**Tucson Unified School District**

**COVID-19 Mitigation Plan**

**Updated Winter 2021**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented changes in our daily lives, and introduced numerous challenges in our schools, including changes in interscholastic activities. Participation in organized sports makes it inherently difficult to maintain social distancing. Additionally, those participating on teams have a wide spectrum of risk profiles (including family members) that necessitate particular care. In light of these unique challenges, Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) has reviewed state and national recommendations from the CDC, National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS), Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA), the Korey Stringer Institute, and the AIA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) in order to develop guidelines for safe participation in interscholastic athletics. It is vital that students be permitted to engage in activities that promote physical and mental health. Due to the persistence of COVID-19 in our communities for the indefinite future, each of us must actively participate in maintaining a healthy community and limiting the spread of disease. To accomplish this goal, TUSD will adhere to previous guidelines and recommendations established by TUSD in addition to protocols described in this document.

Previously established protocols, developed as a cooperative effort between TUSD Health Services, Dr. Mo Mortazavi, overseeing physician for TUSD Interscholastics, and Pima County Health Department will continue to serve as Interscholastics’ guiding documents. This includes information regarding prevention strategies, masking protocols, procedures and guidelines following exposure, and return-to-play guidelines following infection. This information is contained in the following links:

*Masking Protocols:*

As of August 4, 2021 TUSD has mandated mask usage by students and staff.

Masks/face coverings will be worn by all individuals at all times. This includes in weight rooms and locker rooms, on buses/vans, in team meetings and while on the sideline/bench. Athletes may remove their mask when they are participating in vigorous physical activities directly related to their sport. Coaches and other support staff must be masked at all times.

*Heath Services Procedures and Guidelines:*

<http://www.tusd1.org/COVID-19>

*TUSD Health Services Exposure Reference Guide:*

<http://www.tusd1.org/Portals/TUSD1/District/docs/2021-2022/guide-covid-2021.pdf>

*AIA Return to Play Protocol post COIVD-19:*

<https://www.aiaonline.org/files/17128/aia-covid-return-to-play-form.pdf>

**Mitigation Strategies for Winter 2021**

TUSD will resume Interscholastic activities at this time. The following protocols/guidelines will be implemented for Winter 2021 Interscholastic Athletics. It is important to understand that following preventative measures are key to slowing the spread of COVID-19. Full compliance with these preventative measures will decrease the likelihood of transmission of COIVD-19 and other communicative diseases. This document may be revised throughout the season as dictated by COVID-19 infection rates in Pima County.

* Daily screening must be done by athletes and coaches via ATS will.
  + Screenings must be done between 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm daily.
  + Coaches are required to check their teams’ screenings before practice each day and verify every athlete has completed theirs.
  + Athletes will not be allowed to participate in any activity associated with their interscholastic sport unless the daily screen is completed, and they are s/s free.
  + Any positive response on the daily screen will result in follow up by the site’s AT, AP of Activities, or the Athletic Coordinator and be documented in ATS. The individual will not be allowed to participate in any activity related to their sport until cleared by the AT.
* If an athlete/coach tests positive, “close contacts” will be identified by the site. The need to quarantine these individuals will be determined by TUSD Exposure Reference Guide (see above link) along with following recommendations from Pima County Health Department.
* AIA’s return-to-play guidelines post COVID-19 infection will be followed.
* Preventative Methods
  + District employees should encourage and promote behaviors that reduce the spread of illness.
  + Use of cloth face coverings that cover the nose and mouth following district protocol.
    - Modeling from district employees is essential.
  + Stay home when sick and follow district’s return to school guidelines
  + Follow healthy hygiene practices.
    - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer regularly, especially throughout practice/competitions.
    - Discouraging spitting.
    - Cover your mouth and face if you sneeze or cough.
    - Shower immediately upon arriving home.
    - Avoid touching face with hands.
    - Avoid unnecessary physical contact, including high fives, fist bumps & hugs.
    - Wash uniforms and practice clothes and equipment daily.
  + Provide adequate hygiene supplies
    - Ensure there is an adequate amount soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, and tissues.
    - Ensure that these items are readily available at all practice and competition sites, in locker rooms and bathrooms.
  + Post reminder signs and messaging
    - Proper hand washing procedures.
    - Proper use of a mask/face covering.
      * Coaches must model appropriate mask usage.
* Cleaning Procedures
  + Coaches will sanitize all shared equipment on a daily basis with TUSD-approved cleaner.
* Transportation
  + If District transportation is used, the following protocols will be followed:
    - Masks will be worn by all individuals while riding in district vehicles.
    - It is recommended that students sit 1 to a seat alternating between the window and aisle to encourage social distancing.
* Miscellaneous items
  + Locker rooms will be available for changing purposes and storage of activity related equipment only.
    - No meetings will take place in the locker rooms. This includes halftime, pre and post events.
    - Team meetings are allowed to take place. Options for this include:
      * Classroom- Group size cannot exceed 35 individuals including coaches.
      * Gymnasium/Auditorium- Group size should be determined by the size of the meeting area allowing for social distancing protocols to be followed.
  + Meeting Areas Pre-game, Halftime, and Post-game:
    - Home Team – Dance Room off the main gym
    - Visiting Team - South/west corner of the main gym
    - Sideline Seating:
    - In-side gym areas: Staggered seating with two rows
    - Out-side areas: Spaced apart seating on benches, both team on the home side
    - Hydration Plan
    - No shared water bottles. Individuals are responsible for bringing their own personal water bottle for use.
    - Refill stations will be available with an identified individual who will sanitize their hands and don gloves. The athlete will hold their water container below the spout and the gloved individual will push the button to dispense water.
    - Masks are worn by all individuals during the water filling process.