



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

We, the school leaders of the Middlesex League Conference (MLC), share a common commitment to keeping our students, staff, and community safe during the current health crisis. We also know that the commitment to safety extends beyond the impact of COVID-19, and includes the physical, social, and emotional health of our students. As part of that commitment to student safety, we understand the important role that athletics plays in our students' lives and aim to balance the ability for students to participate athletically with the need to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in our schools and communities.

On November 20, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Board of Directors voted to approve sport-specific modifications for the 2020-2021 winter season. These modifications include basketball, gymnastics, ice hockey, skiing, and swimming and diving, but do not include wrestling, indoor track, winter cheerleading, and dance, which have been moved to future seasons. The modifications also set a new start date for the winter sports season of December 14, 2020.

As MLC leaders, we have continued our regular meetings that began in early October, and have developed the following two-phased approach to the upcoming winter season:

Phase I (Practices/Tryouts) – Starts December 14

- The winter sports season for practices/tryouts will begin no earlier than December 14.
- Individual schools will make decisions about the timing for beginning practices/tryouts based upon the local context of each school community.
- Over the four weeks of Phase I, schools will assess the effectiveness of sports modifications and cleaning protocols, as well as the trajectory of the virus, to determine if athletics can proceed to Phase II – Interscholastic Competitions.

Phase II (Interscholastic Competitions) – Starts January 2 or later

- Interscholastic competitions can start no earlier than January 2 but may be pushed to January 11.
- Schedules will be designed, by sport, to match only two communities in a given week.
- Initially, spectators will not be permitted to attend any indoor competitions. We will be meeting as a League prior to the start of interdistrict competitions to finalize whether the competitions can occur as well as the status of spectators.

We are hopeful that we will be able to continue to have athletics, including interscholastic competitions, among our member schools this winter, and we urge the members of our communities to practice proper health protocols (mask wearing, physical distancing, etc.) so that our student athletes can have the opportunity to compete.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Conti, Superintendent, Burlington Public Schools
Glenn Brand, Superintendent, Wilmington Public Schools
Julie Hackett, Superintendent, Lexington Public Schools
Julie Kuenberger, Superintendent, Melrose Public Schools
John Doherty, Superintendent, Reading Public Schools
Matt Crowley, Superintendent, Woburn Public Schools

John Macero, Superintendent, Stoneham Public Schools
Deanne Galdston, Superintendent, Watertown Public Schools
Douglas Lyons, Superintendent, Wakefield Public Schools
John Phelan, Superintendent, Belmont Public Schools
Judy Evans, Superintendent, Winchester Public Schools
Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools