August 14, 2020

To All Parents and Guardians of Student Athletes

The City of New Haven Health Department continues to closely monitor COVID-19 activity and trends in our community and across the country. In collaboration with the New Haven Public Schools, this data is reviewed so that we can take whatever action is necessary to protect the health and safety of all students and staff. Under these challenging circumstances, it is necessary for the City to make decisions regarding the wisdom of allowing for school sporting events involving both moderate and high risk sports to be held at this time, particularly given the recommendations of the Department of Public Health that such activities be postponed for until Spring 2021.

Moderate risk sports fall into three categories: (1) those that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants or (2) those sports that involve intermittent close contact or group sports or (3) those sports that use equipment that cannot be cleaned between participants.

Examples of moderate risk sports as defined by the CDC guidance and under the Reopen CT guidance include: volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, water polo, gymnastics, ice hockey, field hockey, tennis, swimming relays, pole vault, high/long jump, girls lacrosse, crew with two or more rowers.

High risk sports are those that involve close, sustained contact between athletes without significant protective barriers, creating a high risk that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. These sports also require shared equipment and gear which can cause the virus to be transmitted. Social distancing is also difficult to maintain during games/practices/scrimmages for these sports.

Examples of high-risk sports as defined by the CDC and under the Reopen Connecticut guidance include wrestling, football, basketball, boy’s lacrosse, competitive cheer, and dance.

Therefore, the City of New Haven will only permit conditioning training for high risk and moderate risk sports. Following the letter issued August 14, 2020 from the Department of Public Health, all games or practices that involve physical contact will not be allowed at this time. ¹

We recognize that this decision will come as a disappointment to many parents and students. We will continue to monitor the status of the pandemic and keep families updated as information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Maritza Bond, MPH
Director of Health

¹ Department of Public Health, CAS, CIAC Board members Letter of Recommendation