



*The following statement is being issued jointly by the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, the Greater Essex County District School Board, Conseil scolaire catholique Providence, Conseil scolaire Viamonde and the Windsor Essex County Secondary Schools Athletic Association.*

(Windsor, Ontario, Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021) - The publicly funded school boards of Windsor-Essex have agreed to follow the recommendations of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and will enact procedures to limit participation in extracurricular activities for only those students, staff, officials and volunteers who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

We believe that extracurriculars are very important for the physical and mental health of our students, however, we also believe they can only proceed in a way that will reduce the risk of further spread of COVID-19 amongst our students and staff; vaccination is the best way to reduce that likelihood.

Once school boards have formalized their procedures, they will work together with the Windsor and Essex County Secondary Schools Athletic Association (WECSSAA) on determining which sports may be able to proceed based on the amount of time in the season, on the number of students who would be eligible to participate, and the number of coaches who will be available. A timeline for return to play will vary depending on all of these factors.

Elementary students in Grade 7 & 8 who are fully vaccinated will also be able to participate in extracurricular activities, under this procedure.

Each school board will also develop its own internal method for students, staff, officials and volunteers to provide proof of their full vaccination status before they can be approved as eligible for participation.

To further support a safe return to extracurricular activities, WECSSAA and its member boards have decided to play regionally among schools in Windsor and Essex County with the primary

focus on re-engaging our students in athletics. High schools will not participate in SWOSSAA and OFSAA competition, but will follow return to play protocols of each organization, including those of the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association.

The main focus will be on skill development and inter school play, within WECSSAA member boards that support extracurriculars of fully vaccinated students. Currently, some athletic associations have not mandated the same public health standards regarding vaccination of student-athletes, volunteers and officials. Competing with other school boards, and travelling to other locations in Ontario does not support safe regional play at this time.

This decision is aligned with the guidance that has been received from the Windsor Essex County Health Unit.

This statement has been approved by:

Emelda Byrne, Director of Education  
Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board

Sébastien Fontaine, Interim Director of Education  
Conseil Scolaire Viamonde

Erin Kelly, Director of Education  
Greater Essex County District School Board

Joseph Picard, Director of Education  
Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence

Jim Kittl, President  
WECSSAA