



March 8, 2021

Rhonda Blandford-Green, Commissioner
Colorado High School Activities Association
14855 E. 2nd Street
Aurora, CO 80011

RE: Required Testing at Wrestling State Championships

Dear Commissioner Blandford-Green:

As we discussed, CDPHE has modified CHSAA's Season B variance to require pre-event testing for the 2021 Colorado state wrestling championship, to be held in Pueblo, Colorado, on March 11 - 13. CDPHE will provide rapid-molecular testing onsite in the Colorado Building at the Colorado State Fairgrounds during all three days. Students may also seek testing prior to coming to the event, and we will provide information about free testing sites in our correspondence to coaches and parents. Students must be tested within 72 hours of their competition and have a negative test result in order to participate.

As you know, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has described the characteristics of [sporting events](#) that lead to increased risk of SARS-Co-V2 viral spread, including indoor events with an inability to wear a mask, inability to be physically distanced while competing, coupled with the increased risk of travel between communities. The CDC further describes the [principles for assessing the risk](#) of events for COVID-19 spread, stating that larger and longer events, and events that take place during higher levels of community transmission, also elevate risk. Colorado is still experiencing community spread of COVID-19 throughout the state.

CDPHE will be publishing a report this week that shows an increased risk of infection for athletes participating in sanctioned wrestling events. Outbreaks associated with school-sponsored and club wrestling, where masks are not worn in competition, are currently growing. As of 3/3/2021, 15 outbreaks associated with wrestling have been reported to CDPHE, with 61 documented cases of COVID-19 that are attributed to those outbreaks. At least nine additional outbreaks in schools associated with wrestling have been reported. Even when there are a relatively small number of COVID-19 cases among wrestlers, the impact can be large. In one wrestling outbreak, 9 cases resulted in 131 close contacts being quarantined and 389 students moving to remote-learning.

Additionally, variants of COVID-19 have been identified in Colorado, including among youth sports teams and events. Though no variant COVID-19 has been identified among wrestlers,

the amount of variant COVID-19 in Colorado is increasing and it is possible that variant COVID-19 is being transmitted undetected among athletes.

CDPHE wants to assure that testing is as convenient as possible. We are attaching instructions for coaches and parents that describe the process for students to get a rapid test the day of competition or to get a test from a free community testing site or their health care provider within 72 hours of their competition. Please send these instructions to coaches so they may quickly get them to parents.

As always, CDPHE is ready to support student participation in extracurricular activities in a safe and meaningful way. Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Hunsaker Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment