



With the high level of media interest this past weekend over the possible reopening of high school football, we want to take an opportunity to share information regarding the unified stance that DPS has taken in regards to this topic.

First of all, thank you for your support during this challenging and unprecedented time. In early August, CHSAA presented and approved a sports calendar for the 2020-21 school year. This calendar provided modified schedules and timelines for all sports that fall under the CHSAA umbrella. At that time, we outlined a strategic and incremental plan that aligned with local health guidelines and gradually returned our student athletes to conditioning activities and eventual participation in their CHSAA season. We have also committed to working with Denver Health to evaluate the health risks to determine if and when we participate in sports as CHSAA approves them to begin.

Recently, there has been a focused effort to have the state reconsider the start date for football and move it to the current fall season. As part of that movement, CHSAA has sent a survey to its member schools asking if they are ready and willing to begin playing fall sports (specifically football) on Sept. 21, 2020.

The survey had many references to guidance and variances that are not currently defined, and asked districts to decide if they wanted to move football based on these unknown and undetermined timelines. After thoughtful discussion with DPS athletic directors and coaches, and following guidance by leadership and local health officials, DPS as a district has requested that CHSAA honor the schedule that was approved and presented in August.

We are deeply committed to providing our students with safe and engaging opportunities to participate as scholar athletes in CHSAA sports and activities. Our stance reflects our commitment to the health and safety of our students, staff and communities. Our stance is also a strong message that we value and support the diverse group of student athletes we serve. While offering two distinct seasons of football seems logical and noble on the surface, it instead highlights a glaring inequity that does not value all of the more than 140,000 student athletes across the state of Colorado.

We feel the decision to move forward with CHSAA sports as scheduled, after the winter break, gives us the best and safest opportunity for our students to have an opportunity to participate this school year. Currently in Denver, we are under guidance from our local health departments that limits cohort size and adult interaction with cohorts. This guidance alone would make it impossible to offer the same programming allowed in neighboring communities. It could also limit participation opportunities for our students. Additionally, the lack of a solid and cohesive plan from CHSAA that outlines the expectations and requirements for the rollout of football makes it very difficult to make additional commitments at this time. This is because we are unable to assess whether participation would be feasible, what conditions would be required and any implications given our local health context.

As a district, we are excited to continue to grow the opportunities for participation for all of our student athletes over the next several months. Our efforts are in alignment with our return to school processes, local health guidelines, and demonstrate that we value the diversity of all student athletes that participate in CHSAA sports. We will move forward as one.

If you have questions, concerns or thoughts, please reach out to your school's athletic director.

#DPSathletics1903