

Dear OCS Parents/Guardians and Athletes,

Athletics and co-curricular activities are an important part of the school experience for many of our Orange County Schools (OCS) students and their families. Recently the [North Carolina High School Athletic Association \(NCHSAA\) released guidelines](#) about reopening athletics this summer.

In order to reopen safely, we plan to phase-in these activities slowly and carefully, beginning with high school fall sports. A decision on other high school sports and middle school sports will be made later. We continue to plan for Monday, July 6th as being the start date of our return to athletics, although this date is subject to change if necessary to ensure public health and safety and/or to comply with newly issued guidance or requirements from applicable local, state, and federal agencies. Our athletic directors, athletic trainers, and coaches have been working hard to ensure each high school has the necessary supplies/equipment needed and that athletic personnel are trained to follow the recently released NCHSAA guidelines.

In addition, all participants in high school fall sports must adhere to the following

guidelines. Failure to do so could result in being barred from continued participation with the team during summer workouts or other disciplinary consequences.

- Each athlete must have a valid [physical](#), [family medical history form](#), and new concussion form ([English/Spanish](#)) for 20-21 school year on file at the school.
- On the first day that an athlete attends a summer conditioning session, they must submit the [NCHSAA Initial Screening Form](#). Athletes will not be allowed to participate until this form is submitted.
- Each athlete will also be required to have a [consent to participate/waiver](#) form signed by their parent or guardian. Athletes will not be allowed to participate until this form is submitted.
- OCS strongly recommends that coaches, staff, and athletes who are considered vulnerable populations during this pandemic, consult with their primary care physician (not urgent care or emergency room) about participating during summer conditioning sessions
 - Vulnerable individuals are defined as, but not limited to: people age 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system may be compromised by treatment such as by chemotherapy for cancer, certain medication for rheumatoid arthritis and other conditions requiring immune suppression.

- Athletes must bring their own clearly labeled or identifiable water bottle to each workout. Athletes who do not bring a water bottle will not be allowed to participate and will not be provided a water bottle from the school.
- While on campus, coaches, athletes, staff, and parents are required to follow [Orange County's Mandate on Cloth Face Coverings, Governor's Executive Order 147, and DHHS requirements](#). This includes while waiting to be screened, waiting for a workout to begin, waiting for transportation, and any time other than while actively participating in workout sessions.
- Each participant (coaches, staff, athletes) will be screened for symptoms every day upon arrival at campus. Participants whose temperature is 100 or above, or who are showing other symptoms of illness will not be allowed to participate.
- The athlete's mode of transportation may not leave campus until they have passed screening. Athletes who do not pass screening will be required to leave campus immediately.
- Participants should arrive no more than 15 minutes before their scheduled workout time and must leave campus immediately when their sessions have finished.
- Athletes must come dressed and ready to participate with a filled water bottle. Weight rooms, mat rooms and locker rooms will remain closed.
- Students will not be allowed to drink from water faucets. One staff member will be designated to fill water bottles.
- Water bottles must not be shared between players or participants. Towels, clothing and other personal items must not be shared. At this time, no athletic equipment will be allowed to be used by any participants. This decision may be revisited in the future.
- Participants and staff will be asked to wash their hands frequently throughout workouts. Additional handwashing stations and hand sanitizer will be provided.
- Personal equipment, including water bottles, towels, clothing, and other items, must be taken home and cleaned between practices. If used, school equipment will be cleaned and sanitized daily by school personnel.
- Participants must maintain six feet of distance from others at all times, including during workouts and while waiting for screening and transportation home. Handshakes, high-fives, and other physical contact will not be allowed.
- Only outdoor practices and activities will be allowed at this time. Indoor activities are prohibited during the initial phase of reopening.
- Gatherings in outside venues/areas are limited to no more than 25 people. This includes students, coaches, athletic trainers and any other personnel.
- To limit gathering sizes, participants will be assigned to a smaller group of students (pods) and must remain with their group at all times during the workouts. Students will only be permitted to work out with one pod. Once assigned to a pod, they will not be allowed to at any time participate with another pod. Pods will be limited to up to 20 athletes and 2 coaches.

- Spectators will not be allowed. Parents who wish to wait on their child to finish, must wait inside their vehicles. If parents/guardians need to leave their cars for any reason, they must wear a mask while on campus and must be screened for symptoms and temperature prior to being allowed on school grounds. School buildings will be closed to all parents and other visitors.
- Activities will be scheduled throughout the day, but warm weather and lightning guidelines will be in effect.

If you have any questions or concerns specific to the procedures at each individual school, please contact the athletic director for each school Cedar Ridge: Andy Simmons (andy.simmons@orange.k12.nc.us) and Orange: Mike McCauley (michael.mccauley@orange.k12.nc.us)

More information and documents will be posted at www.orangecountyfirst.com under the Athletics department. Thank you for supporting OCS athletic programs.