Dear MCPS Community:

Thank you for a successful start to the high school winter season! Following are some key updates and reminders regarding program operations.

**Return to R.A.I.S.E. Reminders and Information**

**Basketball**

Officials/Referees – MCPS received a letter of approval from Montgomery County to allow *that game officials/referees who are fully vaccinated and engaged in the sport of basketball are not required to wear face coverings*. Masks/face coverings must be worn at all other times (to and from the court, hallways, etc.).

Benches – coaches must wear masks. **Student-athletes must wear masks on the bench, when not actively participating.** Therefore, student-athletes must have masks accessible to wear while on the bench. A reasonable, common sense approach should be used for student-athletes entering/exiting a game (for instance, rapid subbing at the end of the game for offense/defense).

Masks/Face Coverings – outside of the exemption in the Return to R.A.I.S.E. plan during active engagement in basketball, masks must be worn at all other times – locker rooms, classrooms, hallways, etc.

**Wrestling**

Benches – coaches must wear masks. **Student-athletes must wear masks on the bench, when not actively wrestling.** Therefore, student-athletes must have masks accessible to wear while on the bench. Student-athletes who are breaking a sweat, jumping rope, doing calisthenics, demonstrating drilling moves prior to a match, are permitted to remove their mask.

Masks are required for spectators at **all times**.

**Winter Spectator Guidelines**

Spectator guidelines for the high school winter season are available [here](#). MCPS is committed to providing the safest, greatest experience possible for student-athletes, coaches and spectators, consistent with the R.A.I.S.E. core values of MCPS Athletics. Spectators are expected to demonstrate behaviors consistent with the R.A.I.S.E. core values of MCPS Athletics. Spectators who do not comply with MCPS expectations will be asked to leave the premises and may be banned from attending future events.

Be sure to check with your local school for the latest information regarding program operations.
Indoor Track and Field Update
The indoor track and field season is scheduled to begin on December 22, 2021 at the Prince George’s Sports and Learning Complex.

Middle School Athletics
The winter season officially kicked off on Tuesday, December 7, 2021. Basketball games begin on Thursday, January 6, 2021. Schedules can be found on the Middle Schools Schedules webpage of the MCPS athletics website.

Student-Athlete Vaccination Requirements
All high school and eligible middle school student-athletes are required to submit proof of full COVID-19 vaccination prior to participation. This requirement applies to the winter and spring sports seasons, as well as all out-of-season activities conducted through MCPS Athletics. Only medical exemptions will be permitted.

Vaccination FAQs
Here are answers to FAQs regarding the vaccination requirements for MCPS Athletics.

Return to R.A.I.S.E. Plan Operations
The Return to R.A.I.S.E. Plan will continue to drive program operations in regard to COVID-19 procedures and protocols. The plan is reviewed on an ongoing basis by the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics. The latest version is always available on the COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage.

Communication and Resources
Our COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics will continue to evaluate and implement the latest safety measures. Updates and guidance from the Task Force will continue to be provided and are available on the COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage.

We appreciate your continued commitment and support. Specific questions should be directed to your school’s athletics specialist (AD), athletic coordinator (AC), or coach.

Montgomery County Public Schools