Communicate guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
 - Conduct workouts in “cohorts,” if possible, of the same students, always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure.
 - Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- MPH student athletes will:
 - Be responsible for their own supplies and equipment.

- Wear their own appropriate workout clothing (no sharing of clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring their own water bottle(s).
- Use the racquet/foot to pick up balls and hit them to opponents. Avoid using hands to pick up the balls. Send back balls that come from another court with a kick or a racquet.
- Not participate in hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- Maintain physical distancing when changing ends.
- Game and practice play
 - When possible, MPH will use one separate can of balls per player per match. Players should serve their own tennis balls throughout the match. These balls will be labeled ahead of matches.
 - MPH tennis practice equipment will be touched only by the coach and will be cleaned frequently. MPH will use alcohol-based disinfectant to clean all tennis gear, including racquets, towels, target cones, ball machines, and the like.
 - MPH will use a ball machine to in practices and lessons.
 - MPH will use ball tubes and basket pickups to pick up loose balls after a ball machine rotation to limit contact.
 - The OHSL recommends that travel rosters be limited to 11 players.

MPH Student Athlete Options

- If there is any aspect to the protocols that an athlete and/or their parent/guardian are not comfortable with, they have the option to opt out prior to or during any part of the season. Nothing will be held against that athlete if they chose to make that decision.
- While MPH cannot guarantee interscholastic play beyond the fall 2020 season, MPH plans to have intramural options for athletes, if interscholastic sports are not possible.

PPE During Practice and Games

- Face coverings are required for all practices and game play by all MPH student athletes, coaches, and support personnel.
- As noted in the section outlining the Protocols for Individual Sports (pp. 2-4), MPH take every precaution needed to ensure we have practices and games that are as safe as possible. Some of these precautions include:
 - Proper sanitization of any equipment used; disinfectant will be available during games and practice.
 - Hand sanitizer will be available during games and practice.

- MPH will provide face coverings for our student athletes to wear.
- Disposable face coverings will be available for players who forget theirs or need a replacement.
- Ball Boys and Girls will be asked to wear gloves of their choice, either gloves brought from home or disposable ones provided by the School.
- Changing into athletic attire
[Final details to come.] *Restrooms will be used under the same protocols for occupancy during the school day. Additionally, even though locker-rooms are currently off limits during the school day we could look at putting 4-6 players in them under supervision from a coach to maximize time and space. Players would bring all belongings with them. In the case of inclement weather, the athletes could leave their gear in the gym. We additionally could look at changing dividers to place in the gym as another option.*

Additional Safety Protocols

- MPH student athletes and coaches must bring their own water bottles, clearly labeled with their names, to practices and games. (We recommend bringing two water bottles to games.)
- MPH and other schools will not provide water this year. Water jugs are not allowed.
- All coaches will be required to complete the Daily Health Assessment (DHA) prior to arrival on campus or at away games.

Transportation

- MPH has contracted through Birnie Bus for many years to provide transportation for our athletic teams. Because of the pandemic, Birnie Bus services now have the following requirements:
 - Full-sized bus is able to carry 21 people including athletes and coaches.
 - Every passenger will have a seat between them, and everyone on the bus must wear face coverings.
 - Birnie will disinfect every bus between people getting in and off their buses.
 - Because of capacity limitations, MPH will have to rely upon families to help provide transportation for student athletes.

Spectators

- This is going to be an ongoing discussion. While spectators are permissible by NYSPHSAA, and OHSL guidelines, there will be specific protocols in place according to each venue.
- **Based on initial conversations, MPH at the beginning of the season will not allow any spectators during athletic competition. This includes both home and away spectators.** Note: The majority of schools have decided to not to allow spectators for

athletic events in order to safeguard the health and safety of student athletes and their wider school communities.

- MPH is exploring streaming services to provide an option for parents and families to watch live action.

Intramural Sports Programming

[Final details to come.] *If MPH offers intramural sports, the programs will follow the same health and safety protocols as are outlined above for interscholastic programs. Intramural offering would be kept similar to fall sports offerings such as soccer, cross country (running club), and tennis so that students could continue to develop their skills. MPH might be able to create an opportunity for fall golf (use local driving range), and we could consider other activities such as:*

- *Corn Hole*
- *Table Tennis*
- *Mountain Biking*
- *Orienteering*
- *Can-Jam*
- *Frisbee -Golf*
- *Pickle-Ball*
- *Ultimate Frisbee*

Other Season Options

- There is a secondary **Fall Season 2** option that starts on **March 1st** and goes through **April 19th**. All high-risk sports have been moved to this time frame. (football, competitive cheer, volleyball) In addition to those sports, some Section 3 schools have opted to move all low risk sports including fall swimming to that time frame.
- The Fall Season 2 is not a viable option for MPH.

OHSL Statement (Onondaga High School League)

We in the OHSL believe that participation in interscholastic-athletics is an integral part of the educational process, providing student-athletes with learning experiences that may not be found in the traditional classroom and extending such learning beyond the traditional school day. It is in the interscholastic athletic environment that student-athletes learn vital life skills and values through their experiences. The educational goals of a quality interscholastic athletic program consist of competence, character, civility, and citizenship. We believe that participation in such a program enriches any student's learning experience, provides positive outlets, and increases the awareness of one's fitness, health, and wellness. The OHSL has provided this "athletics plan" to guide member school athletic directors in preparation of the Fall 2020 season.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is certainly voluntary for both the individuals and the schools. NYSPHSAA, Section 3, and the OHSL recognizes school district superintendents and boards of education have the authority and autonomy to administer their district's athletic programs as they deem appropriate.

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance (Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation), the ability to participate in sports and recreation activities is determined by a combination of the risk for COVID-19 transmission (1) inherent in the sport or recreation activity itself and (2) associated with the "type of play" (e.g. individual practice vs. game).

Sports and recreation activities are categorized by NYSDOH as "low" risk, "moderate" risk, and "high" risk.

- Lower risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
 - a. Greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually; o Greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all... Moderate Risk (NYSDOH)
- Moderate risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
 - a. Limited ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually;
 - b. Limited ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all... High Risk (NYSDOH)
- Higher risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
 - a. Least ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually;
 - b. Least ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all...

NYSDOH guidance (Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools) states the following related to interscholastic athletic participation:

"Extracurricular: Policies regarding extracurricular programs and which activities will be allowed, considering social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection, as well as risk of COVID-19 transmission (e.g., interscholastic sports, assemblies, and other gatherings). Policies should consider how to maintain cohorts, if applicable, or members of the same household. Responsible Parties must refer to DOH's "Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency" to assist in development of these policies and the conduct of school-sponsored sports.

Further, lower- and moderate-risk sports (e.g., tennis, soccer, cross country, field hockey, and swimming) may practice and play, effective September 21, 2020. However, travel for practice or play is prohibited outside of the school's region or contiguous regions/counties until October 19, 2020. If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction." (Pg. 4)

Season Dates and Information

- Fall Season 1 September 21 - November 14
 - Soccer
 - No culminating tournament
 - Games start at or around October 7
 - JV/V 10-12 game regular season
 - Modified- Currently on hold. Waiting for further guidance
 - Cross country
 - No culminating event
 - Meets start at or around October 7
 - Five meet regular season
 - Modified is currently on hold; Waiting for further guidance
 - Max of four team invitational; ten participant/team
 - Tennis
 - No culminating event
 - Matches start at or around October 7
 - 12 matches, two matches/week

Weekends mid-October unless facility has lights, double header on

- Winter- November 30, 2020, **subject to change**
- Spring- April 19, 2021, **subject to change**

Contest start times

- Dependent on individual school transportation/facilities.
 - Flexibility needed
 - Daylight savings starts on November 1
 - Weekends are encouraged
 - Seven-day rule waived on October 12

Game Day Preparation

- As MPH moves toward game day preparation, we will consider things such as restrooms, parking for buses, and picking up/dropping off players for both home and away teams. In order to do these things efficiently, MPH as well as opposing teams will use a consistent Facilities Protocol Form (see sample Home Facilities Form below).
- At the beginning of each game week, the home team will submit this completed form to minimize any ambiguity with opposing schools.
- If MPH allows spectators or our parents to travel to a facility that allows spectators, game day passes would be provided at two passes per athlete.

Sample Home Facilities Form (complete for each contest site)

Administrator/Site Supervisor Contact (Cell Phone # and E-mail):

Field location (address):

Briefly describe your facilities for the visiting team (Locker rooms, rest rooms, bench area, warm-up location, bus parking, etc.- include map)

What equipment should the visiting team bring?

Describe any facilities limitations and/or problems that might concern the opposing team:

Describe your health screening protocols:

Where should spectators park and enter the facility (provide a map if possible)?

What restrooms are available for spectators?

Will concessions be available?

Will the game be streamed live?

Please provide your emergency action plan, including shelter plans for inclement weather.