



Jacksonville | North Pulaski SCHOOL DISTRICT

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www.jnpsd.org

Building Futures: Every Scholar, Every Day

July 31, 2020

3:27 pm

JNPSD School Community:

Please continue to stay informed through all of our postings on JNP social media, JNP website, local media, and other communication outlets. All community updates and other information posted since March 6 is available for your reference.

Governor's Press Conference Today (APSRC Report)

ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Governor Hutchinson announced the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) has presented a schedule for football to have no contact team drills with helmets throughout the week August 3 through August 7. The Governor has asked AAA to submit a plan to the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) to allow for football, volleyball and cheerleading this fall. This will allow ADH to review and develop guidelines for mitigating the virus for contact sports.

"I've heard from parents, student athletes, coaches and many other educators, and sports, as they make the point, is a very important part of the development of our youth. If we do not have sports, then many of the student athletes will be traveling out of state to participate in sports which adds another level of risk, and that increases the risk," Governor Hutchinson said. "We have over three weeks before school starts with students in the classroom, and we're going to learn from the next three weeks of training and practice in the fields of sports, cheerleading and other activities. We will learn what adjustments need to be made and we will improve our safety protocols. The Department of Health, led by Dr. Jose Romero, will continue its responsibility to provide and issue health guidelines. This group of experts I am convening will serve in an advisory capacity to look specifically at how we can have fall sports in the safest manner possible."

The Governor announced he is establishing a high school sports advisory group to make recommendations and assist ADH in best practices for protecting student athletes and school personnel.

“My message for the football players for Monday is to grab your helmet and be ready for practice, and then after practice, I want you to grab your mask so you can protect others that you might be around,” Governor Hutchinson said.

The Arkansas Department of Education has partnered with the Arkansas Activities Association for a number of years analyzing the impact sports and activities have on the student. According to Education Secretary Johnny Key, these studies show that students who have participated in these activities have higher levels of academic achievement, higher self-esteem, lower incidences of discipline issues, and higher attendance rates.

“So this is something that is very important as we get prepared to go back to school that we have an expert group now, not just experts in medicine but experts in mental health of students, experts in counseling, experts in dealing with the needs of students on a daily basis, to help guide and provide us and provide the Governor with their best advice and wisdom as we move forward. We look forward to working in conjunction with the Health Department and AAA to make this a successful school year and successful athletic and activities seasons,” Secretary Key said.

The Governor was asked if there was a plan to have contact practice starting after next week.

“That is the plan to have that. Now the advisory group that I have created will meet starting next Monday and there is an urgency as they look at this, they are going to look at the best practices across the country. They are going to work with the Department of Health, listening to them. They will have their [ADH] epidemiologist on the advisory group. We will make decisions as we go on. We’re also going to learn from experience. I hope next week there are zero positive cases among athletes in Arkansas. That might not be the case, and so we are going to learn from the experience as we go along but you have to have a purpose and an intent, and the intent is let’s move on for the season,” Governor Hutchinson said.

During follow up, a reporter asked if next week applied to cheerleading and band members?

Lance Taylor, AAA Executive Director, said cheerleading and volleyball should be able to move forward next week. ADH is working on tweaking the band guidelines and he hopes they will be issued early to middle of next week.

The Governor was asked if there are plans for schools in terms of attending games?

Governor Hutchinson said attending games will be subject to the ADH guidelines regarding large venues which include social distancing and wearing masks. Schools may have to submit additional plans on how they will manage meeting guidelines for larger venues.

The question was raised regarding whether basketball and volleyball would be able to scrimmage this fall, and if there are plans for practicing for spring sports this fall.

“What we are addressing right now with football and band, is what’s right before us at this moment. We needed to address that issue so coaches and other leaders will know how to carry on the activities next week. Also, we wanted the athletes to know that we are planning on and moving towards a season this year,” Governor Hutchinson said.

From the Arkansas Activities Association Today

After the Governor’s announcement today, we have been given the approval to proceed according to the 2020-2021 AAA calendar and handbook regarding practice and competition for all sports.

We continue to expect compliance with all directives as issued by the Governor and Department of Health. More information related to the directives will be issued as soon as it is released.

The General Requirements of the current Governor's Directive continue to apply. We will communicate new guidance as new directives are issued.

General Requirements

- Maintain minimum physical distancing of six feet between participants at all times, except when actively participating in the sports activity.
- Athletes, Coaches, and All Staff must be screened prior to any activity by asking the following questions and excluded if the answer is yes.
 - o Have had a fever of 100.4°F or greater in the last 2 days
 - o Have a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell
 - o Had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days
- Coaches and All Staff must have temperature checked by digital thermometer prior to entry, and those whose temperature is greater than 100.4°F must be excluded.
- Face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone 10 years of age or older for indoor sports. Face coverings are strongly encouraged for outdoor sports.
 - o Athletes - Face coverings are strongly encouraged when not actively participating in an outdoor sports activity. - Face coverings or masks must be worn during indoor sports where a face covering is not inhibitory.
 - o Coaches and Staff - Face coverings must be worn at all times for indoor sports and are strongly encouraged for outdoor sports.
- Social distancing of 6 feet must be maintained in the locker room.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer or adequate handwashing facilities must be provided for use by all attendees.

- Sports equipment, restrooms, lockers, water fountains and other high touch surfaces must be sanitized frequently during each event. For a list of cleaning products that will eliminate the Covid-19 virus, visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-ndisinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.
- Avoid non-sport related personal contact at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, huddles, high-fives, hand shaking, fist bumping, and chest bumping.
- For training and conditioning held in an athletic facility, the facility must follow the current Directive for Gym, Fitness Center, Athletic Club and Weight Rooms.

1. Arkansas Center for Health Improvement shows the following COVID cases for Jacksonville: Total = 335 and Active = 71.
2. PreK Parents: Virtual school is not an option for PreK. State decisions have been made that all PreK programs will operate with on-site classes. Please contact Ms. Megan Brown at mebrown@jnpsd.org to register in our PreK program.
3. Please review the Arkansas Department of Health directives at healthy.arkansas.gov in order to be familiar with the safety preparations that impact schools. Much of this information is contained within all of the reentry plans that have been released to the public.
4. The announcement today regarding athletics and activities included an announcement that all venues must follow the indoor and outdoor venue directives issues by the state. This means limiting the number of persons who can attend the events based on capacity requirements. More state guidance will be issued regarding plans.

We appreciate your support of our school district.

Respectfully,



Bryan Duffie. Ed.D.
Superintendent