



MEMORANDUM

TO: BCSS MEMBER SCHOOL PRINCIPALS & ATHLETIC DIRECTORS
FROM: JORDAN ABNEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: PROVINCIAL HEALTH ORDER OF NOVEMBER 7, 2020
DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2020
CC: BCSS COMMISSIONERS, ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS, ZONE PRESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

BCSS has received numerous inquiries about the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) order for the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health Authorities issued verbally on November 7, 2020 and by written order on November 11, 2020. Language in the order confirms that it does not apply to school activities, both physical activity and sport-related.

At this point, BCSS remains at **BCSS Stage 2** of our Return to School Sport plan, meaning that there is no interschool competition. Intra-school sport activities may continue provided that students from different educational learning groups/cohorts remain strictly physically distanced at all times. Students from within the same educational learning group/cohort may participate as normal but are required to minimize contact.

It is clear by the actions of the PHO there is clear concern about the trajectory of virus transmission in these health authorities. We encourage schools to remain unwavering in their commitment to providing safe environments for our student-athletes. As usual, the decision to allow activities to proceed will remain at the discretion of the school and/or district.

BCSS has noted many times to our government partners throughout this pandemic that school sport provides more oversight, structure and therefore a more regulated environment than many in the community setting. In recognizing the role physical activity plays in the mental and physical wellbeing of students, schools have been entrusted to deliver this essential outlet. It is more important than ever we provide the physical channel for students in these coming weeks as many of their other activities will be halted while ensuring all health and safety standards as approved by your district are followed explicitly. While not mandatory, it may even be reasonable for schools in the noted health authorities to increase the protocols and procedures (the increased wearing of masks, adapting training to further limit contact within a cohort, additional attention to hand hygiene etc.)



It should be noted that the Public Health Agency of Canada recently updated its guidelines surrounding COVID-19, making mention of the risk from the transmission of aerosols. While there is more that scientists need to learn in this area, what it means for us in school sport, is we should pay attention to the ventilation in our indoor training spaces. Where possible, ensure doors are open and fresh air is being introduced to indoor training environments regularly.

This continues to be an unprecedented time and the future months ahead could be challenging, but I have received reports of schools being commended by health authorities for their approach and dedication to safety and their ability to support contact tracers because of the diligence and notations for each practice or training session. As a community, we must challenge ourselves to continue to lead in this way and demonstrate school sport is safe and critical to the students we serve.

Thank you to all of you who play a role in the delivery of school sport for your continued service and leadership. As always, should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the BCSS Office, we are here to support you. Be safe. Be well.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jordan Abney".

Jordan Abney
Executive Director
BC School Sports