

SAINT JOHN'S MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

450-106 STATE ROAD 13 NORTH SAINT JOHN'S, FL 32259



04/18/2020

Dear valued Members, Commissioners, Athletic Directors, and Coaches,

I hope this email finds you and your families in good health. As promised, I am sending an association update today April 18th 2020. SJMSAA's next official update will be May 3rd 2020.

The dates for these updates coincide with information we are receiving from the CDC, as well as our local health officials on the next steps for businesses affected by COVID-19. At this time, ALL County parks and recreation facilities are CLOSED to the public, to partner organizations, and any group activities. The next County update is scheduled for May 3rd 2020.

As of today, it is SJMSAA's goal to continue the spring sports that have already begun and where we have already incurred significant costs including purchased uniforms and equipment. If we cannot continue those spring sports, we are looking at all available options for our membership, but as you know, we are a not-for-profit association, and our ability to provide refunds is limited to the dollars not yet spent on behalf of our members. Please also know that we are also evaluating short term loans, insurance claims, or other necessary actions should we need to take such drastic measures. Your board is working very hard over this time, and as previously mentioned, we will provide another update on May 3rd.

Outlined below is a list of **spring sports** and where they currently stand in relation to their season.

Golf – Uniforms printed, matches not yet played, plan for return to play in place.

Tennis – Uniforms printed, matches not yet played, tennis pros paid, plan in works for completion of season.

Softball – Uniforms Delivered, two weeks of season played, County Parks paid, plan for completion in place.

Baseball – Uniforms Delivered, no games played, plan to complete in place.

As of now, sports commissioners have been directed to look at the latest possible start time that will still get their season finished before the 2021 school semester begins in August. If we can return to action safely, we will do so to complete the season (even if over the summer months). We will not make any final decisions on closing these sports down for the year until after our May 3rd update.

Our **fall sports** offerings of Football, Soccer, and Cheerleading are currently looking at their options should this event continue into their seasons. As of today, SJMSAA has taken two measures to mitigate any possible issues for fall.

First, SJMSAA **Football** will forgo a spring season for 2020. Our goal is to focus on our fall season, and we will be incorporating a “Fall Jamboree” in lieu of a “Spring Showcase”. With this said, registration for football will remain open until mid-July. At that time, should we be back to operational status, we will contact all registered members with information regarding tryouts, and the fall season. Should this scenario play out, we will be able to offer the same football experience we always have, we will just move our spring session to early fall.

Cheerleading is currently underway. All schools held virtual tryouts, and teams have been selected. Coaches are in contact with student athletes and individual practice routines are underway. Cheer camp has been delayed; but is now tentatively scheduled for July 17-19th. Cheerleading had the highest recorded turnout for tryouts in our association history despite the challenges we face as a community today. As of this email, we have received approximately half of the registrations completed, with the first payment installment not officially due until June 1st.

Soccer is still several months away and is not an immediate concern.

Commissioners, at this time a plan for return to play should be completed so that when we get the green light, we can submit for field leases and get back to play. Additionally, over the next three weeks we will need to develop a “best practices” procedure for dealing with the “new” normal with respect to social distancing and your sport. Additionally, we will need to develop, and place these plans and procedures in an EAP (Emergency Action Plan) for how we will deal with handle any future outbreak or recurrence of COVID-19 or any infectious disease. These EAP's will be specific to each sport, they need to be written and submitted to the Executive Board for approval and submission to the insurance underwriter for final approval.

Athletic Directors, with brick and mortar school currently out of session, we realize your ability to communicate and provide support to SJMSAA is limited. We also understand that many of you are struggling with the same financial hardships we all are experiencing at this difficult time. We want your focus to continue to be on your health and safety, as well as devoting time to supporting our many students in the County that are working hard to transition to a virtual school system. A time will come sooner than later when we are going to need you to step up and be a champion for our association again soon. Until such time, please stay safe, and if you have any suggestions, input, or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

SJMSAA **stipend** program for coaches, commissioners, athletic directors, and board members will continue in place for the month of May. We recognize the financial burden COVID-19 has presented to all our members, and volunteers and hope that this will ease some of the burden.

What can you do to help?

Please keep in mind that many of our members still have a great deal of work to do in preparation for "return to play", and your help in any of the following areas is greatly appreciated.

- Cleaning and sterilization of uniforms and equipment
- Cleaning, organizing, sterilizing school equipment shed
- Development of an EAP plan for dealing with infectious disease for you sport, activity location.

Best regards,

Justin Palesotti
Executive Board – President
Saint Johns Middle School Athletic Association