



South Carolina High School League

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To: Dr. W. Burke Royster, Superintendent – Greenville County Schools

From: Jerome Singleton, Commissioner

Subject: Time of scheduled appearance before Appellate Panel

Date: August 5, 2020

You are scheduled to appear before the Appellate Panel on Monday, August 10, 2020, to present your case for suspension of athletic activity for all districts. The meeting will be held via **ZOOM** virtual meetings at the South Carolina High School League Office, 121 Westpark Boulevard, Columbia, South Carolina. Your scheduled appearance time is 11:10 a.m. Please find attached the contact information for each of the Appellate Panel members.

The League Office will forward copies of your appeal brief that had been submitted to the Executive Committee to the members of the Appellate Panel. As you prepare to present your case, please refer to page 9 of the League's Constitution as it relates to Evidence (Article VIII; Section 3).

If the Appellate Panel upholds the decision of the Executive Committee, the appealing party is required to pay the cost for the meeting.

You will have 10 minutes to make your presentation to the Panel.

Date: August 10, 2020

Time: 11:10 am

Site: ZOOM Virtual Meetings
South Carolina High School League
121 Westpark Boulevard
Columbia, South Carolina

/cd

Attachment



The School District of Greenville County

W. Burke Royster, Ph.D.
Superintendent

August 3, 2020

Commissioner Jerome Singleton
South Carolina High School League
P.O. Box 211575
Columbia, SC 29221

Dear Commissioner Singleton:

Please accept this letter as official notification of our appeal of the Executive Committee's decision to the Appellate Committee. Greenville County Schools would like to appeal the League's decision not to establish a statewide cut-off that would cease athletic activity for all districts if school districts that represent more than 15% of the state's total population have suspended athletic activity.

We request to be added to the Appellate Committee agenda for August 10, 2020.

Sincerely,

Dr. W. Burke Royster
Superintendent
Greenville County Schools

Cc: Mr. Raleigh King, Appellate Committee Chair



The School District of Greenville County

W. Burke Royster, Ph.D.
Superintendent

July 2, 2020

Mr. Jerome Singleton, Commissioner
South Carolina High School League
P.O. Box 211575
Columbia, SC 29221

Dear Jerome,

As per our discussion earlier this week:

We currently as a country, state, and community face a challenge unique in our generation. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically altered nearly all aspects of our lives, collectively and individually. It has and continues to have a profound impact on all facets of public education.

I appreciate the League's action in developing a phased-in approach to the return to athletics. It is in keeping with the actions, regulations, and constitutional requirements that have and do guide the League in ensuring parity and equity for athletes, individual sports, and schools. Although these are unusual times, they are not without precedent. In recent history, the League has acted to address disparity created by natural disasters. I believe this is a time that calls for an extension of that action.

Last week, DHEC released to superintendents the definitions it has established for determining Low, Medium and High community spread of COVID-19 and a current rating for each county. There are three distinct data points based on a two-week look-back period. Each is described below. Each data point is determined to be Low, Medium, or High by DHEC, and an average of all three is used to establish the overall rating for each county. Also included below is a brief descriptor of the action that should be taken, following the AccelerateED Task Force Recommendations, based on the county's overall valuation of Low, Medium, or High spread. We are most appreciative to now have direction and definition for the degrees of impact established by the medical and public health experts at DHEC,

Metrics and Categorizations:

- Two-week cumulative incidence rate: The number of new cases in the prior two weeks per 100,000 people. This metric provides the recent incidence of COVID-19 infections in that county. Categorization (# cases/100,000 people):
 - o Low: 0 – 50
 - o Medium: 51 – 200
 - o High: ≥ 201
- Trend in Incidence rate: Whether the two-week incidence rate is increasing, decreasing, or stable compared to the previous two weeks. For purposes of this assessment, consider the trends to be equivalent to:
 - o Decreasing = Low
 - o Stable = Medium

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o Increasing = High

- Two-week percent positive rate: the percentage of individuals who tested positive out of the number of individuals tested with a molecular (swab, or PCR) test in the last two weeks for each county. The metric takes into consideration the number of tests performed in the county in the prior two weeks. Categorization:
 - o Low: $\leq 5.0\%$
 - o Medium: 5.1 – 9.9%
 - o High: $\geq 10.0\%$

Recommended Action for School Districts Based on Overall Spread Rating:

- Low: Modified Traditional Scheduling – Students and staff may return to school buildings with modifications to their scheduling and instructional practices to mitigate continued risks related to COVID-19, including:
 - o Hygiene and sanitation protocols, class-size caps, limited or eliminated partner/group activities, minimized transitions during the school day, staggered arrivals and dismissals, minimized off-campus travel, etc.
- Medium: Hybrid Scheduling – Only a portion of staff and students can report to a physical school building due to a combination of health requirements and facility/space limitations. As a result, some students will be able to report to school while others will engage in distance learning on alternating 1- or 2-day per week schedules.
- High: Full Distance Learning – No students and only essential staff report to school locations, and a virtual school program is implemented for all students.

Greenville was rated High on all three measures for an overall rating of High. I believe 29 counties in total were designated as having overall ratings of High which, when correlated to the AccelerateED Task Force recommendations, indicate no students should report to school in those counties. Given the High rating for our county, we suspended athletic activities and postponed summer academic recovery camps the day the ratings were issued. Other districts rated High have also done so, but not all with that rating have, nor have others with lower ratings. While one might argue that all that was lost was a period of conditioning, that is not only a perceived loss in preparing for a season but a real loss, as any opportunity for coaches to work with players conveys an advantage.

While I am generally a proponent of local decision-making, in this most serious manner it is my opinion that this disparity should be addressed at the state level and request that the League take action.

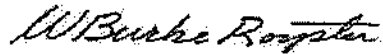
Additionally, please consider the following in your decision:

- DREC this week reported a nearly 1000% increase in the virus in the age group 11-21.

- Although there is some evidence that younger individuals are less susceptible to the more drastic results of the virus, they are not immune from it, and it seems logical that with more reported cases that may not continue to hold true.
- Many of our coaches are in the most susceptible age ranges for severe consequences and many have underlying health conditions.

I believe that acting unilaterally now may mitigate the spread of this disease among our students, our employees, and our communities and possibly help to ensure a return of high school athletics, which are so important to our students and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. Burke Rongsten".

Superintendent