



March 12, 2020

To: Heads of School and Athletic Administrators

From: Richard H. Kemper, Jr, CMAA, Executive Director

Subject: Information and Resources on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

With the current news of confirmed cases of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Virginia, we have started to receive questions from some schools about the potential impact on VISAA regular and postseason competition. In addition, we are aware of a false communication sent to at least one coach at a VISAA member school that was picked up by various media outlets. The purpose of this memorandum is to address the questions we have received and to provide practical information and guidelines to our member institutions to help keep participants, personnel, and spectators safe and informed.

We are monitoring and following guidance from the Virginia Council for Private Education ([www.vcpe.org](http://www.vcpe.org)) as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)). We encourage VISAA member schools to do the same and to make sure school communities understands the symptoms of COVID-19:

- fever
- cough
- respiratory symptoms
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

### **Regular Season and Postseason Competition**

On March 11, a coach at one of our VISAA member schools received a statement from a “Marvin Bailey,” who represented himself as the “Director” of the VISAA, announcing the cancellation of all spring state competitions and condemning any school that continued to hold regular season competitions. **This statement was not from the VISAA. At this point, we have not canceled any VISAA postseason competition.** While our continued monitoring of the situation may result in adjustments to the state championship events we sanction, any such action would be communicated prominently on our web site ([www.visaa.org](http://www.visaa.org)) and official social media streams, distributed directly to all heads and athletic directors of our VISAA member schools, and would be signed by me in my capacity as the VISAA Executive Director.

Media inquiries about the authenticity of any such future statements or any matter currently affecting VISAA should be sent to me.

### **Key Planning Considerations for Athletic Events**

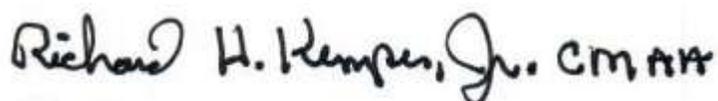
These are practices that a school should consider generally and when preparing to host an athletic event:

- Follow your school’s Emergency Operation Plan (EOP).
- Communicate with opponents any restrictions your school has placed on hosting an athletic event.
- Emphasize that participants, staff, and spectators should stay away from the event if they feel unwell (have a fever and cough).

- Emphasize that all frequently touched surfaces throughout the venue are properly cleaned prior to the event with approved disinfectants.
- Have cleaning supplies available for use during the event.
- Provide easily accessible soap and water or 60% alcohol hand-sanitizers and tissues in all venue common areas and consider having additional hand-sanitizer stations available to promote proper hand hygiene.
- Promote appropriate respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene practices prior to and during the event through signage and public address announcements.

Communication with all parties involved in athletic competition is key to reducing the virus's spread. Consider following these guidelines:

- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cough into your elbow.
- Move away from someone coughing as fast as you can.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Use your own water bottle. Do not touch the bottle with your mouth when taking a drink. Disinfect the bottle after each practice and game.
- Avoid supplying visiting teams water coolers or water bottles.
- Consider using cups instead of water bottles and discard the cup after use.
- Avoid personal contact with people. The shaking of hands after a game should be avoided. Develop a practice to be used by your teams and communicate that with your opponents. (e.g. a wave, "good game," touch elbows, hand over heart).
- Have hand sanitizer available on team benches.
- Have your athletic trainer develop "Best Practices" for your teams and post those in all areas of athletic facilities.
- Communicate your "Best Practices" to your school community.



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Executive Director

Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association