



COUNTY OF POLK
Health Department
www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health

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November 18, 2020

Dear Tom Keating, Executive Director, Iowa High School Athletic Association; Jean Berger, Executive Director, Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union,

Over the last couple of weeks, Polk County has seen an alarming number of positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. We need your help reducing the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Our positivity rate is over 20%. The situation is very real, urgent and not slowing down any time soon without significant mitigation efforts. We need to change the trajectory of this disease and the impact we are seeing in our community, including overwhelmed hospitals and staff. We are asking you to *temporarily* suspend youth extracurricular activities, including high school athletics, until we have this current surge under control.

Any time we bring together people for an extended period of time, we greatly increase the chance of COVID-19 spreading. This includes extracurricular activities and high school sports. We put our youth, their families, and our communities at risk when we continue these activities during uncontrolled community spread of COVID-19, such as we are currently experiencing.

We know how important sports and other activities are to students, athletes, coaches, schools and families and that they create lifetime memories, bonding experiences and community unity. However, we cannot have any of that if the spread of COVID-19 continues unchecked. We implore you to temporarily suspend and postpone the winter sports season until the current surge is mitigated and viral transmission is reduced. It will take all of us, working together, to get this virus under control. We are asking you to join us in this fight and reduce community spread in Polk County and the State of Iowa. Please consider our urgent plea for your help.

Sincerely,

Helen Eddy, RPh, MBA
Polk County Health Department Director