

For Immediate Release

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Ripon Board of Education Determines Fall Sports Schedules

Ripon - Ripon Area School District (RASD) Board of Education met to review the schedule for Ripon High School (RHS) fall sports at a special meeting held on Wednesday, August 19. The Board voted to use the traditional WIAA Fall Sports Schedule for low-risk sports—Girls Tennis and Cross Country. The Board voted to utilize the [recently announced Alternate WIAA Schedule](#) for high-risk sports—Football, Boys Soccer, and Volleyball which means athletes will compete in these sports in the spring.

The WIAA Board of Control approved the Alternate Schedule at their meeting on Friday, August 14. The inclusion of the one-year alternative season reduced the length of all sports seasons during the 2020-2021 school year. The WIAA required schools to initially declare their plan to participate in either the traditional fall season or the alternate fall season in the spring by Sept. 1. The Board of Education reviewed the alternate schedule at their regular meeting on August 17 and then scheduled a special meeting for August 19 to review Ripon's options and make a determination.

On July 23, the WIAA voted to push the start date for football, soccer, and volleyball back to September 7. This means these teams had not yet started practicing for the 2020 season. The low-risk sports, including Girls Tennis and Cross Country, started practice on August 17, the first allowable date.

The Board of Education reviewed the alternate schedule for each fall sport offered in Ripon. Considerations were given to which sports require athletes to have close contact with other athletes during practice and competitions. The Board reviewed the impact an outbreak could have on all of the other students and staff in the district, including those who choose not to play sports.

Superintendent Mary Whitrock shared, "while the Board acknowledged the impact their decision would have on athletes, they discussed the primary purpose of the district is to provide academics for all students 4K-12. They note the Board's importance in creating an environment that ensures as much face-to-face instruction for students this year. Adopting the alternative schedule for high-risk sports teams

reduces the potential risk of an outbreak and increases the district's ability to protect students, staff, and the community at-large. The Board felt delaying the start of these high-risk sports until later in the school year would allow experts to learn more about the virus."

During their meeting, the Board discussed the increased outbreak in the area and Fond du Lac County Health Department's concern with controlling the spread of the virus between athletes playing high-risk sports at this point in time. They also noted that though Ripon was one of the first districts in the East Central Conference (ECC) to use the alternative spring schedule, it is not the first district in the state to use the option. The Board shared their expectation that Ripon teams would follow the safety guidelines in place by the WIAA.

Any comments or questions, please contact Dr. Mary Whitrock at (920) 748-4600.

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