

a message

from North Yarmouth Academy's
ATHLETIC OFFICE



September Athletics Update

September 13, 2020

On the afternoon of Thursday, September 10, the Maine Principal's Association (MPA) released its redefined "School Sports Guidance: Return to Competition for Competitive Activities in Maine" document in partnership with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAAA), Maine Department of Education (MDOE), Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Maine Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and MPA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC). The complete guidance can be found [here](#).

One of the goals of our North Yarmouth Academy after school activities remains to provide a space for personal growth, the development of character, achievement, and teamwork. Obtaining this goal hinges on our ability to follow the guidelines laid out by our governing bodies in order to maintain our community's health and safety.

As we begin Middle and Upper School athletic activities on Monday, September 14, we would like to highlight the following information as it relates to our NYA specific after school activities:

Training and Contest Schedules

All team training and practice schedules are [posted on our website](#). Additional schedules will be added in the near future. Coaches will communicate specific team schedules with their team roster and families via an email each Sunday throughout the season.

- The Cumberland County Conference (CCC), our Middle School league, will not sponsor interscholastic competition this fall. NYA Middle School teams will instead train in-house during the week.
- Upper School varsity schedules are being finalized and will be released upon completion. We are exploring junior varsity schedules, and due to transportation and referee constraints, competition at this level will likely be extremely limited.

Safety Precautions

Middle and Upper School practices will be designed to incorporate social distancing, minimized equipment sharing, multiple mask breaks, and keep our overall community health in mind. Team hand sanitizer will be provided to each group. Students must bring their own full water bottle to the start of each training session.

The MPA and State guidance notes that "All athletes - other than those involved in the game - coaches, officials, staff, and spectators must always wear a mask. This includes officials wearing a mask during the contest." During NYA Middle and Upper School training sessions, students and coaches will remain masked when moving. Dynamic warm-ups, individualized skill training, partner work, and small group drills will include the wearing of masks. Students may remove their masks when engaged in game-like activity (i.e. scrimmages, conditioning work) or when stationary, socially distanced, and instructed by their coaches. Any student needing to take a mask break outside of those designated by a coach is

encouraged to do so, socially distanced from the group, without question. We will pay close attention to the guidance on mask wearing as the fall season progresses, and communicate any changes in the MPA/State guidance appropriately.

Any student or family wishing to postpone their involvement in after school activities because of COVID-19 related concerns is encouraged to reach out to [me](#) or [Mallory Michaeles](#) (Associate Director of Athletics, Middle School).

Locker Rooms

Neither our Middle nor Upper School locker and bathrooms have adequate space to allow student athletes to change with appropriate physical distancing. Therefore, it was necessary to make an alternate arrangement for changing for after school activities. Utilizing a combination of locker and classroom space (just as drama has done for years), we have created a changing schedule based upon gender and grade. Athletes must stay distanced with masks on as they change. Window coverings will be closed for privacy. Athletes will change clothes only and will put on sport specific gear outside to speed the process. Changing rooms will be available before training sessions only. A full and specific schedule of changing locations and groups will be communicated to students prior to Monday afternoon.

Upper School Transportation

Due to constraints in passenger capacity in both our own NYA vehicles and those contracted for transportation to and from training and competition sites, transportation remains an area of high concern. Once Upper School competition schedules are finalized, we will create a transportation schedule to safely accommodate each of our teams. Families are encouraged to review our [NYA Private Vehicle Agreement](#) and return a signed copy to Ms. Ross prior to any off-campus travel.

Spectator Policies

At this time, NYA remains open to students, faculty, and staff. Administrators from the Western Maine Conference and within NYA will meet to finalize a league and school-specific policy related to potential spectator admittance. Our goal is to create a policy that allows our student-athletes to be supported and celebrated, while upholding our duty to protect our community's health. At this time, no spectators are allowed at any NYA training session, on or off-campus.

The NYA Middle and Upper School fall activity season is one full of tradition, success, and excitement. While this fall is starting out with an unusual sense of uncertainty, we possess the collective power to create a season that builds upon our past achievements. Our ability to work as a team, treat one another with empathy and respect, and uphold our responsibility as a Panther will result in a season we can be proud of. Whether it is a season that includes eight games or zero, we can come out on top.

Thank you for your continued commitment to one another, your patience, and resiliency.

Go Panthers!

Kelsy Ross
Director of Athletics