



Media Release

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MANATEE DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS BEGIN PRACTICES FOR FALL SPORTS SEASONS TODAY

(Bradenton, FL – August 24, 2020) Students and coaches who participate in high school fall sports in Manatee District schools will begin practices today, in accordance with guidance from the FHSAA's Board of Directors. The return to the practice and playing fields in Manatee County will be aligned to additional recommendations from the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other national governing sports and health organizations.

The calendar for resumption of fall sports is as follows:

- Monday, August 24 – Practice for fall sports begins.
- Tuesday, September 8 – First competition date for Golf, Swimming and Cross Country.
- Monday, September 14 – First competition date for Volleyball.
- Friday, September 18 – First competition day for Football.

The School District of Manatee County has put together a plan for the return to high school sports that includes detailed guidance for health, safety and prevention for student athletes and coaches. Examples of some of the safety protocols put in place are below:

- Before the start of practice, schools will pre-screen all students-athletes for COVID symptoms that they or others living in their house may experience. Student-athletes and staff must self-screen every day for COVID-19 symptoms for themselves and family members. Coaches will take the temperature of each students-athlete each day prior to the start of practice. Any temperature over 100.4 degrees or a yes answer to survey questions should be referred to the athletic trainer to begin the COVID symptom protocol.
- Teams must have hand sanitizer or hand-washing stations readily available in the practice areas. Students and staff should be encouraged to use it frequently.

- All surfaces and equipment areas must be thoroughly disinfected throughout and at the end of each day.
- There can be no shared water or food.
- Locker rooms are to be limited to the number of coaches and staff that can safely social distance.
- Locker rooms will be sanitized daily.

“We recognize that sports and other extracurricular activities are an important part of the learning and socialization opportunities offered in our high schools,” said Jason Montgomery, Supervisor of Athletics for the School District. “We want to give our students the ability to participate and compete, but in a way that maximizes their health and safety.”