

Shrewsbury Athletics



Adapted for COVID-19 Pandemic

Fall 2020

Jay Costa

Director of Athletics

Mission of the Athletic Department

- ★ Interscholastic Athletics can play a vital role in re-engaging our students as we seek to get back to school and to some sense of normalcy. A functioning athletic program will aid in rebuilding the interpersonal connections that would fundamentally support the implementation of any of the proposed academic instructional models. In the quest to educate the whole student, it cannot be overstated enough that Interscholastic Athletics can foster profound and positive social and emotional health outcomes in our collective communities.

Participation Requirements

- ❖ Parent Portal PowerSchool Online Registration
 - Includes permission form, emergency contact information, concussion education, opioid information, medical history information, and travel permission.

Physical Exam Requirements

- All students who plan to participate in athletics must submit written proof of a current physical exam to the athletic director and/or school nurse prior to the start of the sport season.
- Per DPH and MIAA regulations, physical exams are valid for 13 months to the day of the exam.
- A student athlete will NOT be allowed to participate once an exam has expired.
- The physical examination must be an in-person physical exam in order for the student to be eligible. Telehealth physicals are not valid for athletic participation.

Road Map to Athletics...



After receiving final guidance from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and our governing body for athletics, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), Shrewsbury High School and the Midland-Wachusett League feel that we have a solid plan in place for the fall season.

Our main focus, is and has been, the health and safety of all our student-athletes and coaches!

Athletic Seasons for 2020-2021

Fall Season I: September 18 - November 20 (Cross Country, Soccer, Field Hockey and Golf)

Winter Season: November 30 - February 21 (Alpine Ski, Basketball, Ice Hockey, Indoor Track and Swim/Dive)

Fall Season II or “Floating Season”: February 22 - April 25 (Cheer, Football, G. Volleyball and Unified Basketball)

Spring Season: April 26 - July 3 (Baseball/Softball, Crew, Lacrosse, Track & Field Tennis, and Unified Track)

**These dates may change as we move through the year

**There will be NO MIAA Tournament for Fall I.

**No decisions have been made by the MIAA regarding postseason tournaments for the Winter, Fall II, or Spring seasons.

What sports we will offer this fall...

We will offer the following sports during Fall Season I:

- Boys & Girls Cross Country - Varsity
- Field Hockey - JV1 and Varsity
- Golf - JV and Varsity
- Boys & Girls Soccer - JV1, JV2 and Varsity

- ❖ All levels of Football, Volleyball, Cheer, and Unified Basketball will be moved to the floating Fall Season II
- ❖ Cheer, Football, and Volleyball may be allowed to have limited practices during Fall Season I under EEA, MIAA, and league/District 3 guidelines. Crew may also have limited practices (different governing body)

Central Mass divided into PODS...

After extensive discussion on how to best move our league and district forward during this uncertain time, Central Mass has decided to divide the schools into geographic pods.

These pods were designed by a mileage model to limit travel amongst schools. Teams will only play teams within their pod and will not crossover into other pods. Our schools will not participate in non-league contests or scrimmages during the Fall I Season.

Shrewsbury's POD includes Algonquin, Leominster, Wachusett and Westboro.

Expectations of Coaches...

- Coaches will wear masks at all times.
- Coaches will keep bench players 6 feet apart.
- No close huddles with team pre/post game.
- Only 3 coaches will be allowed per each team's sideline.
- Coaches are responsible for making sure benches are picked up before leaving the field.
- Coaches will hold athletes on the field until fans clear the sidelines.
- Coaches will provide a travel roster with players' names to COVID captain at the home site (COVID captain is adult staff member responsible for protocols).
- Coaches will sanitize after getting off the bus, after warm-up, during halftime, and at the end of competition
- Do not organize or promote in-person team events outside of practices and games scheduled by the Athletic Department.

Expectations of Student-Athletes...

- Students must come ready to play each day as we will not have access to the locker rooms
- Athletes will be attended to by their own athletic trainer (if they have one) before boarding the bus
- Athletes must have extra masks (recommend 6) in their bag - wet masks are no longer effective and should be replaced with dry ones
- Athletes will maintain 6 feet of social distance in all bench areas
- Athletes must bring their own water bottle
- Athletes must sanitize after getting off the bus, after warm-up, during halftime, and end of competition
- Do not organize or promote in-person team events outside of practices and games scheduled by the Athletic Department.

Student-Athletes Athletic Bag Requirements...

- Multiple face coverings (masks) - Recommend at least 6
- Hand sanitizer
- Personal water bottle(s)
- Disinfecting wipes
- Personal equipment/clothes/shoes (no sharing)

Student-Athletes: Cohort D [Remote]

- Per the District Reopening Plan, Cohort D are fully-eligible to participate in athletics and other extra-curricular activities

Expectations of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)...

- Spectators will not be allowed during tryouts /preseason practices or regular season practice sessions.
- Face coverings must be worn at all time
- Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines
- Do not organize or promote in-person team events outside of practices and games scheduled by the Athletic Department.

Spectator Policy for Fall Season I

- Face coverings must be worn at all time.
- Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines
- League lanyard must be worn at all times - athletes will be given 2 lanyards for spectators.
- Fans will only be allowed for the home team - should regulations change, this will be revisited
- Upon arrival fans will sanitize hands and have lanyards visible.
- Fans will vacate the facility after the game ends and not congregate on the sidelines or in Venue.

Individual Sport Modifications...

Due to the various guidance for athletics put forth by the EEA and adopted by the MIAA, various sports will see rule changes and modifications to play for this upcoming school year.

Although we do not like the idea of *drastic* changes to the way games, meets and matches are played, we must follow all rules and regulations to have the safest possible athletic contests for all involved (players, coaches and officials).

The MIAA issued their sport modifications for the 2020-2021 school year on August 28, 2020. We are prepared to implement these modifications as we begin our seasons.

In order to have a safe and productive season all team members and coaches must adhere to these sport modifications at all times.

Transportation for School Athletics...

Shrewsbury High School will continue to offer transportation to all athletic contests as long as AA Transportation can accommodate our schedule. All guidelines regarding social distancing must be followed. JV2, JV1 and Varsity teams will no longer be able to travel on the same bus to events.

Masks or face coverings must be worn at all times and seating arrangements must be adhered to while traveling on school transportation.

Families must provide transportation to/from all practices and if a bus cannot be secured for a competition.

Midland-Wachusett League Protocols...

The Mid-Wach League Athletic Directors have created protocols for the following topics:

- General POD Guidelines
- Pre-Season Schedules and Tryouts
- Practice Sessions
- Competitions
- Game Day Management
- Athletic Trainer and Training Room
- Rosters and Sub-Varsity

The AD's have finalized these protocols and have made recommendations to the Mid-Wach League Principals for final approval. All Mid-Wach Principals approved these protocols.

Game Schedules

- All game schedules are posted at www.mwlma.org.
- Golf matches begin on 9/29.
- Cross Country meets on Wednesdays.
- Field Hockey games on Monday and Fridays (except for 10/15).
- Soccer games are on Tuesday and Thursdays.
- Rescheduled Cross Country, Soccer and Field Hockey contests due to weather or other reasons will be made up on Saturdays. Golf matches will be made up based on course availability.

Student Registration/Participation

- For Fall Season I we have seen a very strong turnout for Tryouts and expect full student rosters

Modified Competition Schedules: Fall I

- **Typical Year:**

- Golf- 18 matches
- Soccer- 18 games
- Field Hockey- 18 games
- X-Country- 6 meets + Invitationals.

- **Fall 1 2020 [Modified COVID]:**

- Golf- 8 matches
- Soccer- 8 games
- Field Hockey- 8 games
- X-Country- 4 meets + no Invitationals.

User Fees for 2020-21

- CURRENT:
 - Fee structure for the 2020-21 academic year will be \$325 per sport per student due to COVID-19. Free and Reduced Lunch is \$50.
 - Family Cap of \$975 or \$150
 - User fees are due within the first 2 weeks of the regular season. Due dates are posted on the website and sent in the pre-seasons emails.
 - Failure to pay by the established date will preclude the athlete from participating in any team practices and games.
- RECOMMENDED CHANGE:
 - Fee structure for the 2020-21 academic year will be \$275 per sport per student due to COVID-19. Free and Reduced Lunch is \$40.
 - Family Cap of \$825 or \$120
 - User fees are due within the first 2 weeks of the regular season. Due dates are posted on the website and sent in the pre-seasons emails.
 - Failure to pay by the established date will preclude the athlete from participating in any team practices and games.

User Fees for 2020-21

- A lower fee is recommended due to fewer competitions
- As part of the FY21 budget process, we had forecast and assumed a 25% reduction in Athletic Fee revenue [\$87,500 for the entire year] primarily due to an expected drop in student participation which has not happened for Fall Season 1
- The recommendation is a 15% reduction which would equate to approximately \$52,500 reduction in revenue for the entire year with full participation
- We also are forecasting decreased costs for transportation and officials due to fewer competitions

User Fees for 2020-21: What Are Other Mid-Wach League Districts Doing?

Reduced their Fee	Algonquin, Gardner
Under Discussion/No Decision Yet	Fitchburg, Groton-Dunstable, Hudson, Leominster, Murdock, Quabbin, Westboro
No Change	Maynard, North Middlesex

User Fees Recommendation

- Recommended vote:
 - *I move that the 2020-2021 Athletic Fee be set at \$275 per sport with a \$825 annual cap, and \$40 per sport with a \$120 annual cap for students eligible for Free or Reduced Price lunch, due to modified seasons and competition schedules per current Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association [MIAA] protocols based upon COVID conditions.*

Info about Shrewsbury Athletics

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