



MCPS ATHLETICS
RETURN to R.A.I.S.E.
September 10, 2021

Dear MCPS Community:

The fall competition season is underway! We want to provide important information on vaccination requirements for participation in the MCPS interscholastic athletics program.

Vaccination Requirements

Student-Athletes

Beginning Monday, Nov. 15, the start of the winter sports season, all high school and eligible middle school student-athletes will be 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. This requirement is supported by the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics, which includes representation from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, along with multiple MCPS departments. This requirement also aligns with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine. As of Sept. 10, 2021, 87.2% of the 12 and older population in Montgomery County is fully vaccinated and 96.1% of all eligible residents have received one dose.

Coaches and Athletic Department Personnel

Consistent with MCPS requirements for staff members, coaches and athletic department personnel must submit proof of vaccination. All staff employed by MCPS must provide verification that they have received at least the first COVID-19 shot by Sept. 30, 2021, and verification of the second shot by Oct. 29, 2021, unless staff request an exemption based on a medical reason documented by a medical doctor. If a medical exemption is granted, the employee must submit to regular COVID-19 testing as required by MCPS.

Rationale

Vaccinations play a critical role in supporting a safe environment for our student-athletes, both in the classroom and the realm of competition. In addition to protecting individuals and teams, vaccinations minimize interruptions to in-person learning and program activities. Furthermore, with the indoor activities offered in the winter season, vaccinations will play an integral role in ensuring activities continue in the safest environment possible. Vaccinations are the best path forward to promoting the R.A.I.S.E. core values of academic excellence and safe competition in all settings.

Fall Season

All eligible student-athletes participating in the fall season are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.

Exemptions

Students may be exempted from immunization requirements if an authorized health care provider certifies that there is a medical reason not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Submission of Documentation

More information will be shared in the coming weeks regarding the submission of documents. Registration for winter sports will open in mid-October.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Information regarding clinics is available [here](#).

Return to R.A.I.S.E. Plan

The Return to R.A.I.S.E. Plan has been [updated as of Sept. 10](#), to include the new vaccination requirements.

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 are available on the [COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage](#).

We recognize that this is a difficult decision for some families and appreciate the efforts and commitment to the health and safety of our student-athletes. Specific questions should be directed to your school's [athletics specialist \(AD\)](#), [athletic coordinator \(AC\)](#), or coach.

Montgomery County Public Schools