



October 25, 2020

Hello Panthers!

As we say “good-bye” to the fall athletic season and turn our collective focus to winter, I’d like us all to take a moment and reflect upon all we have to be grateful for. Our fall activity seasons started later than in previous years and under guidance and protocols that, at times, felt restrictive or even unfair. Our students, families, and coaches were all asked to uphold new levels of patience, trust, and adaptability in order to safely start and keep activities in action. While many of our peers hardly touched a playing surface or saw breaks in action due to outbreaks, we marched on. I want to say “thank you” for joining together, sacrificing, and ultimately succeeding in a fall that I will always remember as one of our greatest NYA Athletic successes.

Our work is not done! The winter season brings its own unique challenges. With the experience we gained from the fall, we will tackle it with an increased focus on ensuring our students are provided opportunities for personal growth, the development of character, achievement, and teamwork. Our anticipated Middle and Upper School Winter Activity offerings for the 2020-21 year are:

Middle School, begins Monday, November 9:

- Boys and Girls Basketball
- Drama, co-ed
- Hockey, co-ed
- Wellness for Life, co-ed

Upper School, NEPSAC hockey begins Monday, November 9; all other activities begin Monday, November 16:

- Boys and Girls Basketball
- Drama, co-ed
- Boys and Girls Hockey
- Indoor Track and Field, co-ed
- Nordic Ski, co-ed
- Studio Band, co-ed
- Wellness for Life, co-ed

Our NYA Winter Activity planning continues to adapt in direct connection with guidance from 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), the MPA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), and our own NYA Return to Campus Plan. These groups are working together to communicate official guidance and decisions about winter activities. Representatives from our coaching groups, conference affiliates, and school administration are participating in these conversations in order to provide the best and safest return to competitive winter activities. Of important note is the potentially different guidance between Community Based, and School Sponsored sports, the MPA and NEPSAC, as well as our various New England State governments. We are prepared to creatively support any level of sport participation allowed for school-based activities which may range from in-house only, regionalized, state, or New England competition.



As we think about the logistics of each winter activity, we must all remain committed to providing experiences that preserve our NYA traditions. While these traditions, along with locker room use, transportation, game play, spectator policies, daily hygiene, and other nuances will certainly be altered this winter, our end goals remain the same as any other year. By communicating with our peer school administrators and coaches, collaborating with our gear vendors, exploring film and streaming options, I am confident that we will enter and move through each winter activity with the same success as the fall. I am also confident that we will do so with the health and safety of our greater NYA community and the state of Maine in mind.

So, what can we do now? While we await schedules and sport details, students can put extra time into their academic work, personal passions, or even tap into the [Get Moving Workouts](#) on their own! Students who need to sign up for an NYA Winter Activity have been emailed and should see Ms. Michaelles (Middle School) or Ms. Ross (Upper School) this week to communicate their intentions. While it is easy to focus on what we are or may be missing out on, I encourage us to pause and enjoy the many opportunities we still have to look forward to.

I look forward to sharing details about each NYA Winter Activity as soon as they are available, and cannot wait to see the good work of our community shift into the colder months ahead.

As always, thank you and go Panthers!

Kelsy Ross
Athletic Director