



## **2020 Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") Athletics Health And Safety Plan**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of unique challenges to sports worldwide. COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system and can infect people of all ages. While data from the CDC and other entities indicates that while children are infected with COVID-19, few children are hospitalized. However, in rare occurrences, severe outcomes have been reported in children. A child who is even mildly symptomatic or asymptomatic can spread the virus to others. While it is not possible to eliminate COVID-19, scientific research does suggest that schools can take steps to help reduce the risk to students, coaches, and their families. To minimize the risk, Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") will take the necessary precautions based on recommendations from the federal, local, and state governments, Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), National Federation of State High School Associations, and the PIAA Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") realizes that best practices regarding COVID-19 are in a constant state of change as new information and treatments become available. As new information becomes available and as we transition from summer conditioning to in season practice and play, the recommendations contained in this document will be updated to reflect current information in an effort to decrease risk of exposure for our students, staff, and families.

**Participating in interscholastic athletics is a privilege at Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") and it is of the utmost importance that everyone involved; athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators work together to help adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document. It is the responsibly of the participating interscholastic student athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators to follow these guidelines while in season and out. Failure to follow these safety measures will jeopardize everyone's ability to participate.**

These guidelines will be reviewed and updated if necessary, prior to the official start of the Fall Sports Season (10 August for football and 17 August for all other Fall sports).

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Social distancing should be practiced whenever possible (6 feet at a minimum). Practice social distancing in all common areas such as locker rooms, classrooms, meeting rooms, weight room, coaches' offices, gym, wrestling room, and athletic training rooms.
- Coaching staffs are limited to essential personnel only. A list of essential personal will be given to the Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer.
- Consider the capacity of rooms and the quality of ventilation in rooms and spaces. Smaller group meetings should be held in areas like the gym, a classroom or even outside on the field where proper social distancing can take place.
- Large indoor gatherings are strongly discouraged. Virtual meetings should take place when possible.
- Up to ten student-athletes may use the weight room at one time.



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- Team meals should be pre-packaged and be served "grab-and-go" style. Food provided for athletes must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in Restaurant Industry.
- When at practice or competition, student-athletes, coaches, and other essential personnel should avoid handshakes, high-fives, fist pumps and all other forms of contact with one another.
- No outside groups or speakers should be permitted in the facilities.
- Student athletes should be six feet apart when not actively participating in a drill or physical activity.
- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva droplets are not allowed, including but not limited to chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- If multiple games are held in the same facility, adequate time will be scheduled between contests to allow for facilities to be cleaned and disinfected, and to minimize interactions between athletes.
- Booster run concession stands and other food provided for athletes must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in Restaurant Industry.

### **SANITATION:**

- ALL personal athletic equipment should be cleaned daily. It is recommended that student athletes take their equipment home daily for cleaning.
- Athletes CANNOT share gear and MUST use their issued equipment.
- If equipment must be shared, all equipment should be properly disinfected between users.
- Athletes must wear shirts and shoes at all times in the weight room and locker rooms to minimize sweat transmitting to equipment.
  - o Athletes reporting to the athletic training room for evaluation or treatments will be permitted to wear flip flops in and out of the facility only.
- Each athlete MUST have their OWN personally identified hydration container (i.e. water bottle) that is never shared.
- Hand sanitizers and wipes will be provided throughout the facilities and areas.
- Maintenance will set a daily cleaning and disinfecting schedule of all high traffic areas in the locker rooms and weight rooms.
- Student-athletes will shower at home.
- Student-athletes will use the gym lobby restrooms until further notice.

### **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:**

- Student-athletes, coaches and staff are required to wear masks when in all indoor spaces. This includes athletic training room, coach's office, gymnasium, and school building.



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- Student-athletes engaged in a lift do not need to wear masks. All others, including spotters are required to wear masks when in the weight room.
- During any "down time" situations, coaches and athletes should be wearing masks.
- Cloth face coverings are considered to be adequate (surgical or N95 masks are not necessary).
- The garment should cover the nose and mouth and allow for continued unlabored breathing.
  - o A full list with references for mask specifications and maintenance is on the CDC website.
- Wearing gloves has not been shown to decrease transmission of the virus. Current recommendations are for frequent handwashing and to avoid touching one's face.

### **DAILY SCREENING:**

- Students-athletes, coaches, and other essential staff will be screened daily with no-touch temperature checks and a questionnaire.
- Attendance should be recorded for contact tracing reasons.
- Screening questions will include:
  - o Have you had any new onset cough or shortness of breath?
  - o Have you had any known exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19?

ANY student-athlete, coach, or other essential staff, who shows a temperature of  $>100.4$  or if any of the above questions has a positive response, the individual will not be granted access to the facility and that individual will be sent home. In the case of a minor, their parent or guardian will be notified of the documented concern of illness and/or fever.

If a parent/guardian is dropping a student-athlete off for practice, it is strongly encouraged that the parent/guardian remain on campus in their vehicle until the student-athlete has passed their daily screening.

### **POSITIVE CASES AND COACHES, STAFF, OR STUDENT-ATHLETE SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS:**

- **What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?**
  - o Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe (see CDC Fact Sheet Below).
  - o Symptoms may include:
    - Fever or chills
    - Cough
    - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
    - Fatigue
    - Muscle or body aches



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- Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
- **What to do if you are ill?**
    - If you are ill or think you are infected with the COVID-19 virus, STAY AT HOME.
    - It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community.
    - If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
    - Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, school nurse, athletic trainer, and/or coach).
    - It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and/or monitored for symptoms.
    - If a Positive case of COVID-19 is diagnosed, contact tracing will be implemented with the assistance of local health professionals and the CDC and DOH.
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  - **What to do if a student or staff becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?**
    - Make every effort to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event
    - The athlete’s parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
    - The ill individual or their parent/guardian will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction
    - All affected facilities will need to be disinfected immediately.
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  - **Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?**
    - Student or staff must provide written medical clearance from their medical doctor or CRNP before being allowed back to practice/conditioning.
    - Return to athletics can begin once the individual is cleared by a medical doctor or CRNP and is determined to be non-contagious, fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), has vast improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), and experiences no vomiting or diarrhea.



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### **ACCLIMATIZATION PHASES:**

- **PHASE ONE:** The team should be broken into groups or pods of no more than 10 student-athletes. These groups should remain constant for the next two weeks. During this period, the students would be permitted to participate in non-contact workouts in their small groups. Conditioning practices should be broken into groups of 10, with a coach in charge of each group, emphasizing all social distancing practices.
- **PHASE TWO:** After 14 days of small groups (10 or less) and a community disease load that is not rising, the teams of 10 may be merged into groups of no more than 50 student-athletes who can now practice together as a group. Social distancing should be maintained at all other times such as in the weight rooms and locker rooms.
- **PHASE THREE:** After the four week period is complete and the disease load in the community is declining, teams may then combine to the total group for full practices and competition. Social distancing protocols should remain in place at all other times.

### **STUDENT-ATHLETES' ACTIONS:**

Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") requires that its athletes assist in following these guidelines to help maintain a safe and healthy environment for all. Failure to adhere with these guidelines provided by the athletic department could result in the inability to participate in interscholastic athletics.

- Practice social distancing.
- Mandatory PIAA pre-participation physical examinations will be required prior to the start of the fall sports season (August 10<sup>th</sup> for JV/V Football; August 17<sup>th</sup> for all other fall sports).
- Access to the weight room and athletic training room will only be permitted to in season PIAA sports. Exceptions are made for injuries or other emergencies.
- During any offseason workouts, no athlete will be allowed to maintain a locker in any athletic facility.
- In season athletes must maintain a clean and neat locker.
- Avoid touching your face as much as possible.
- Wash your clothes as often as possible, daily is preferred (No clothing should be left in any athletic facility overnight).
- No sharing of towels, razors or any other personal hygiene items.
- Wash hands as frequently as possible and use hand sanitizer often when available.
- Bring a personal water bottle(s) with name on it to all practices and events. There will be no shareable water bottles available. Athletes who report without a water bottle will not be permitted to practice on that day.
- Athletes should arrive no earlier than 20 minutes prior to an out of season practice.



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- Assist coaches, custodial, and medical staff in disinfecting of all athletic equipment used during a workout.
- Comply with the daily health screenings outlined in this document.

### **COACHES' ACTIONS:**

- Coaches will model the behavior they expect of student-athletes.
- Practice social distancing.
- Coaches will screen and monitor athletes for symptoms prior to the start of all games and practices. This includes a daily temperature check. Results will be shared and held in the athletic training room or the athletic director's office. This will be a daily occurrence until the CDC or state/federal government mandates that they are no longer necessary.
- Wear a protective mask as directed per CDC guidelines. If a member of a coaching staff has a pre-existing medical condition and cannot wear a mask they will need a recent doctor's note. Coaches must maintain recommended social distancing guidelines.
- It is recommended that coaching staffs create pods or groups for students to attend offseason workouts. These groups must be submitted to the athletic director and athletic trainer in the event that contact tracing needs to be enacted.
- Coaches will submit a weekly schedule of staff members performing daily screening to the athletic trainer and athletic director.
- If a large team gathering is required, it is recommended to be done remotely via an electronic platform.
- Coaches will be responsible for monitoring the number of student-athletes in the locker rooms and gymnasium during the season in order to promote social distancing guidelines. This may include limiting access to the building before or after events.
- Coaches will be asked to help assist in the cleaning of all athletic equipment before, during, and after athletic practices, events, and workouts.
- Washing and/or sanitizing hands regularly is strongly encouraged.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ACTIONS:**

- Follow guidance by the National Athletic Trainers' Association as it pertains to COVID-19. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - o Limit athletes and coaches occupancy to the athletic training room to promote social distancing.
  - o Athletic trainers are required to wear masks. If an athletic trainer has a pre-existing medical condition and cannot wear a mask, they will need a recent doctor's note. When practicable, they must maintain recommended social distancing guidelines.



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- Clean and disinfect all hard surfaces which include, but not limited to, training tables, taping stations, doorknobs, and other equipment that is utilized in the daily operations of the athletic training facility.
- There will be no unsupervised admittance to the athletic training room.
- Provide proper guidance to assist student-athletes on proper hand washing techniques and other preventive behaviors.

### **CUSTODIAL ACTIONS:**

- Practice Social Distancing.
- Athletic facilities should be cleaned on a schedule developed in conjunction with the athletic director and athletic trainer. High touch areas should be cleaned as often as possible throughout the day. These areas include but are not limited to, door handles, restrooms, athletic training room, coaches' offices, locker rooms, concession stands, officials locker room, water fountains.
- Post additional signage obtained by the athletic director and athletic trainer for all restrooms, locker rooms, and athletic training rooms on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (e.g. proper handwashing and hygiene practices).
- Ensure weekend custodial coverage to properly clean all athletic areas due to events occurring on Saturdays.
- Provide additional hand sanitizer in locker rooms, athletic training room, coaches' offices, concession stands.
- Provide additional cleaning supplies for the athletic training room and weight room.
- Provide additional cleaning supplies for coaching staffs to sanitize equipment before, during, and after athletic practices, games, or workouts. Whenever possible, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared, all equipment should be properly disinfected between users.

### **COMPETITION AND TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Competition and travel need to be considered and planned prior to the onset of the season.
- An open line of communication should be maintained between all medical providers in a conference.
- The athletic director and the team athletic trainer will be in contact with each opponent's administration prior to traveling to their facilities.
- There must be global agreement that all ill athletes will be held from participation no matter the circumstances.
- Member schools must be willing to share information regarding potential cases and exposures.
- Travel should be limited.



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- Travel teams should be in place. It is recommended that coaches submit travel rosters.
- Social distancing should be maintained, including masking.
- Preparations should be made for limited stops when in-route (pre-packaged meals).

### **ATHLETIC EVENT ATTENDANCE:**

- The Blessed Francis Seelos Academy ("School") administration will continue to monitor and evaluate guidance provided as it relates to spectators attending school athletic events. As stated below, the following people are grouped into tiers from essential to non-essential. This is to determine who will be allowed to attend an event until further guidance is received from state or local governments.
  - o Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security, administrators
  - o Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
  - o Tier 3 (Non-Essential) – Spectators and boosters
    - Only Tier 1 & Tier 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state or local governments lift restrictions of mass gatherings.
    - Seating areas, including bleachers, will adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet for spacing for anyone not in the same household once spectators are permitted. To assist with this, areas will be properly and clearly marked. It is recommended that if adults must be in close proximity to one another, they should wear a face covering (i.e. facemask or shield).
    - Once state or local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings, caregivers or spectators will be prohibited to enter the field of play or bench areas.
- It is strongly encouraged that parents/guardians do not attend athletic team practices.
- Parents/guardians should arrive no more than 10 minutes prior to the scheduled end of the athletic event or practice for picking up their children.
  - o Special considerations will be made in the event that a student-athlete suffers an injury or medical emergency during the athletic practice or event. These considerations will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the athletic trainer, athletic director, and/or school nurse.





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### **Resources for More Information:**

- Wearing Masks – <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx>
- **COVID-19 (from Governor's office)** – <https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/>
- NFHS Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities – [https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15\\_2020-final.pdf](https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf)
- **Center for Disease Control – "What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others"** – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- UPMC Sports Medicine Guidelines – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- PIAA Guidelines – <http://www.piaa.org/assets/web/documents/Press%20release%20-%20Wednesday%20June%2010%202020%20-%20RTP.pdf>