

Greetings,

As we continue to navigate the challenges of return to school and return to play, I trust that this day finds you healthy and safe. Please find attached “Guidelines for Return to Play/Practice Team Sports.

Phase 1.5 has been updated as it pertains to football and competitive cheer. Beginning Monday, August 31st, football and competitive cheer will be able to increase their numbers during Phase 1.5. Both high-risk sports will be able to use what numbers they deem necessary to hold their Phase 1.5 workouts. During this time, all other Phase 1.5 requirements will apply with the only exception being how many can participate. Coaches should structure their workouts, so they continue to practice in groups and allow for as much social distancing as possible during workouts and between the groups. While the number of participants can increase, schools are strongly encouraged to practice your varsity and sub-varsity teams separately to help decrease the risk of spreading COVID-19 among the entire group. While not always ideal to do this, it is important to understand the benefit of what this offers in terms of keeping your athletes as safe as possible.

On Thursday, September 3rd and Friday, September 4th, both football and competitive cheer will be able to move into Phase 2.0 as it pertains to what they are allowed to do during their sports-specific workouts. You will find an updated chart that outlines what both sports can do on these two dates. All other Phase 1.5 guidelines will still apply for both sports during these two days of open season. Please be reminded that these workouts should be open to all, and student-athletes should be allowed to return to team activities without repercussions when they feel it is appropriate to do so. In these unprecedented times, please allow for participation without mandatory attendance requirements during open season.

 The purpose for allowing football and competitive cheer to increase their numbers next week and move into Phase 2.0 for workouts for two days is to allow athletes, coaches, and school staff an opportunity to increase their numbers while still maintaining best practices. It is imperative that schools realize the effort that has gone into getting everyone to this point as safely as possible. Allowing you to increase your numbers will only give schools an opportunity to continue to see how the best practices can continue to be used to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Additionally, we have attached the guidelines for best practices for Phase 2.0 and Phase 3.0 as they pertain to all fall sports. You are encouraged to apply the best practices during both phases to continue to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. Again, this information has carefully been compiled and surmised by a task force of representatives from the League staff, SC Superintendents, member school athletics directors and coaches, and the SCHSL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC). Additionally, the information has been reviewed and vetted by DHEC, and discussed with a representative from the SC Governor’s office.