

Great Falls Public Schools has long supported our students' physical and mental growth and development through our athletic and extra-curricular offerings. The individual and team development that is promoted by our coaches and programs is a vital part of the overall experience we provide for young people in our school system. It is our strong belief that participation in athletics and other extra-curricular programs enhances our student-athletes physical, social, and mental-emotional well-being. The Montana High School Association has released guidance for conducting Fall Activities during this time of the pandemic. The choice to participate in extra-curricular activities/athletics remains strictly voluntary. While schools remain open and are offering instruction to students, the Great Falls Public Schools Athletic Department is committed to taking measures to mitigate the risk of participation to the degree that is possible and feasible.

During this time of the COVID-19 outbreak and the resultant shut downs, we recognize the need to put extra-curricular activities in the proper perspective. Further, as we have throughout the length of the outbreak, we will continue to solicit and adhere to the directives and recommendations put forth by our local County Health Department, Board of Trustees, Superintendent of Schools and Governor. Given the MHSAs decision to offer opportunities for fall athletes, we are issuing the following proposal for the management of events/competitions hosted by GFPS in local facilities.

Under the terms of the Governor's directives, the "sponsor" of an event is responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable requirements issued by the Governor or the local Health Officer, including but not limited to the use of masks and the maintenance of appropriate physical social distancing throughout the entirety of the event. For purposes of athletic events and activities, the School District of the home team is deemed to be the sponsor of the activity and is therefore responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements for all in attendance, including both the home team and the visiting team. It is therefore incumbent upon the District of the home team to ensure that visiting teams from outside of Cascade County are aware of the terms of this plan and provide an indication that they will comply with them, prior to the activity or event. The aim of this plan is to mitigate and manage the range of risks associated with school sports and activities, while acknowledging that there likely be cases of Covid-19 associated with these activities. We acknowledge that some school districts/counties may have policies that are more or less restrictive than these guidelines.

General Guidelines for Contests/Games/Athletic Events:

1. All individuals connected to the event must understand that attendance and/or participation in the event poses a risk related to the Covid-19 virus. Those working and/or participating understand said risk and choose to be involved under their own free will.
2. All individuals connected to, or in attendance of, the event agree to submit to a screening process including questions related to their current state of physical health and will be honest and forthcoming in their response. Entry will be restricted to those who are currently symptom free and do not pose a risk to other participants/patrons.
3. Signage related to the Covid-19 virus will be posted in all facilities whenever possible.
4. Hand sanitizing stations will be made available in all facilities.
5. All participants/spectators/game personnel will wear a mask/face covering during the duration of the contest and maintain appropriate physical/social distancing of 6 feet at all times. Family groups are allowed to sit together. Players participating in the contest will not be required to mask at times when they are actively involved in competition or immediately recovering. All other times will require a face covering.
6. When a public address is available, announcements will be made throughout the contest reminding patrons of Covid procedures.

7. All teams/players, coaches, event workers and support personnel, and spectators are expected to follow MHSA's guidelines for masking and social distancing when applicable throughout the duration of the contest.

Transportation/Overnight Trips:

1. The AA conference and GFPS has altered schedules to eliminate the need for overnight stays. At this point there will be no events that require teams to stay overnight. This is subject to change depending on post season schedules.
2. When traveling on a bus, GFPS athletic programs will strictly adhere to the following procedures:
 - a. Limit of 50 total occupants of bus- includes driver and coaches.
 - b. Coaches will develop a seating chart that remains as consistent as possible throughout the year.
 - c. Occupants will load the bus from back to front and exit the bus from front to back.
 - d. All occupants will "gel in" with hand sanitizer prior to getting on the bus each time.
 - e. All occupants will mask for the duration of the time on the bus.
 - f. Coaches will have a plan for meals that can be consumed outside/prior to getting on the bus.
 - g. Bus will be sanitized upon exit and before departure.
 - h. Parents can have their athletes travel with them as long as proper paper work is filed prior. Do not have more kids on the travel roster than what can be held in the facility or participate in the event/competition.

Spectators:

1. Each "home" and "away" participant in uniform will be allowed to have 2 guests in attendance. Should Covid numbers in GFPS and Cascade County **not** experience a significant increase, beginning Feb. 9, GFPS athletes will be allowed a 3rd guest to add to the spectator list **for home contests only**. Teams travelling to other Eastern AA counties will be subject to their restrictions for visiting teams. Requests for additional spectators for "Senior Nights" will be considered. Total number of spectators for play off contests will be evaluated prior to the beginning of the post season.
2. Guests will be listed next to athletes name on the roster and will be required to sign in at the entrance point. Signing in signifies that all attendees agree to follow district protocols for masking and seating arrangements. In addition, a signature will indicate that the individual in attendance is not experiencing any Covid related symptoms and will serve as acknowledgement of the inherent risk associated with attendance of the event.
3. Spectator lists will be provided by both "home" and "away" teams no later than 9 a.m. the morning of the contest.
4. In each facility, there will be designated separate seating areas for home and visiting fans.
5. At this time there will be no designated student sections.

Concessions:

1. Concessions will not be offered at any district facility until further notice.

Event Workers:

1. All event workers will be masked at all times.
2. Only workers deemed essential for the management of the event/contest will be utilized.
3. Event workers will maintain a social distance of 6 feet at all times.
4. Hand sanitizer will be provided for event workers.

Media:

1. Media members will be issued a credential upon request. Credentials issued during the fall season to local media outlets will continue to be honored.
2. Each school has been issued 2 media credentials.
3. Media members in attendance will be required to follow screening procedures upon entry.

Locker rooms:

1. Visitors will be provided a locker room changing area large enough to accommodate the number of athletes in uniform.
2. Prior to a different school/team inhabiting a locker room/change area, the room will be sanitized.
3. Students will be advised to adhere to social distancing recommendations while in the locker room/changing facility. Home teams will be encouraged to shower at home at the conclusion of the contest.

Specific Facility Management Plans:

CMR Field House (basketball)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSAA guidelines related to Covid related changes in game procedure.
2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.
3. All individuals involved in the game will maintain appropriate social distancing in the bench area and will remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate. Seating for sub varsity teams will be provided in the bleachers directly behind the team bench. This area will be off limits for fans/patrons. The home team's sub-varsity players will be seated in this area as well.
4. Separate seating sections for "home" and "away" will be provided opposite of the team benches on the upper and lower area. A "buffer" between seating sections will be roped off.
5. Fans will be asked to leave the Field House/Aux Gym when their athlete has completed their game.
6. Cheer/spirit will be limited to 12 individuals plus coach(es) appropriately distanced on the upper balcony section of the Field House. This number could be adjusted in accordance with any adjustment of CCHD's local gathering restrictions.
7. Dance teams may perform at half time. They will enter the gymnasium, perform and exit the gymnasium.
8. ~~Pep Band will not be allowed to perform at this time.~~ As of games scheduled for 1/28 and beyond, a pep band will be allowed to perform. A section in the upper mezzanine on the east side will be created/reserved for the pep band.
9. All games played at CMR Field House will be live streamed via the NFHS network. Games played in the Auxiliary Gym will be live streamed when equipment currently ordered is installed.

CMR Fieldhouse (wrestling)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSAA guidelines related to Covid related changes in game/match procedure.
2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.
3. All individuals involved in the match will maintain appropriate social distancing on the gymnasium floor and will remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate. The floor area will be available to participants and event/team personnel only. The floor will be off limits for fans/patrons.
4. Separate seating sections for "home" and "away" will be provided on opposite sides of the upper mezzanine area.
5. All matches contested at CMR Field House will be live streamed via the NFHS network.

GFH Fieldhouse (basketball)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSAA guidelines related to Covid related changes in game procedure.

2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.
3. All individuals involved in the game will maintain appropriate social distancing in the bench area and will be remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate. Seating for sub varsity teams will be provided in the bleachers directly behind the team bench. This area will be off limits for fans/patrons. The home team's sub-varsity players will be seated in this area as well.
4. Separate seating sections for "home" and "away" will be provided opposite of the team benches on the east side bleachers. A "buffer" between seating sections will be roped off.
5. Fans will be asked to leave the Field House/Aux Gym when their athlete has completed their game.
6. Cheer/spirit will be limited to 6 12 individuals plus coach(es) appropriately distanced on the North end of the Field House. This number could be adjusted in accordance with any adjustment of CCHD's local gathering restrictions.
7. ~~Pep Band will not be allowed to perform at this time.~~ As of games scheduled for 1/28 and beyond, a pep band will be allowed to perform. A section on the North or South end of Swarthout Field House will be reserved for the pep band.
8. All games played at GFH Field House will be live streamed via the NFHS network. Games played in the Old Gym will be live streamed when equipment currently ordered is installed.

GFH Old Gym (frosh basketball)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSА guidelines related to Covid related changes in game procedure.
2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.
3. All individuals involved in the game will maintain appropriate social distancing in the bench area and will be remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate.
4. Separate seating sections for "home" and "away" will be provided. The West side of the Old Gym bleachers will be reserved for "home" guests. The East side of the Old Gym bleachers will be reserved for "away" guests.
5. All games played at GFH Old Gym will be live streamed via the NFHS network when equipment currently ordered is installed.

GFH Old Gym (wrestling)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSА guidelines related to Covid related changes in game/match procedure.
2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.
3. All individuals involved in the match will maintain appropriate social distancing on the gymnasium floor and will remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate. The floor area will be available to participants and event/team personnel only. The floor will be off limits for fans/patrons.
4. Separate seating sections for "home" and "away" will be provided. The West side of the Old Gym bleachers will be reserved for "home" guests. The East side of the Old Gym bleachers will be reserved for "away" guests.
5. All matches contested at GFH Old Gym will be live streamed via the NFHS network when equipment currently ordered is installed.

GFH Pool (Swimming)

1. All participants will adhere to MHSА guidelines related to Covid related changes in meet procedure.
2. All participants, spectators, event workers and essential game personnel will be required to follow the general event guidelines outlined above.

3. All individuals involved in the meet/trial will maintain appropriate social distancing on the pool deck and will remain masked unless involvement in the contest is immediate. The deck area will be available to participants and event/team personnel only. The deck will be off limits for fans/patrons unless they are involved in meet management.
4. Coach/program will coordinate team areas and marshalling of athletes to competition area to comply with suggestions for meet management provided by MHSA.

The event plan/procedures listed above are the collaborative effort of GFPS Administration, the Athletic Department and the Cascade County Health Department. All entities understand that the Covid outbreak presents unique and fluid challenges of a dynamic nature. Collectively, we will review and evaluate the plan periodically and make necessary adjustments. Additional spectators and relaxation of procedures will be considered only if local gathering restrictions are adjusted. All information is subject to change and may do so under short notice. We will make every attempt to ensure that all changes and necessary information is communicated to all parties to the best of our ability.