

Groton Area School District

Return to School-Sponsored Athletics Plan

Updated May 29, 2020

The following document sets for the regulations under which the Groton Area School District will resume athletics activities while promoting the health and safety of student-athletes, coaches, and community members.

It is possible that student-athletes will have experienced a prolonged period of inactivity since the middle of March when regular school operations were suspended. Aside from the concerns surrounding COVID 19, coaches and athletes must understand that a gradual return to full physical activity must be employed to protect the physical health of the athletes.

The District intends to advance through each phase of the plan in two-week increments provided that infection data for our area continues to show a downward trajectory. Adjustments may continue to be necessary depending on new information that is learned as we progress.

This document is prepared largely based on the guidance provided by the NFHS through their work with their medical advisory board and modified for and adopted by the SDHSAA through their work with their own medical advisory board.

The out-of-season rules, contact limitations, and summer moratorium set forth by the SDHSAA remain in full force and effect.

No out-of-district camps will be approved until we are able to safely progress into phase three.

Phase 1 – Beginning June 1, 2020

Phase 1 – Beginning June 1, 2020. Workouts will be limited to high school athletes and must be conducted under the direct supervision of a school-district coach. Coaches should contact Joe Schwan to schedule workout times with specific details so facilities and cleaning schedules can be planned appropriately.

Pre-Workout Screening:

- All coaches and students will be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout to include a temperature check. Temperatures of 100.4 or greater exclude an athlete from participation.
- Athletes and their parents must complete the COVID19 Release and Waiver of Liability agreement prior to participation.
- Athletes must report to their workout at exactly the time they're scheduled and enter the building wearing a mask until after successful completion of the pre-workout screening. Athletes may remove their mask while completing their workout. Athletes must leave the building immediately following their workout without congregating/loitering.
- Coaches will wear masks while supervising workouts and conducting pre-workout screenings.
- Responses to screening questions will be recorded and stored for contact tracing if COVID-19 infection occurs.
- Immediately following the pre-workout screening but before touching any surfaces or participating in any workout, athletes must wash their hands with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Any athlete or coach with one or more positive response on the screening will not be allowed to take part in workouts, should contact their medical provider, and must receive medical clearance before returning.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- Gatherings should not consist of more than 10 people at a time (inside or outside), to include all participants and coaches.
- Locker rooms will not be available during phase one. Students must report to workouts in proper gear and should immediately return home to shower at the end of the workout.
- Workouts should be conducted in “pods” of students with the same 5-10 people (including coaches) always working out together.
- There should be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times. If this is not possible, the number of individuals in the room should be decreased until proper social distancing can occur.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment

- Low-risk, individual sports/activities may begin practices with distancing measures in place.
- Moderate and high risk sports/activities should focus on individual drills and weight training.
- There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, pennies, shoes, or sport-specific equipment) between students.
- Students should wear their own workout clothing, and clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All athletic equipment, including balls, should be cleaned after each use and prior to the next workout.
- Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment can be permissible, but the equipment must be cleaned between use of each individual.
- There should be a focus on resistance training with body weight, sub-maximal lifts, and use of resistance bands.
- Free weight exercises that require a spotter should not be conducted, as they cannot be conducted while observing social distancing.

Hydration

- All athletes must bring their own water bottle and must not share their water bottle.
- Water fountains will not be available.

Phase 2

Phase 2 – Tentatively beginning June 15, 2020. Workouts must be conducted under the direct supervision of a school-district coach. Coaches should contact Joe Schwan to schedule workout times with specific details so facilities and cleaning schedules can be planned appropriately.

Pre-Workout Screening:

- All coaches and students will be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout to include a temperature check. Temperatures of 100.4 or greater exclude an athlete from participation.
- Athletes and their parents must complete the COVID19 Release and Waiver of Liability agreement prior to participation.
- Athletes must report to their workout at exactly the time they’re scheduled and enter the building wearing a mask until after successful completion of the pre-workout screening. Athletes may remove their mask while completing their workout. Athletes must leave the building immediately following their workout without congregating/loitering.
- Coaches will wear masks while supervising workouts and conducting pre-workout screenings.
- Responses to screening questions will be recorded and stored for contact tracing if COVID-19 infection occurs.

- Immediately following the pre-workout screening but before touching any surfaces or participating in any workout, athletes must wash their hands with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Any athlete or coach with one or more positive response on the screening will not be allowed to take part in workouts, should contact their medical provider, and must receive medical clearance before returning.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- Gatherings should not consist of more than 10 people at a time inside to include all participants and coaches. Up to 50 people may gather outdoors for workouts.
- Locker rooms will not be available during phase two. Students must report to workouts in proper gear and should immediately return home to shower at the end of the workout.
- Indoor workouts should be conducted in “pods” of students with the same 5-10 people (including coaches) always working out together.
- There should be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times. If this is not possible, the number of individuals in the room should be decreased until proper social distancing can occur. Tape or field paint can be used as a guide for athletes and coaches.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment

- Low-risk sports/activities practices may resume.
- Modified practices may begin for moderate risk sports/activities.
- There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, pennies, shoes, or sport-specific equipment) between students.
- Students should wear their own workout clothing, and clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All athletic equipment, including balls, should be cleaned after each use and prior to the next workout.
- Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment can be permissible, but the equipment must be cleaned between use of each individual.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for athletes and coaches.
- Maximum lifts should be limited. Power cages should be used for squats and bench presses with spotters standing at each end of the bar.

Hydration

- All athletes must bring their own water bottle and must not share their water bottle.
- Water fountains will not be available.

Phase 3

Phase 1 – Tentatively beginning June 29, 2020. Workouts must be scheduled in advance to allow for the appropriate planning necessary for facilities cleaning and assurance of the ability to maintain appropriate group sizes and distancing requirements.

Pre-Workout Screening:

- Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours must not participate in workouts and should contact his/her medical provider.
- A record will be kept of all individuals present for workouts.

Limitations on Gatherings:

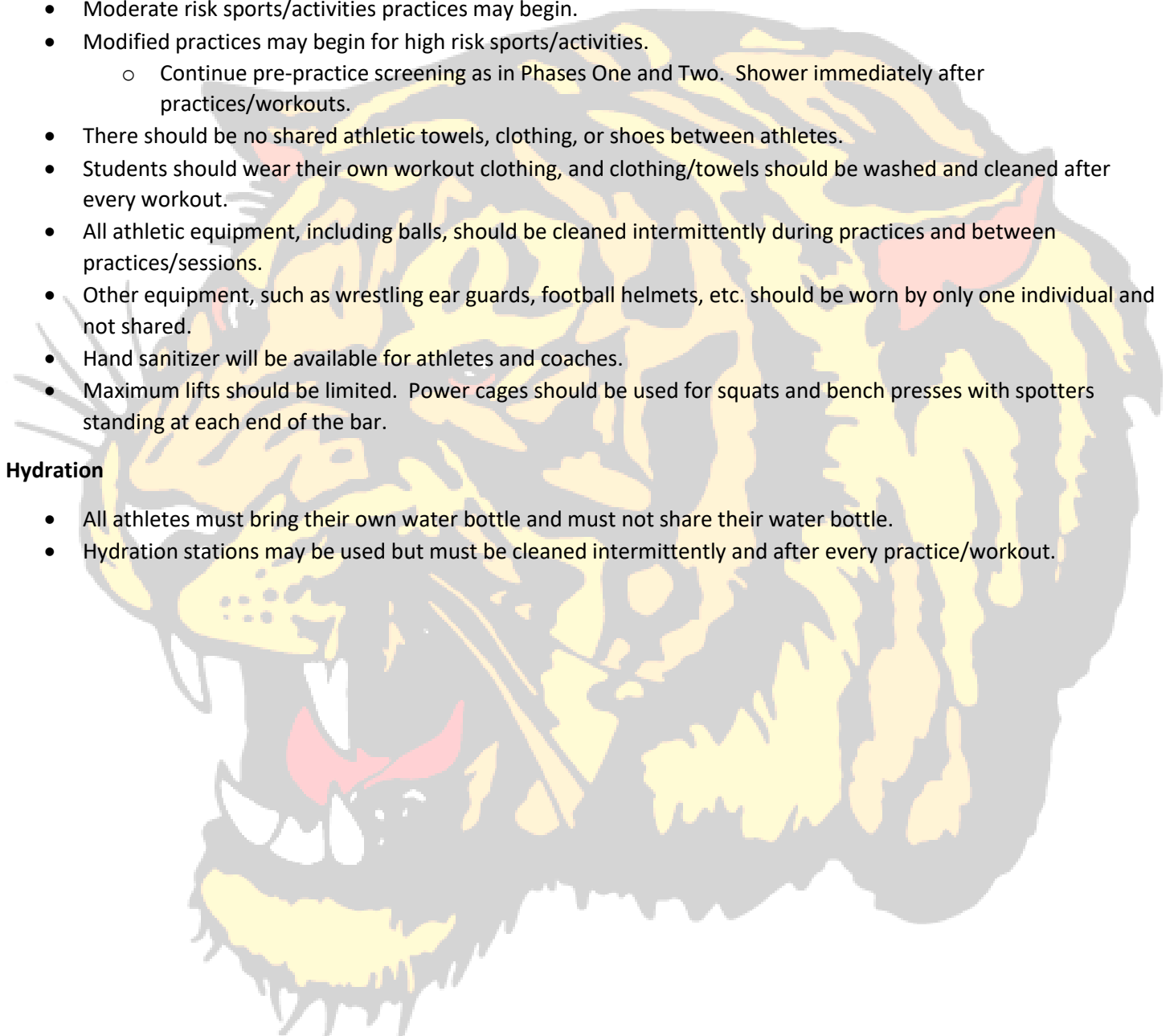
- Gatherings sizes of up to 50 individuals, indoors or outdoors, may resume.
- When not directly participating in practices or workouts, care should be taken to maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment

- Moderate risk sports/activities practices may begin.
- Modified practices may begin for high risk sports/activities.
 - Continue pre-practice screening as in Phases One and Two. Shower immediately after practices/workouts.
- There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing, or shoes between athletes.
- Students should wear their own workout clothing, and clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All athletic equipment, including balls, should be cleaned intermittently during practices and between practices/sessions.
- Other equipment, such as wrestling ear guards, football helmets, etc. should be worn by only one individual and not shared.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for athletes and coaches.
- Maximum lifts should be limited. Power cages should be used for squats and bench presses with spotters standing at each end of the bar.

Hydration

- All athletes must bring their own water bottle and must not share their water bottle.
- Hydration stations may be used but must be cleaned intermittently and after every practice/workout.



Facilities Cleaning Valid for Phases One through Three

Adequate cleaning schedules will be implemented for all athletic facilities.

Prior to an individual or group entering a facility, all hard surfaces within that facility will be wiped down and sanitized. Hard surfaces include but are not limited to door knobs, chairs, furniture, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, and training tables.

Individuals must wash their hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts. This is to be conducted in conjunction with the pre-workout screening process.

Hand sanitizer will be available to all coaches and athletes.

Equipment will be wiped down thoroughly before and after each individual uses the equipment.

Athletes should return home, shower, and wash their workout clothing immediately upon completing a workout.

The following chart shows sport and activity risk categories at each phase, using the guidance from pages 1-4, to include pre-workout screening, gathering limitations, facilities cleaning, physical activity, and hydration.

	Low Risk Activities: Golf, Sideline Cheer, Cross Country, Track and Field	Moderate Risk Activities: Volleyball, Soccer, 7 on 7 Football	High Risk Activities: Football, Basketball, Wrestling
Phase One Group Limitation: 10 people, indoors or outdoors	Full practices with social distancing measures in place for sports that are individual in nature.	Individual drills Individual use of equipment/balls with no passing/exchanging Team runs with staggered starts and maintained distance Weight training	Individual drills Individual use of equipment/balls with no passing/exchanging Team runs with staggered starts and maintained distance Weight training
Phase Two Group Limitation: 10 people indoors, 50 people outdoors	Full practices with social distancing measures in place for sports that are individual in nature	Modified drills with social distancing measures in place. Exchange of equipment/balls with intermittent cleaning. Non-competitive drills Weight training.	Individual drills Exchanges of equipment/balls with intermittent cleaning Team runs with staggered starts and maintained distance. Weight training.
Phase Three Group Limitation: 50 people, indoors or outdoors	Full practices with social distancing measures in place for sports that are individual in nature	Full practice.	Modified drills with social distancing measures in place. Exchanges of equipment/balls with intermittent cleaning. Non-competitive drills.