



BLACKFEET NATION

Donna Yellow Owl &lt;dyellowowl@blackfeetnation.com&gt;

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**letter for the IC leader**

1 message

**Rose LaPine** <rlapine@blackfeetnation.com>

Tue, Dec 1, 2020 at 1:14 PM

To: Donna Yellow Owl &lt;dyellowowl@blackfeetnation.com&gt;

(This is the body of the email that I sent to Kweb, Kim and Dawn):

Please see attached letter. I hope this is helpful.

I think it is up to the IC team leader, Tribal Council or the school to decide whether to proceed with winter sports or not. Attached letter is a recommendation or additional note from a medical standpoint. My references came from CDC and MHSA. While these references are invaluable, decision on opening winter sports will depend on a discussion between our tribal leaders, IC, school board, lawyers.

At this point, it is very difficult to weigh the risks and benefits of opening sports for our children. As you know, mental health issues are surging but at the same time, COVID-19 cases still have not plateaued and an increase of cases are being anticipated after Thanksgiving and Christmas.

As a medical professional, we do have a duty "to do no harm" to anybody and I am sure the school officials, the Council and other leaders share the same ethical principle.

Please see attached letter.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rosaula LaPINE, MSN-FNP

Public Health Authority for the Tribe

406-231-0786

(This is a response to one of the providers in Heart Butte who gave me the same opinion)

Hi Crystal.

I did come across a lot of these types of resources and concerns.

It is very difficult to decide and it is not that I was "passing the bulk" to the leaders because at the end of the day, there is a reason why they added a medical person within the team. However, I don't think we should rely solely on what the medical professionals are saying. Yes, we have to rely on science/studies but I feel we also need to incorporate other aspects especially in terms of personal beliefs, cultural aspects, among others. There are things that science may not be able to explain thoroughly and there are things that beliefs are difficult to understand. I know there are leaders out there who will understand both and on this note, I will leave that decision to them.

Your input is really appreciated Crystal.

Thank you very much.

Rose

Hi Donna,

Here is the letter that I wrote and I did a careful thought about it...

Please let me know if you have any questions so we can review it together.

Rose

**covid school recommendation.docx**

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Your plan of opening for winter sports for our youth is bold and brave and your goal of developing not only the mental aspect of our students but their physical health is excellent. Nevertheless, as the saying goes, "in everything we do, there is a price".

We all need to understand that COVID 19 is new and there is always new information every day. Hence, we may agree on this plan yesterday but we will dispute this plan today or vice versa.

There are notes below that I thought, as a public health authority, might guide you as you continue to pursue this plan. I put all these together as a recommendation or a guide, which may help you to make your final decision. Please note that these recommendations are based on the principles of assessing risks, promoting behaviors that reduce spread of infection, and maintaining the health not only of the athletes and staff but the whole Blackfeet community.

#### Recommendations:

1. Participation of school nurses:
  - Assist school-based healthcare providers with covid testing
  - Help identify close contacts of the athletes and school staff including coaches
  - May assist with contact tracing and case investigation
  - Assist administration/staff/teachers implement mitigation strategies
  - Evaluate athletes for symptoms and exposures. Thus, school nurses play a role in reporting or referral to the school-based healthcare providers
2. COVID testing:
  - Initial COVID-19 testing is encouraged with guardian's permission
  - If exposure is suspected/confirmed, quarantine for 14 days; testing is encouraged 5-7 days after the first day of exposure.
  - School-based clinic will offer COVID 19 testing and if symptomatic, will triage athletes and staff
3. Co-morbidities:
  - Athletes with co-morbidities such as exercise-induced asthma, or any types of asthma, diabetes, obesity, etc will need to obtain clearance from their healthcare providers. This clearance is needed even if the athlete already completed their sports physical exam within the one-year term
4. Please emphasize to our athletes, families and staff that isolation and quarantine is inevitable to avoid frustration
5. Travel restrictions may apply when athletes travel to a city/town with high cases of COVID 19 for competitions