



PIONEER VALLEY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE
Western Massachusetts

October 13, 2020

Dear Athletic Directors and Principals of the PVIAC:

First off, we want you to know that our Executive Board, which is made up of principals and ADs, admire and stand behind all administrators in public education at this time. We hope this pandemic is allowing your teams to work smarter and grow closer.

The PVIAC EB met several times over the past two weeks, and we discussed the numerous options presented in terms of having high school athletic competition for the fall of 2020.

One thing is evident; there are various perspectives and decisions being made regarding our high school student-athletes competing in high school athletics. We understand that this is not a one-size-fits-all solution.

This board acknowledges that data around COVID-19 is constantly changing. We will continuously review data, trends, and guidelines and use that information to make informed recommendations to our member districts.

As an EB, we are recommending that schools move forward with a modified fall season with each district's school committee approval. We recommend that schools only play within their newly formed bubble, limited to six schools. This reduces contact from more extensive league play. This decision cuts contact down about 40% compared to standard leagues. In soccer (B&G), Cross Country (B&G), and Golf, leagues are formed inside their bubble. Far fewer teams are competing in Field Hockey and Volleyball. The leagues formed will coincide with our ultimate goal of reducing overall unnecessary or maximum contact. Gymnastics has five schools that will compete, and four of the five schools have contact with each other during other competitions

Here is what the Executive Board has passed for the Fall of 2020:

- Compete in a bubble that will limit contact with fewer athletes.
- The scheduled amount of games will be:
 - Team sports (Soccer, FH, Golf, VB) 10-12 contests
 - Cross Country 5-6 contests
 - Gymnastics 4-6 meets
- No independent varsity contests, only those given by schedulers.
- Spectators for indoor events such as Volleyball and Gymnastics will be at the discretion of the host school and their local Board of Health.
- Strongly recommend that only home fans be allowed for outdoor contests. The PVIAC EB is officially recommending no more than 50 spectators total. A school can say no fans at all or increase the fan base to align with the state-mandated gathering size in collaboration with their local boards of health.
- Out of season coaching: The only sports that will be allowed to participate in out-of-season instruction will be the Fall sports that have been moved to Fall 2 (i.e., Football).
- Due to the challenge of contact tracing and the overall safety of our student athletes, it is of paramount importance that spectators follow all safety guidelines set by the local board of health when attending athletic events.

We truthfully know that athletics is the other half of education that helps our young students complete their academic mission. The PVIAC believes in assisting each individual school in accomplishing their goals for all students.

PVIAC Executive Board