



DIAA 2020-2021 COVID-19 Return to School & Athletics Survey Summary Report

September 8, 2020

On September 3rd, 2020 an email request went out to Superintendents and School Leaders asking to complete a survey which collected information on school learning models and the upcoming sport seasons. Thirty-eight (38) school leaders submitted the form. Not all respondents answered every question.

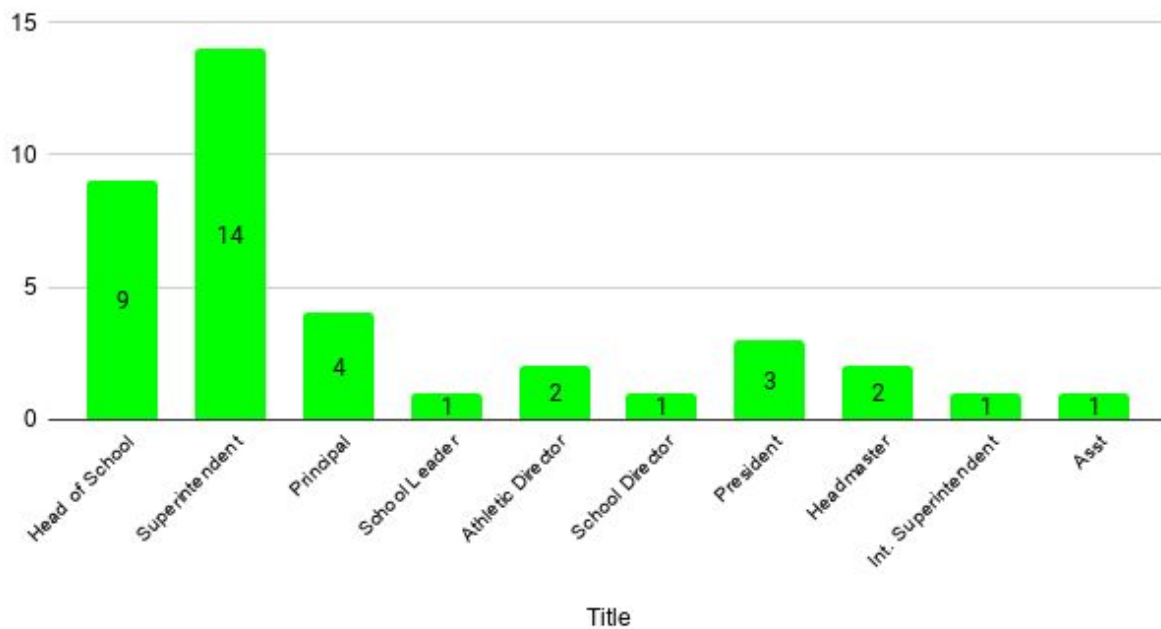
Summary of Survey Questions:

Page 3	Title of person completing the survey (Chart) updated 9/9
	Question 1: Date that school/district began student instruction for the school year (Chart) updated
Page 4	Question 2: Type of learning model that school/district will utilize to begin the school year (Chart) updated
Page 4	Question 3: If your school/district model is not in-person, what is the anticipated length of time your school will be hybrid (remote learning/in-person) or remote learning only? (Summary) updated
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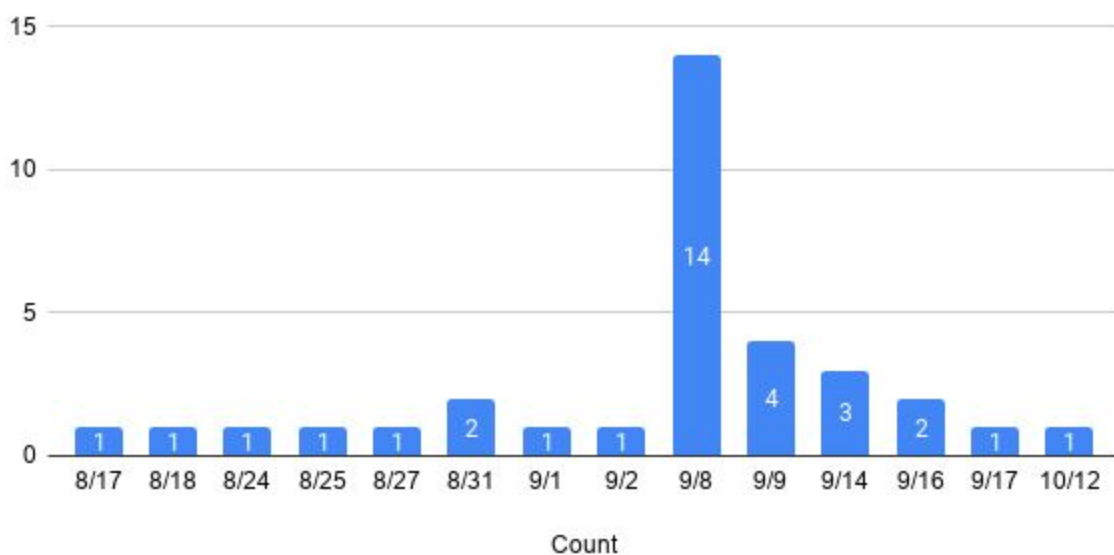
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Page 12	Question 10: If the decision to delay sport seasons was reconsidered by the DIAA Board to permit fall sports to start immediately, would your school/district be in support of fall sports starting? (Chart)
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Title of Person Completing Survey:

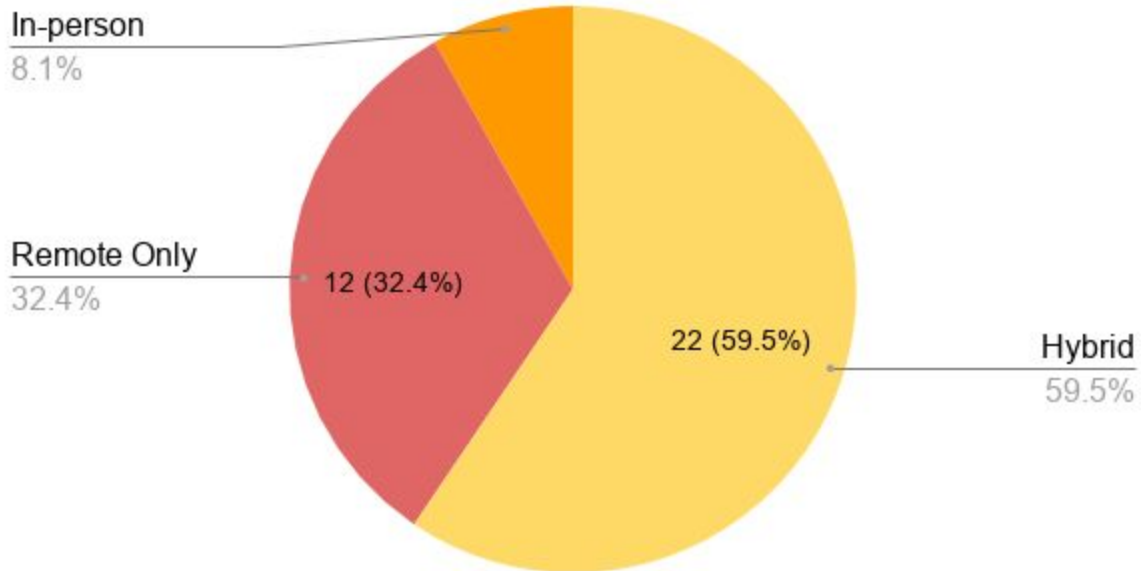


1. Please provide the date your school/district will begin student instruction for the 2020-2021 school year.



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Question 2: Which Delaware Department of Education learning model will your school/district utilize to begin the 2020-2021 school year?



3. If your school/district model is not in-person, what is the anticipated length of time your school will be hybrid (remote learning/in-person) or remote learning only?

September	October	November	December	2021
Roll-in of students across district based on student needs and services beginning September 21	October 14	November 9	through December 2020	Until 1/4/2021
	Remote learning until Oct 5th (at the earliest); hybrid learning until at least Jan 1st		rolling return till December	January 29, 2021
	until beginning of October, but could continue until january in full remote depending on COVID related metrics			
	Through at least October 10			

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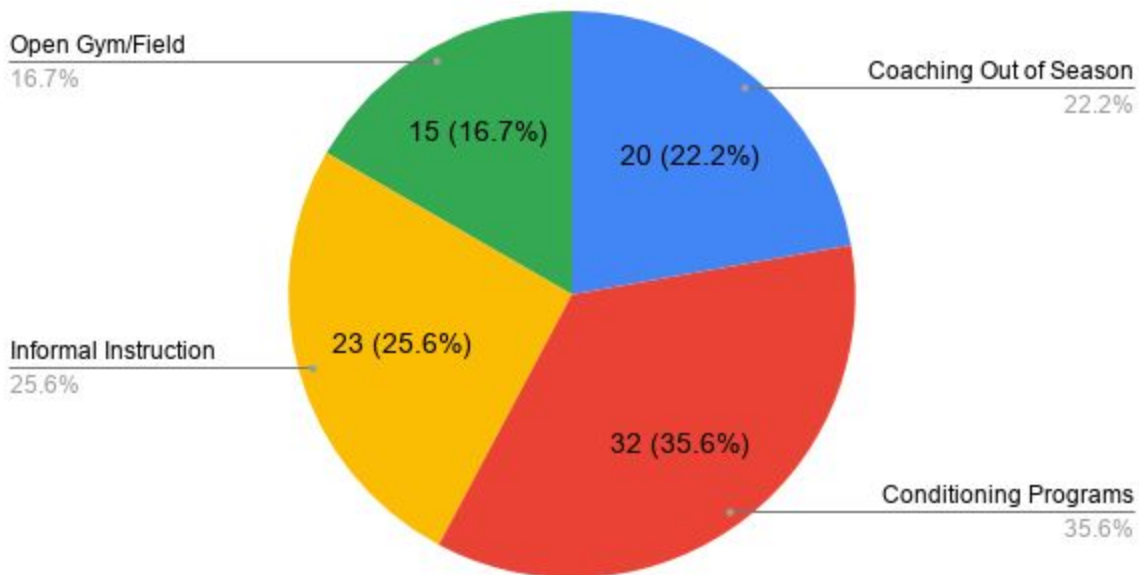
Question 3, other replies:		
The majority are in person. 5% opted remote learning.		
Depends on rate of infection in school. There is no guarantee we will be 100% in-person this year.		
We offer a virtual option to students who wish to use it.		
Until review of situation concerning gatherings are allowed. Supposed to be re-evaluated in 6 weeks		
We are looking to bring students in at some point during the 1st semester		
Undetermined		
Unclear, dependent upon state guidelines and continued cases of COVID19		
The Diocese of Wilmington will evaluate in mid-Oct. and determine if hybrid learning will continue or be modified.		
Remote until October 19th Hybrid until guidance changes from Department of Education		
6 weeks		
TBD - dependent on data - 2 schools replied this. .		
Until advised otherwise by Governor and/or CDC		
We would return entirely to in-person when we feel the guidelines can be met without compromising student and staff health and safety.		
Virtual 1st Quarter; Hybrid 2nd Quarter		
We are hybrid.		

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4. Will your school/district allow your student-athletes to participate in DIAA approved athletic activities?

Yes	25/38
Yes, When our board feels it is appropriate and safe to do so. Clear and specific guidelines should be made available to players, spectators, officials and coaches.	
Yes, as long as we can meet the guidelines of DPH and feel we can keep our students safe.	
No	3/38
Other replies:	7/38
Depends ability to facilitate safety measures and equity	
Depends on DIAA decision, State Board approval and DPH guidance	
not while we are remote; unsure about ramifications of having athletics while we are hybrid, as that will exacerbate socio-economic differences	
Practice under strict health protocols	
That should be a decision by the Governor	
We are an independent school	
We would be willing based on the overall health of the school community and our infection rates.	
yes, but we may make decisions on schools we compete against based on how schools are testing students	

Which approved athletic activities will your school/district allow during the extended coaching out of season period starting 8/14?



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Other responses to the question, “Which approved athletic activities will your school/district allow during the extended coaching out of season period starting 8/14?”

Open Gym/Field will be contingent upon DPH approval,
work out programs following DPH and DIAA guidelines
You should tell us that answer
None while we are remote; unsure about ramifications of having athletics while we are hybrid as that will exacerbate socio-economic differences

6. When will these approved athletic activities begin?
8/19
9/7
9/8
9/9, 9/9
9/14, 9/14
9/16
9/21
9/28
Already in progress
ASAP
Further guidance. We are hampered by transportation so when DIAA commits to having a season, we will commit to more transportation.
Have started
in progress
Once submitted plans have been approved. We began some activities per the original Emergency reg 1010.
Outdoor has begun. Indoor: began the 18th and have been paused now pending approval of our plans.
Scheduled for mid-September.
September
September 8 for conditioning and informal instruction - Fall Sports Only; August 31 allowed coaching out of season for all sports, i.e. club teams
They are continuing.
They are underway.
They've started. Looking at the other option now
Upon approval from DIAA- when allowed.

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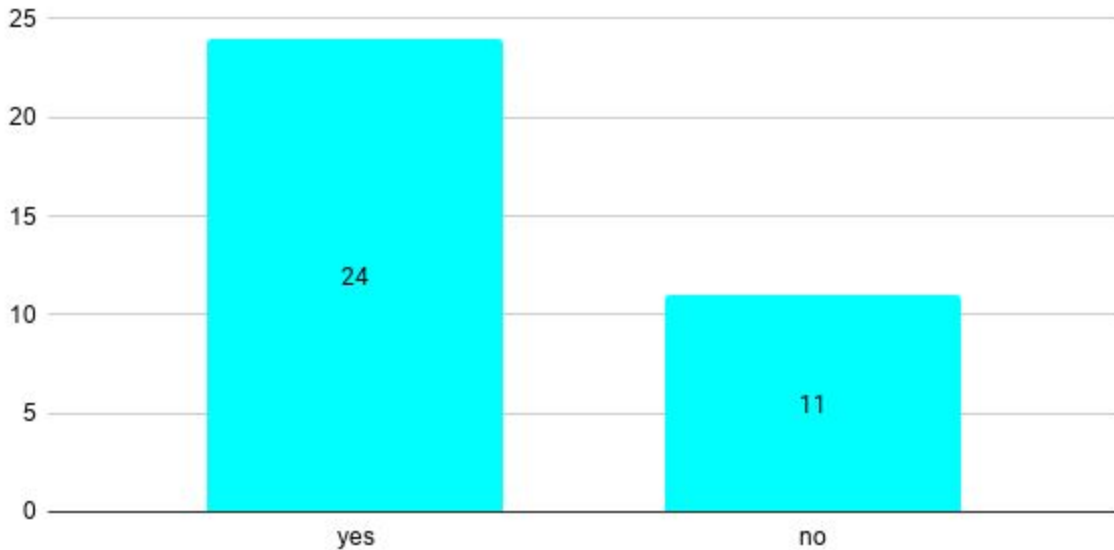
7. Current amended Regulation 1010 adopted on August 14, 2020 delays the start of sport seasons until December. Do you still support the decision to delay the start of sport seasons until December?

Yes	No	Other
If DPH allows sports to be played, then we would play.	I support delaying the opening until we have more data regarding how school openings are impacting infection rates in Delaware. We should not start immediately but build slowly and collect as much data as we can in the process. That said, we would not need to wait until December to accomplish this. We need 3-4 weeks to observe trends after schools open. I would be looking to a possible mid-October opening based on what we learn.	I want students to be safe
If there remains no option to start sooner, then yes.	No - 2 Replies	We supported that in August because DPH said we could not play all sports. That guidance has since changed. We will follow the guidance.
Originally, yes. Now that DPH has approved other sports based on a submission of how students can return to play safely, this should be reevaluated.	No, we think that we can provide a safe experience on campus; a delayed start would be our preference.	We would prefer to play earlier if possible.
We are most prepared for this scenario (beginning in December) from the August decision; however, our hope is that all students have the opportunity to participate in their chosen sport(s) during the school year. We are in favor of the scenario that provides the best chance for this to occur from the health and safety recommendations of DPH and SMAC.	No. Would like to reconsider and move it up to allow for a fall season if things can be put together and all safety measures are implemented.	Would prefer earlier
Yes - 16 replies		
Yes, but dependent on changes to DIAA decision, State Board approval and DPH guidance		
Yes, but would prefer a full cancellation of fall season and allow winter/spring to have complete		

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seasons		
Yes, if that is the only option.		
Yes, unless clear parameters are in place for a safe return earlier.		
<p>The delayed start of sport seasons until December will provide the time needed to prepare for the newly released sporting guidance and DPH parameters.</p> <p>I am in support of the seasons beginning in the Fall, however I respect and support the decisions that are made by the DIAA board.</p> <p>We supported the decision to delay the start of sports seasons until December. Have not seen details of other plans regarding district expectations, protocols, etc, to determine if other plan or plans are possible.</p> <p>I support the decision but wouldn't have an issue if this were moved up due to the recent announcement by the Governor. We will follow the direction of DIAA on this either way.</p>		

Question 8: Would you recommend state championships with the delayed December sports season model?



9. Please share any additional comments.

We would like to uphold the August 14 decision

Even if the state tournament is all we do in sports, I don't see why we wouldn't try this. MLB and NBA and NHL are accomplishing this with shortened seasons.

I am not in favor of competitions in any form until we are 100% back in school face to face

I believe that whatever model is adopted, it must be equitable for all the sports and seasons.

I feel strongly that we should be protecting public health at this time .

In regard to question 8, the highest priority should be on allowing all student-athletes to have as many competition dates and experiences as possible within a particular season. State championships should be secondary to this, but we are ok with modified state tournaments being held if a good number of competitions can be scheduled within seasons.

Students need to be safe. School is first about academics then all else. If the Governor does not make the call. You should. Not each school or school district.

The championship would have an asterisk next to it to indicate the different season, etc.

There is the need to balance academics and equity of all students participating in athletics who are learning in this new hybrid/virtual environment.

Timely information on any changes are requested in a timely manner so issues can be addressed with school programs.

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We have made changes to our preparations for sports that accommodate the previously approved schedule.

We may have to modify state tournament play to reduce risk for students.

We want our athletes to be able to play. Our desire to delay the season was to get our kids into the actual school building with a rolling return with minimal issues and THEN invite competition. We would use the ability to work with our kids on campus in alternative sports activities noted above as the proving ground that we can do this and do it well.

We would like to play conference only to allow for easier transportation issues.

The Athletic Department and Athletic Trainer need to develop a plan to specifically address all of the newly released accommodations, order the needed supplies based upon the state schedule of teams allowed to play in each season, and solicit DPH and DIAA responses to the variety of health and safety questions regarding the accommodations. Since our district is virtual for the 1st Quarter and hybrid for the 2nd Quarter, state guidelines need to be established to define student attendance and student athletic participation eligibility that is consistent across all districts to enable a fair and equitable system.

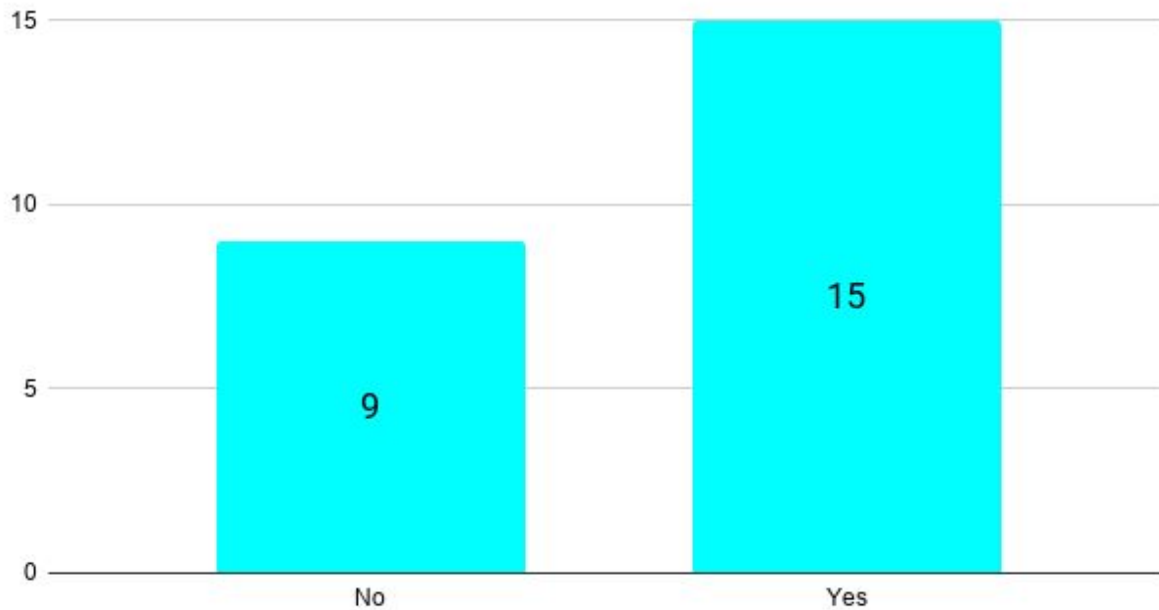
most important to us is giving all students an opportunity to play as many competitions as possible

I believe that students should not be penalized and if we sanction a season they should be able to play for a championship

In the least restrictive stage, Stage 3, Reg. 1010 4.5.6 specifically states Play Days and Tournaments events are not permitted. The State Championship is a tournament.

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10. If the decision to delay sport seasons was reconsidered by the DIAA Board to permit fall sports to start immediately, would your school/district be in support of fall sports starting?



Comment: In regard to question 10 (above), our Board will need to approve as our schools are beginning the school year fully remote. The recommendation from district staff would be to allow student-athletes to participate in athletics this fall if DIAA determines that the fall sports season will begin in September or October.

11. What would be your 1st, 2nd, & 3rd date preference to start permissible fall sports?			
Date	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference
9/21	7	3	29
9/28	5	28	6
10/5	20	2	16

11a. Please share additional date preferences if not listed to start permissible fall sports.
After the winter season as we voted on
December, as per the current plan
Dependent on ability to arrange transportation for students on remote days
I prefer we do not start athletic competitions
I suggest with stick with the current plan. 80% of the schools in the state are not opening for class. To bring kids in for sports is crazy. What a mixed message for kids and families. It is not safe to be here to learn - but come up to play, sweat, breath on strangers? Not smart - and that's from a school opening. Your board worked hard to come up with a prudent solution. Stick with your plan. The governor's message was not helpful, in my opinion. Schools, districts, administrators - have more than enough on our plates right now trying to run school remotely and via hybrid.
No other dates recommendations
Not so much the date, but allowing time for teams to make sure they can get the appropriate PPE. Also, allow for some time for conditioning.
October 12 would give some time for preparation and also give a full winter and spring sports seasons.
October 12, 19, 26
October 15 if safe
October 19th for start of season
We do not support the delay or these dates
We would like sports to begin in December as voted on previously.
When it is safe

12. If fall sports would start on 9/21, 9/28 or 10/5, will your school/district allow your student-athletes to participate in DIAA approved athletic activities?	
Yes	17
No	5
Other replies:	
Yes, according to guidance and safety standards at that time.	
Our school's Board of Education will need to approve as our schools are beginning the school year fully remote. The recommendation from district staff would be to allow student-athletes to participate in athletics this fall if DIAA determines that the fall sports season will begin in September or October.	
This would be contingent upon our local board approval. Clear and specific return to play criteria would need to be available.	
will reconsider given variables, but leaning toward no to focus on academics	
When it is safe.	
Probably not	
I am in support of figuring out how to have athletics for our students. Starting immediately is going to be very difficult	

13. If fall sports would be approved to start 9/21, 9/28 or 10/5, what would be potential challenges your school/district would encounter to accommodate fall sports starting immediately?

1. Acquiring and potentially paying for the new approved PPE for the sport; 2. Conditioning of athletes. We do not want to risk injury; 3. Organizing processes & procedures from practice to eventually games; 4. Transportation for our student athletes. Since we are remote this will be an issue. 5.

About one-third of our students have chosen full remote learning. I believe the challenge of starting fall sports would be the logistics involved of getting those students to practices. I believe that another problem would be the amount of staff needed to follow all recommended guidelines ex: trainers and health personnel.

As long as we are remote, we will not participate in sports

COVID-19 concerns

Currently, no outsiders are allowed in the building according to the diocesan school reopening plan. Other challenges are finding an approved field to practice and play on with such short notice. Transportation would have to be arranged. Locker rooms are currently closed to all according to the diocesan school reopening plan.

Equity issues surrounding students who would then be unable to participate on days when they were not being educated in the building

Equity, more infections and exposures to manage

Foolish play. As colleges are sending their students home in droves - it is just too darn soon to be playing sports.

Having been open at that point for almost a month, we could consider starting as early as 9/21. I think the October date is better for reasons outlined above.

logistics, transportation, safety protocol management, etc

maintaining social distancing guidelines, understanding needs for transportation, especially for those families that may not have the ability to travel to and from campus on remote days.

Meeting all of the guidance and safety requirements, specifically for indoor activities. Transportation will also be an issue.

No challenges - 4 member schools replied

operational costs, sanitation protocol, EQUITY, optics of students not in school, pressure on district for other activities

Our full student body (all boarding) does not arrive until early October .

Proper conditioning of athletes to prevent injury.

Protective equipment procurement and costs; additional/double transportation costs; staffing, space limitations with regard to locker room facilities, and spectator management/crowd

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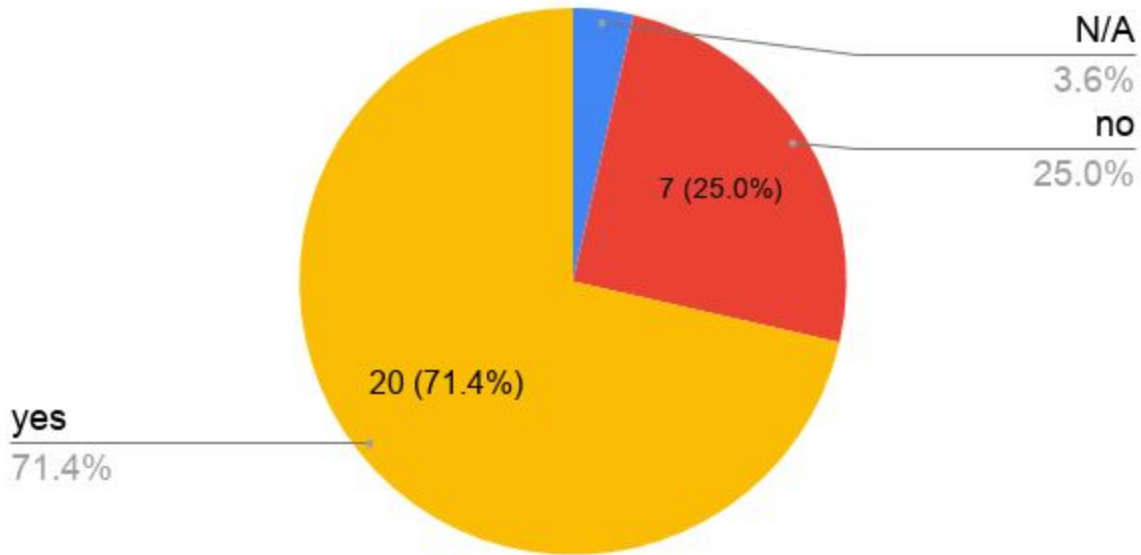
control.
Sport guidelines are inconsistent with guidelines for returning to school. Why temp check for athletes? Limiting 1 fan will be an issue. Any fan control will be an issue for us.
student transportation on days they are not in-person
Students beginning the school year remotely; transportation of students to practices; bus transportation to events; possibly numbers of students who can participate - this is an equity concern; health and safety related expenses; ensuring all the health and safety guidance and protocols are followed
The completion and collection of student physicals, ordering/receiving the needed supplies and equipment, budgetary increases for transportation and sanitation needs, staffing needs of medical personnel (Athletic Trainer) to accommodate and monitor the newly released and required DPH guidelines, and the restriction of on-site access for anyone (coaches and players) required to quarantine by DPH - fluidly and potentially intermittently throughout the seasons.
transportation but we'll figure it out
transportation to practice, increased transportation & equipment costs
Transportation to/from practices and competitions; cleaning supplies and protocols; ensure there are enough coaches; instituting testing protocols; addressing the sub varsity level teams
Transportation, but we have already developed a plan. Just waiting for state approval.
Transportation, logistics associated with the new criteria to play and criticism that sports can begin - yet schools are not fully open to students.
Travel to other schools; scheduling challenges
We will be in a remote learning mode. Think of what challenges that will have.

14. If fall sports would be approved to start 9/21, 9/28 or 10/5, will your school/district be able to meet the requirements to conduct sports per Regulation 1010?
Yes - 18 member schools
No - 4 member schools
Maybe. Still working through them. It will be difficult.
unsure
Capacity limitations will force restrictions on all levels of Varsity, JV, and Middle School Sports.
Dependent on funding, logistics, ability to obtain equipment/PPE on time
I believe for the most part. What we would need to figure out is something like 4.5.4.6.1 which closes locker rooms.
I believe we could, however I am not sure if we have the personnel to support all the screening and possible isolation needs.
Is it safe by those dates?
we're in favor of the original mandate

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15. What is your recommendation for competition?
Conference only schedule - 10 member school replies
In state travel only - 8 member schools
Conference only schedule, In state travel only - 3 member schools
A competition schedule with limited travel distance and time between competing schools
Allow out of state travel
Allow out of state travel, Our priority - both in state and out of state - is playing schools that have similarly rigorous guidelines for operation during and after the school day. We want to play, but if we play in state or out of state I need to know the school is taking this challenge seriously and committed to doing this the right way.
Allow out of state travel, Out of state travel with in state competition as well.
as determined by upholding August 14 decision
In state travel only, I would prefer conference only, but feel this would be a difficult restriction for private schools.
No competition until we are back in school
When schools go back live. All of them. Then let's have live athletics.
Conference only schedule, In state travel only, Depending on number of games allowed; we would have to schedule other teams outside the conference.

Would you recommend state championships for fall sports if there is a reduced schedule?



17. Please share any additional comments.

God Bless you all. This is a mess. Stick with your plan. It is prudent and safe - and still gets kids active and playing, at some level. This push to start sports is about loud parents. Bad message to open up now. And IF we start sports - all the districts should open for school.

I am not pleased that the Governor "punted" the responsibility of the lives of all Delaware scholar-athletes to DIAA in an election year. No matter the decision, we will be held responsible for the athletes who get sick, expose others in their households, etc, even if their parents fill out waivers. I am completely uncomfortable about making this decision.

I believe the DIAA got it right with their original decision to start Winter sports in December, Fall sports in February and Spring sports in April.

I don't think a well-considered decision should be changed based on parent pressure - if the decision was the right one when it was originally made, then it remains the right decision.

I support the start of Fall sports on 9/21 but again will support whatever decision the DIAA board makes.

Lets starting taking steps forward. A good plan starting today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow.

Please uphold the August 14 decision for the sake of our kids.

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Safety first. Make the decision. Will you sign off on the liability? If we are not back until January? How can we have sports? Why are sports now overtaking the academic studies? Let's get our priorities safe. The pros are having a tough time. College athletics is having a tough time. So, high schools are going to do a better job and keep the virus off high school team? If a high school athlete dies from the virus... is that ok?

Starting the sports season on 9/21 or 9/28 may rush the process and may make schools less prepared to follow all protocols. There may also be increase in probability for injuries due to short amount of time to prepare for competitions.

Strongly against athletic competitions until we are back in school.

Thank you for your efforts during these difficult times.

The current guidelines make it difficult for sports to happen. Guidelines for sports should match the guidelines for returning to school.

There are too many unanswered questions and lack of specific state guidance, in advance, to abruptly change the state DIAA Plan approved over a month ago in DE. Utilizing the next three months to develop an Athletic Plan in alignment with the introduction of virtual groups of students being phased into the facility in a hybrid model will allow for a more-informed decision about how to safely and effectively restart athletic competition. Consistency of playing sports while simultaneously bringing students in the facility for instruction should coincide synchronously. From transportation school bus seating restrictions to food service seating restrictions to classroom instructional capacity restrictions, athletics needs to transition into a re-start in alignment with the academic re-opening of facilities to face-to-face instruction.

Transportation of teams would be an issue unless the bus configuration is amended.

Understanding this survey is about athletics and we fully recognize the emotional and physical toll this may be taking on our students, we are in favor of safely returning to play. We also simultaneously are looking to bring our students back in a hybrid setting for in-person learning.

We need time for the following: (1) ask DPH for indoor facility use, including needs for inclement weather, (2) create clear student athlete protocols, (3) allow students to get back into the groove of in school learning before increasing exposure risk

There are too many unanswered questions and lack of specific state guidance, in advance, to abruptly change the state DIAA Plan approved over a month ago in DE. Utilizing the next three months to develop an Athletic Plan in alignment with the introduction of virtual groups of students being phased into the facility in a hybrid model will allow for a more-informed decision about how to safely and effectively restart athletic competition. Consistency of playing sports while simultaneously bringing students in the facility for instruction should coincide synchronously. From transportation school bus seating restrictions to food service seating restrictions to classroom instructional capacity restrictions, athletics needs to transition into a re-start in alignment with the academic re-opening of facilities to face-to-face instruction.

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I support the start of Fall sports on 9/21 but again will support whatever decision the DIAA board makes.

As we look to put together a sports schedule for the entire year, let's not forget that Spring athletes lost an entire season last year. Rather than making sure that the allotment of times for seasons are equal this year, let's make sure that we give the spring sports a complete season. If that means extending that season into the summer I believe that we should do that this year.

The decision has been made. Let's move forward and not succumb to pressure for particular sports that may be coming from other areas.

Fully supportive of athletics when we are in Phase 3

DPH, SMAC and the Governor believe Fall sports can be played, so the greatest challenge is logistics and the safety concerns for schools. If athletic directors and coaches can handle the additional burden of making sure that the health and safety guidelines are followed then I would support moving forward.

From a BSD Board of Education Member ...

"I just want to clarify, this is not a decision which a local school board has authority or input, it is the State Board of Education that approves the decision of DIAA. Superintendents are employed by their local school board and I understand that the DIAA will be surveying the Superintendents for their input. However, the input given by the Superintendents will be based on their ability to meet the guidelines and restrictions set by the Governor in the DE School Reopening Plan. Once the DIAA makes a decision, it will go to the State Board of Education for approval. This is not your local school board but a board comprised of individuals from across the state, appointed by the Governor to oversee the Dept. of Education and Secretary of Education.

My hope is that the Governor will change his restrictions in the school reopening plan to make it possible for our Districts to allow our kids to participate in sports."

Providing the information sought in this survey without knowledge of the specific restrictions and/or allowances that will be in play for the high contact sports (i.e. football, wrestling) is asking Superintendents and districts to make a blind, uninformed commitment. A "sign here first, details later" mentality that less no defensible position for either side of the decision being made.