



Kyrene Athletics

KYRENE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Safe Return to Athletics Plan

School Year 2020-2021

Kyrene is focused first and foremost on the health and safety of students when making decisions regarding middle school athletics to be offered during the 2020-21 school year. Kyrene's plan will include three phases for the return to athletics aligned with the school reopening guidance from the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. The Kyrene School District plan is aligned with guidelines from the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) and reflects collaborative efforts with the Tempe Union High School District and Tempe Elementary School District. Each phase of the plan outlines specific guidelines to follow and the Kyrene School District reviewed specific sports to determine the activities that best align with the three phases of return to athletics.

The AIA strongly supports the return to athletics and competitive sports with considerations for safety. The AIA have provided considerations, guidance, and recommendations for resuming athletics in Arizona. The considerations include promoting behaviors that reduce the spread of illness, maintaining a healthy environment, maintaining healthy operations, and having protocols and procedures in place for when someone gets sick.

COVID-19 is currently present in our community and will continue to be present in our community for the foreseeable future. As long as COVID-19 remains active in our community, we must all be focused on maintaining a healthy environment by limiting the spread of the virus. We may need to suspend, postpone or cancel an athletic event or season based upon health metrics and recommendations from national, state, or district authorities.

As we begin our return to athletics, we will put the guidelines in place and follow the requirements for each phase. Site Athletic Directors serve as the local point of contact for concerns about COVID-19 as related to athletes or athletics. All Site Athletic Directors and Coaches will be required to complete the COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators NFHS Training and will provide a certificate on file of completion this upcoming school year. Site Athletic Directors and Coaches will also receive resources on what to do if a student athlete feels ill or displays symptoms of COVID-19.

Kyrene School District has prepared a comprehensive plan to mitigate risk of exposure to COVID-19 in our schools. Student athletes participating in Kyrene athletics do so with the expectation that parents/guardians have read and signed the COVID-19 Parental Acknowledgement and Disclosure form in the ParentVUE portal. While participating in athletics, children will be in contact with other children as well as employees who are also at risk of community exposure. No list of restrictions, guidelines, or practices will eliminate the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Families play a crucial role in keeping student athletes safe and reducing the risk of exposure by following the practices outlined in the Kyrene Mitigation Plan.

The guidance contained in this handbook is aligned with the Center for Diseases Control (CDC), the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), and the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) and may be subject to changes as more information becomes available. The Kyrene School District, recommends for athletic stakeholders (including Athletic Directors, Lead Supervisors, Coaches, Scorekeepers, and Officials) and student athletes to:

- Stay at home if they are feeling sick or they live with someone who is sick including not coming to school, practices, or games.
- Cover their mouth if they need to cough or sneeze.
- Wash or sanitize their hands regularly.
- Avoid touching their face with their hands.
- Avoid physical contact.
- Participate in social distancing whenever possible.
- Bring their own water bottles or gallons of water to practices and games.
- Disinfect athletic equipment before and after practices and games.
- Follow comprehensive sanitation protocols for facilities and athletic equipment before and after every use.
- Notify the Site Athletic Director (staff) or Coach (athletes) immediately if they feel sick.
- Refrain from participating in athletics if you are at risk or are a vulnerable individual, youth or adult.
- Follow district protocols for athletes or athletics staff who are diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19.
- Coaches will contact athletes who miss practice to check on the individual's health status. Coaches will notify the Site Athletic Director when student athletes miss a practice as a result of an illness.

Kyrene's Phases for Return to Athletics (adapted from AIA Guidelines)

Phase 1 - Substantial Community Spread (one or more benchmarks are in the "red" category for two consecutive weeks of data) and Kyrene Schools remain open for in-person learning

Intramurals or Clinics/Camps

- Guidelines for maintaining healthy operations and a healthy environment must be followed at all times.
- Will be offered only if a coach is available and there are enough participants registered (1:25 ratio).
- Online registration and fee are required to be completed by the parent/guardian prior to student athlete participation.
- No contact sports will be offered. Activities will include individual training with a focus on conditioning, strength, and/or agility training.
- No water will be provided. Athletes should bring their own water bottle. Two gallons of water are recommended per training session.
- The student athlete will bring their own equipment if possible.
- Disinfecting and cleaning of all personal equipment and materials will occur before and after practices as well as any other time there is contact with another person.
- Training groups/cohorts will remain consistent for attendance and contact tracing purposes if needed.
- Temperature checks and self-reported screening reports are required; athletes must be free from symptoms to participate.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet is required for athletes.
- Athletes and staff must wear masks at all times, even during practice.
- No hand shaking, high fives, or fist bumps allowed.
- Coaches and athletes will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer every time they enter or leave a practice facility.
- Locker rooms will be closed to athletes.
- No competitions, games, meets, or tournaments will occur during this phase.
- No spectators will be permitted at practice or during clinics/camps.

Phase 2 - Moderate Community Spread (all three benchmarks are in the “yellow” or “green” categories for two consecutive weeks of data)

Modified Athletics Program

- Guidelines for maintaining healthy operations and a healthy environment must be followed at all times.
- Athletic programs that are offered during this phase are permitted to have a 1:50 ratio with athletes staying in cohorts
- Online registration and fee are required to be completed by the parent/guardian prior to student athlete participation.
- Focus will remain on conditioning, skills, and drills. Low-risk contact sports are allowed with minimum contact. High-risk contact sports are not allowed during this phase.
- No water will be provided. Athletes should bring their own water bottle. Two gallons of water are recommended per training session.
- The student athlete will bring their own equipment if possible. Shared sports equipment, such as balls, will be disinfected before, during and after every practices, scrimmage, and games.
- Training groups/cohorts will remain consistent for attendance and contact tracing purposes if needed.
- Temperature checks and self-reported screening reports are required; athletes must be free from symptoms to participate.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet is required for athletes.
- Athletic stakeholders, including athletic directors, coaches, officials, and scorekeepers, are required to wear a face mask.
- Athletes must wear masks when transitioning between facilities and entering or leaving campus. Masks are optional for athletes during practice sessions and games.
- No hand shaking, high fives, or fist bumps allowed.
- Coaches and athletes will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer every time they enter or leave a practice facility.
- Athletic Directors and coaches will need to set up a schedule for locker room use. Locker rooms may be open only if 6 feet social distancing can be practiced and supervision is possible. It is recommended that a maximum of 10 students are allowed in the locker room at one time with adult supervision. In addition, bathroom use should be restricted to a maximum of 2 people at a time. For games, visiting teams will be required to dress out at their home campus.
- Officials are scheduled for games. Game officials should come to the venue dressed for all athletic-based competitions.
- Games, scrimmages, and meets are allowed. Spectators will be limited for indoor events based upon the capacity of the space and number of participants. Spectators for outdoor events will need to remain socially distanced. All spectators must wear masks at events.

Phase 3 - Minimal Community Spread (all three benchmarks are in the “green” category for two consecutive weeks of data)

Full Athletics Program

- Guidelines for maintaining healthy operations and a healthy environment must be followed at all times.
- All contact and non-contact sports may resume with usual activity.
- Online registration and fee are required to be completed by the parent/guardian prior to student athlete participation.
- Training sessions, games, and tournaments will be able to take place.
- Kyrene School District will use the AIA Recommendations for disinfecting equipment and facilities for high risk contact sports to occur.
- Social distancing is still recommended to the greatest extent possible.
- No water will be provided. Athletes should bring their own water bottle. Two gallons of water are recommended per training session.
- Temperature checks and self-reported screening reports are required; athletes must be free from symptoms to participate.
- The student athlete will bring their own equipment if possible. Shared sports equipment, such as balls, will be disinfected before, during and after every practices, scrimmage, and games.
- Athletic stakeholders, including athletic directors, coaches, officials, and scorekeepers, may be required to wear a face mask in alignment with Kyrene and municipality guidance.
- Athletes may wear masks when transitioning between facilities and entering or leaving campus. Masks will remain optional for athletes during practice sessions and games.
- No hand shaking, high fives, or fist bumps allowed.
- Coaches and athletes will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer every time they enter or leave a practice facility.
- Locker rooms may be used. Athletic Directors and Coaches may need to set up a schedule for locker room use to ensure social distancing as well as appropriate capacity and supervision. For games, visiting teams may be required to dress out at their home campus. Bathroom use may be restricted.
- Officials are scheduled for games. Game officials should come to the venue dressed for all athletic-based competitions.
- Games, scrimmages, and meets are allowed. Spectators are permitted. Spectators may be limited for indoor events based upon the capacity of the space and number of participants. Spectators for outdoor events may need to remain socially distanced. All spectators must wear masks at events in alignment with Kyrene and municipality guidance.

Proposed Athletics Seasons for 2020-21

Fall Sports Season – August through October

Cancelled

Winter Sports Season – November through January

Cross Country (non-cut sport)

Boys Basketball

Girls Soccer

Softball

Cheer - Cheerleaders will only cheer at home games.

Wrestling – postponed. Wrestling is a high-risk contact sport. Wrestling will not start at the same time as other winter sports. The possibility of a half-season for Wrestling will be considered for January and February dependent on minimal community spread as indicated by health metrics. A half-season would align with the Southeast Valley Conference (SEV) and other K-8 districts that offer wrestling.

Spring Sports Season – February through May

Girls Basketball

Baseball

Track & Field (non-cut sport)

Transportation will be provided to away games and meets as applicable. Masks will be required on buses and in other transportation vehicles. The capacity of buses for athletics events is the standard capacity of no more than 50 persons including student athletes, coaches and bus drivers.

Timeline for Return to Athletics

Cross Country Modified Season

Oct. 15	Online Registration OPENS for Cross Country
Oct. 19	Practice Begins
Nov. 2	Online Registration CLOSES at midnight for Cross Country
Nov. 3	1 st Meet
Nov. 12	2 nd Meet
Nov. 19	3 rd Meet
Nov. 24	4 th Meet
Dec. 1	5 th Meet (B Race Only)
Dec. 3	6 th Meet (A Race Only)
Dec. 10	Conference Cross Country Meet at Pueblo Middle School

Winter Sports Season (Boys Basketball, Girls Soccer, Softball and Cheer)

Schedules for Winter Sports will need to be reviewed and revised.

Winter sports activities are on pause while Kyrene students are learning from home.

Oct. 15	Online Registration OPENS for Winter Sports Season
Nov. 5	Online Registration CLOSES at midnight for Winter Sports Season
Nov. 9-13	Tryouts for Cut Sports
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day-No School
Nov. 16	Practice Begins for Cut Sports
Nov. 23	First Game
Nov. 26 & 27	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 21 - Jan. 3	Winter Break
Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 25, 27 & Feb. 1	Tournaments (Boys Basketball, Girls Soccer & Softball)
Jan. 28	Cheer Showcase Night

Practice and game schedules vary per school. In the event that a team or school is impacted by COVID-19, a game or meet may need to change locations or be cancelled and is not likely to be able to be rescheduled. Schedules and the format of practices or games may need to be adjusted mid-season if there is a shift in the level of community spread. Please be mindful of these possibilities upon registration, we will not be able to issue refunds for athletics participation fees as they are most commonly paid through non-refundable tax credits.

COVID-19 Point of Contact for Athletics

Site Athletic Directors serve as the local point of contact for concerns about COVID-19 as related to athletes or athletics. Site Athletic Directors are responsible to ensure that all guidelines in Kyrene's Return to Athletics Plan are followed.

School	Athletic Director	Contact Information
Akimel A-al	Dana Westermann	480-541-5851 dwestermann@kyrene.org
Altadena	Chris Howard	480-541-6041 cHoward@kyrene.org
Aprende	Carl Nasuta	480-541-6251 cnasuta@kyrene.org
Centennial	Randall Hoggard	480-541-6451 rHoggard@kyrene.org
Kyrene Middle School	Dana Lineberger	480-541-6651 DLineberger@kyrene.org
Kyrene Traditional Academy	Patricia Hineman	480-541-5451 phineman@kyrene.org
Pueblo	Mandi White	480-541-6851 mandiwhite@kyrene.org
District Office	Debbie Wilkinson	480-541-1131 dwilki@kyrene.org