

March 10, 2021

Highland CUSD No. 5 Parents and Staff,

In last week's update I provided some information regarding the spectator capacities for outdoor activities. We received updated guidance on Monday that allows districts to have 20% capacity in attendance for outdoor activities only. I want to provide some broad details how this is going to look going forward. Many of our outside athletics participate on fields that do not have a defined perimeter, examples being baseball and softball fields, some soccer fields, tennis, etc. We will not attempt to define an attendance capacity for those types of venues. We simply ask that spectators wear masks and social distance to the extent possible. We do not plan to oversee these expectations at these venues unless there is a clear attempt to make our students, staff, or other spectators uncomfortable. We will continue to enforce the mitigations/expectations for our student athletes as required by state guidelines.

However, we are required to control any activities occurring in the football stadium. The stadium has a gate and perimeter fence that clearly defines the area. I want to provide information that demonstrates what expectations will be within that specific area. There is a capacity to host fans beyond what exists in the stands. We have determined our full capacity to be approximately 3750. With the current guidelines, we will be allowed to provide 750 tickets to each activity that participates in the stadium. The most crucial activity will be football since it draws the largest number of spectators. We plan to pre-sell tickets to varsity football games to minimize any interaction at the gate. If you have a ticket, you get into the game. If you don't, sorry.

Obviously, individuals who come to the game and do not have a ticket can see the game from the exterior of the perimeter fence. We encourage any individuals outside the perimeter fence to also wear a mask and maintain social distance. We discourage fans from traveling to opposing venues if they do not have a ticket. As for home events, we will not provide any supervision outside the perimeter of the stadium unless there is obvious disregard for the safety of our students, staff, or spectators. We also reserve the right to ask any individual who violates district policy to leave the premises immediately. We see value in our student body, parents, and community attending games and cheering on the BULLDOGS, but must do it in a safe manner. We may have visiting spectators intermingled with home spectators outside of the perimeter. There will be a low tolerance for any heckling or intimidation between spectators due to our desire to make the environment exciting, but safe for all of our spectators.

We have discussed the possibility of limiting access to the parking lot to detract from large crowds and tailgating. We are concerned about the optics of such activities. However, it has been determined that the parking lots will be open, but we ask folks to please be wise about the activities occurring prior to and during the game. We strongly discourage Tailgating at this time. We will address any issues that clearly violate district policy or create a clearly unsafe environment for our students or spectators. I do want to make it clear that ALCOHOL has never been and will not be allowed or tolerated on school grounds. Please be mindful that we are attempting to celebrate the activities of our students in a safe and responsible way.

Specific procedures for ticket sales will be provided by the Highland High School administration. If you have any questions about the expectations for attendance at activities, please reach out to the Highland High School office. Our HHS athletic director, Amy Boscolo, has done a wonderful job this year managing all of the athletic requirements while attempting to provide maximum access for parents and spectators. I applaud all of the efforts to make this year work given the tremendous challenges. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Sutton, Superintendent