

TO: MPA Member Schools
FROM: MPA Interscholastic Management Committee
DATE: May 11, 2020
RE: Summer and Fall Guidelines

Greetings from the MPA, hopefully this memo finds each of you, and your family, healthy and safe! Below please find a summary of items that were recently approved or discussed by the MPA Interscholastic Management Committee at their May 7, 2020 meeting.

The following items were presented to the IMC by the MPA Sports Medicine Committee:

- That the following timeline be established for summer activities:
 - That through June 13, 2020, which is the close of the 2020 spring season, we continue to encourage all coaches to communicate with athletes in their program regarding their health and well-being, encouraging them to remain active, and to maintain a healthy life-style. The only coaches that may provide sport-specific workouts during this time would continue to be the spring coaches.
 - Starting on June 14, 2020, and continuing through July 5, 2020, coaches would continue to connect virtually with athletes but that all coaches would now be allowed to suggest sport-specific workouts. It is strongly recommended that the workouts be coordinated within the school to avoid overuse by the multi-sport athlete.
 - That starting on July 6, 2020 we could hopefully allow some in-person instruction to occur. Prior to July 6 a set of guidelines, aligning with recommendations from the Governor's Office, the Maine CDC, and the Maine Department of Education, will be developed for what this in-person instruction might involve. It is important to note that these guidelines will align with other educational recommendations that are being made and will not replace any district level rules or policies that have been previously implemented. It is also not the intent of establishing a July 6 date to reopen all activities but rather allow for a period of time prior to elapse before making recommendations around social gatherings, physical distancing requirements, the wearing of facemasks, and other guidelines being suggested by our state leadership.
- Recommend that for a one-year period districts consider revising their policy regarding pre-participation physical exams. Currently, the recommendation is that athletes have a physical exam every two years. There have been concerns raised that there may be difficulty in scheduling a wellness physical in doctor's offices prior to the start of the fall season. The Sports Medicine Committee recommends that the policy be revised to allow those athletes that have been involved in competitive athletics previously, as long as they don't have any pre-existing medical conditions, to complete the comprehensive health history questionnaire that is often used during the years between physicals. It is also recommended that these questionnaires be reviewed by a school healthcare professional (school physician, school nurse, athletic trainer) prior to the athlete competing. Those athletes that are new to competitive athletics should still be required to have a complete physical exam.
- For the start of the fall season the 2-week mandatory "hands-off" period is waived. If schools are able to start the fall season on August 17, 2020 there was a concern that with the stay-at-home order currently in place, and the possibility that it may extend further into the summer, that the athletes would need additional time to begin a conditioning program to avoid overuse injuries once the fall season begins.

In addition to approval of the Sports Medicine Committee's recommendations the Interscholastic Management Committee also approved the following:

- Suspending the eligibility requirement that an athlete must pass the equivalent of four full-time courses or learning experiences to be eligible to compete. Eligibility for the fall semester will be determined at the local level.
- Confirmed that all other eligibility requirements (8-Semester Rule, 4 Seasons of Competition, and 20-Year Old Rule) continue to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the MPA Eligibility Committee.
- Confirmed that the MPA Transfer Rule would remain as written requiring both school's administration to agree that the transfer wasn't for athletic purposes, but that schools should be prepared to see an increase in the number of student transfers because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also suggested that schools review the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as well as local policies regarding homeschooled students and those students attending virtual schools, as there will also be an increase with these students as well.