

MSHSAA Position Statement - Quarantined Students – (September 2, 2021)

The MSHSAA office has received a number of contacts about schools being less restrictive than the required protocols set forth by their Local County Health Departments regarding the quarantining of students. Further, we have been informed that some schools are considering allowing students who are supposed to be in quarantine to continue to attend school, sports practices and games/contests. We have informed our member schools that it is a local school decision on whether they put local school policies/protocols in place to allow quarantined students to *attend school and practices*. However, students who are required to quarantine under the Local County Health Departments guidelines and expectations are not permitted to participate in interscholastic competition (games or contests). From day one that Covid-19 became a factor in our society, we have stated that schools must follow their Local County Health Department guidance and expectations for dealing with the pandemic. If a school allows a student(s) to participate in competition (games or contests) who are supposed to be quarantined under the Local County Health Department guidance and expectations, the school will be required to forfeit the contest(s) in which the student(s) participated and further considerations made for removing that school from postseason.

DESE has also come out with guidance, in accordance with the CDC, regarding students who have had direct exposure to Covid-19, but are vaccinated, and how that relates to quarantine requirements. MSHSAA member schools may follow this guidance from DESE and not be in violation of the MSHSAA policy to follow Local County Health Department requirements.

As a reminder, there is a MSHSAA mandate in place for students that “test positive” for Covid-19. This mandate requires a student to quarantine, complete an evaluation by a physician and follow a five stage return to play protocol. (See Covid-19 Return to Play Form posted on the Sports Medicine tab at www.mshsaa.org).

The MSHSAA Board of Directors has the authority under the MSHSAA Constitution to put policies in place to deal with situations that arise which are outside the language of the by-laws but affect the business of the association. The Covid-19 pandemic falls into this area and has the potential to effect student health and the safety of all participants in the interscholastic program.

Section 6: POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

a. The Board of Directors shall be the executive body of the Association. It shall have the authority to adopt such policies and procedures as are necessary to administer the business of

the Association except such policies and procedures shall not be in conflict with a provision of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Please understand, the state association's position statement(s) and policies are in place to protect students, coaches, and officials that serve and participate in the interscholastic contests. MSHSAA is not attempting to infringe on the procedures a school has in place for educating students in the classroom, but we must have policies and procedures in place to deal with the safety of students who participate in the interscholastic program and against opposing schools.

Thank you for your attention. If you have specific questions, please refer to the Sports Medicine page of the MSHSAA website, or contact our office.