R.A.I.S.E. REIMAGINED

The Virtual Operations of MCPS Athletics
During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Spring 2022

WE CAN, WE WILL, We R.A.I.S.E.

R.A.I.S.E. REIMAGINED – 2022

The Virtual Operations of MCPS Athletics during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Following is an overview of the virtual operations of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) interscholastic athletics program during the 2021-2022 school year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

R.A.I.S.E. REIMAGINED OVERVIEW – 2022

During the 2021–2022 school year, the MCPS athletics program will be administered in-person to the extent possible, per the Return to R.A.I.S.E. plan developed by the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics. If a team reaches a significant number of positive cases, team activities may need to pause. *A decision on the status of team operations would be determined by an individual analysis of the positive cases in regard to team operations, which would be conducted in collaboration with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services*. Teams that pause will transition back to in-person activities starting with at least one day of practice, per the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics.

We CAN, We WILL, We R.A.I.S.E.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic program operations and stakeholders across the MCPS Athletics program will embrace a positive mindset founded on the following charges:

- **We CAN** – we will focus on what we CAN do throughout the pandemic, not what we cannot do. While we recognize the disappointment experienced by students, coaches, and all stakeholders during pauses, we must focus on the positive aspects of participation and engagement.
- **We WILL** – we will be innovative and create the GREATEST possible experience for our student-athletes, both in virtual and in-person experiences.
- **We R.A.I.S.E.** – we will demonstrate an unwavering commitment to our R.A.I.S.E. core values of MCPS Athletics.

RESOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

To provide consistency in referencing documents and plans, the following definitions are provided:

- COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage – the centralized source of in-person information regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the MCPS athletics program.
- R.A.I.S.E. Reimagined – this document provides an overview of the virtual operations of the MCPS Athletics program during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Return to R.A.I.S.E. Strategic Plan – this document guides the in-person operations of the MCPS athletics program, in accordance with the MPSSAA Roadmap for Return guidance. The latest plan is always available on the COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage.

ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

Virtual programming for both middle and high school athletics is centered on team-specific engagement that:

1) Fosters social-emotional and academic check-ins,

2) Instills sport-specific knowledge and strategies, and

3) Promotes the MCPS Athletics R.A.I.S.E. Core Values, as follows:

- Respect & Sportsmanship – team building;
- Academic Excellence – academic support and college recruiting support;
- Integrity & Character – character education;
- Spirited & Safe Competition – skills and sport instruction, along with COVID-19 safety education; and
- Equity & Access – efforts supporting equity and social justice initiatives.

During pauses, no in-person activities are permitted. Virtual sessions may occur afterschool during typical operating hours for in-person activities.

Virtual Best Practices

Best practices for sport-specific sessions include identifying actions and methods used to instill a comprehensive knowledge of the sport/activity, including skills and strategies; provide drills, conditioning workouts, or other appropriate activities to promote the activity, for example:

- Host a virtual 20 minute “show and tell” on individual drills used to improve student-athlete skills;
- Host a virtual game analysis on the officials calls – signs and rules violated;
- Host virtual sport specific chalk talks; or
- Utilize an online platform to post team announcements, articles, and other sport-specific resources.

Best practices for academic and social-emotional check-ins include identifying actions and supports utilized to promote the R.A.I.S.E. core values of the interscholastic athletics program and support the academic performance of student-athletes during the 14-day virtual experience, for example:

- Conduct weekly social-emotional check-ins to support student-athletes;
- Conduct weekly academic check-ins to support student-athletes outside the realm of virtual learning;
- Discuss topics included in the free NFHS courses for students; or
- Host an optional virtual office hours for student-athletes to check-in.

APPROPRIATE VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Coaches and student-athletes are expected to follow all expectations according to the MCPS Code of Conduct and Student Rights and Responsibilities. Virtual platforms are the only acceptable means of meeting with students during a team or school-wide pause. Student and coach safety, especially in a virtual space, is of the utmost importance.

The approved meeting platform for MCPS is Zoom. Coaches must use their MCPS Zoom account if they are web conferencing with students. Coaches should never use a personal/non-MCPS Zoom account while engaging with students. In addition, coaches should give students the option of turning off their camera. The MCPS Web Conferencing Center has several resources to assist coaches with virtual engagement including:

- Zoom Web Conferencing: Getting Started and Troubleshooting for Staff
- Day 1 Quick Tips Zoom Web Conferencing
- Zoom Meeting Participants - Attendance

RESOURCES FOR COACHES

Coaching resources are located on a shared Google drive. The following resource will assist coaches with navigating the shared Google drive.

Google Drive Tutorial for Beginners

High School Resources

The following resource is intended to assist coaches in conducting engagement sessions.

Shared Google Folder – Spring Sports

All high school coaches conducting virtual sessions, will have access to the shared Google folder – 2022 Sport Folders & Virtual Resources. The 2022 Sport Folders & Virtual Resources shared Google folder contains various resources to assist coaches with implementing engagement activities during virtual athletics.

Middle School Resources

All middle school coaches conducting a virtual experience, will have access to the MS Virtual Seasons 2022 shared Google folder. The folder contains resources to assist coaches with implementing engagement activities during virtual sessions.

Please note: staff members must access Google folders using their .net accounts.