



IESA Reverses Course, Will Conduct Fall Sports Seasons In Baseball, Softball, Golf And Cross Country

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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BLOOMINGTON - The Illinois Elementary School Association, which is the governing body for junior high and middle school sports in the state, has officially reversed course and will conduct a fall season and limited state tournament series in four sports this fall after having previously cancelled the seasons because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The organization's Board of Directors voted on Friday to conduct the seasons in baseball, softball, boys and girls golf and boys and girls cross country, after a report from the office of Governor J.B. Pritzker placed those four sports in a low-risk category for physical contact and other risk factors. The Board had previously voted on July 23 to cancel the entire fall season because of the pandemic.

The reversal will allow member schools to conduct regular-season games and meets in the four sports of the fall season, and also allows the IESA to conduct both regional and sectional state tournaments. Preseason practices in baseball, softball and cross country can start on Monday, with the first games allowed to be played Aug. 15.

It will be a very limited regular season, with a golf sectional tournament scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 9. Only the baseball and softball regionals will be played, and are set for the week of Sept. 21, and cross country sectionals will be scheduled for the week of Oct. 10-17. The state tournaments in each sport will not be held this year.

The Board also approved a plan for modified seasons in other sports and activities, much like the seasons adopted by the Illinois High School Association Board on July 29. The plan that was passed by the IESA Board gives member schools, teams, athletes,

parents, administrators and officials how those seasons will be conducted this school year, and is also much like the IHSA plan, in that it's very fluid and can change at any time, depending on how circumstances develop as the year progresses.

"It is important to remember that the 2020-21 school year is not going to be the same as previous school years," the IESA Board said in its statement that announced the reversal. "We are hopeful that the remainder of the sports and activities will be held. Currently, the majority of those activities have been deemed as medium or high risk. The Board felt that the plan they approved provides direction and a blueprint should we be able to move forward."

For more information on the plan for the 2020-21 school year and on the fall sporting season, please log onto the IESA website, www.iesa.org.