

September 5, 2020

Re: Extra Curricular Athletic Activities Update Earl Marriott Secondary

Dear Parents, Student-Athletes and Coaches:

The Athletic Department at Earl Marriott would like to provide details on the landscape of School Sport across the Province, along with an update on the current status of athletic activities at our school.

At the present moment, all extra-curricular sport activities are still suspended by BC School Sports (BCSS). However, as per the latest update from BC School Sports in their [Return to School Sport Plan](#) released on September 2nd, the current school sports activities ban will be lifted on September 10th. Starting on September 10th, School Sport will enter **Stage 2: Intra-School activities within educational cohorts**. The conditions in STAGE 2 follow the guidelines released by the Ministry of Education and the Restart Education Plan and are very different from the community sport model.

Stage 2: Guidelines

1. Student-athletes from the same learning group / cohort can practice together under these conditions:
 - a. Reduced contact must be maintained;
 - b. Equipment can be shared within in cohort, but should be reduced;
 - c. Maximum number of people is 50 (including coaches, athletes, spectators);
 - d. It is recommended that student-athletes wear their masks before and after sessions (or when they are not in the training area)
 - e. School sports that allow for a mask to be worn during training are encouraged.

2. Two cohorts **can** practice on the same training area, as long as the number of participants does not exceed 50.
 - a. Cohorts practicing on the same training area **cannot** share equipment, unless it is properly sanitized before being used by another cohort;
 - b. **Cohorts cannot play each other or train together whatsoever (unless strict social distancing can be maintained within your sport);**
 - c. Where there is more than one cohort in an area, social distancing must be maintained and there must be a 'buffer zone' (2m or 6ft) between the cohorts;
 - d. This will be difficult as our athletes will be a part of a number of different cohorts.

3. Spectators should be limited / recommended to not be permitted at training sessions.
 - a. If a school chooses to allow spectators:
 - i. Should be a member of the student-athlete's immediate family bubble;
 - ii. Required to wear a mask;
 - iii. Practice social distancing;
 - iv. Remain in a designated area for spectators;
 - v. Spectators contribute to the 50 person maximum

4. Coaches:
 - a. If the coach is from the same cohort, they can interact with student-athletes as normal, but should still maintain reduced contact;
 - b. Community coaches or coaches from another cohort can be present in more than one cohort training session if they maintain social distance from the student-athletes and wear a mask at all times (at the discretion of the school administration).

The parameters around this announcement do not lift the ban on traditional inter-school athletics, as those activities will not be permitted on September 10th. Traditional tryouts, game-like activity within school teams, competition between schools and tournaments will not be allowed at this time. Inter-school competition will be re-evaluated in the mid-fall.

The guidelines in STAGE 2 present numerous challenges for School Sport, many challenges that do not currently exist with Community Sport. We would like our school community to be aware that the resumption of Athletics at Earl Marriott will not resume on September 10th as allowed by BC School Sports. There are safety considerations, organization logistics, planning and preparation that need to occur before Athletic activities happen.

The Athletic Department is working with our school administration and district staff to ensure the necessary educational learning pieces are in place first, before we look at the resumption of athletic activities. Together with the Coaching Staff, initial planning will take place during the first week of school to determine what Athletics will look like at Earl Marriott. The goal is to move thoughtfully and with student-athlete safety at the forefront of all planning. We believe having our students get their feet in the door for a period of time and understand the safety measures that are in place while their learning occurs is critical to ensuring the importance of their well-being is taken care of prior to Athletic events commencing.

BC School Sports has provided a return date for school sport extra-curricular activities, it is up to each district and school when that will occur. We will evaluate with our district and the school administration what programs we can safely offer and which activities may or may not be available, based on our level of comfort as it pertains to the safety of all involved. This will take time once

students are officially back in the school building. The safety of our students, staff and coaches remains our number one priority.

While each individual school will have safety protocols in place during learning periods for the start of school on September 10th, our Athletic Department will continue to work on safety protocols as they pertain to Athletics as we seek approval to begin School Sport at Earl Marriott. It is our intention as an Athletic Department to have a plan in place to offer fall training to our in-season sports first (Boys Soccer, Cross Country, Football, Volleyball and possibly Swimming). We are not going to put a date on this return to training, but our goal is to get students active and engaged with extra-curriculars as soon as it is safe to do so. We ask for your patience at this time, updates will be provided through the school and via social media, please take the time to follow us on Twitter: @athleticsEMS, Instagram: earlmarriottathletics or for further information check our Athletics website: <http://www.emsathletics.ca/>.

We understand the integral role school sports plays in a student's high school experience, not to mention their individual health and well-being. We also understand that there is a discrepancy between School Sport and those happening in the community. Please understand the challenges our schools face is far greater than community programming, however we are committed to providing the safest experience possible within the guidelines outlined by the Ministry of Education. Again, we are asking for patience at this time to allow for school and student learning to begin safely before the Athletic Department can offer athletic training and skill development. Some programs and coaches may send registration information to athletes for completion prior to the end of next week as part of our athletics training safe start up plan. For our incoming Grade 8 students we would like to welcome you to the Mariner Family, we will work to communicate opportunities in an appropriate time frame once school begins September 10th.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to reach out. In the mean time, enjoy the last weekend of summer.

Take care,



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