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#WeAreSachem

Board of Education

Section XI Athletics Council
NYSPHAA
180 E. Main St., Ste 302
Smithtown, NY 11787
Attn: Mr. Thomas Combs, Executive Director

September 22, 2020

Dear Mr. Combs,

On September 11, 2020, the Sachem Central School District and athletic community learned that Section XI has decided to postpone "all sports until January 4, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic." We write to request that Section XI reconsider this decision at the earliest opportunity, and that you reassess the opportunities for our athletes to return to play while observing appropriate health and safety guidelines. We believe that a safe return to athletic activity can be accomplished if appropriate safety precautions are taken.

Like Section XI, the Sachem Central School District is, first and foremost, concerned about the health safety and welfare of all of the students at Sachem and other districts. We appreciate that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to the education of our children. But we also recognize that athletics and other extracurricular activities are essential components of the social and emotional growth and well-being of our students. Our community members, like many others, have expressed significant concern about the psychological toll that the COVID-19 related quarantine and restrictions have taken on the students of our district. We believe that providing our students with the ability to return to athletic activity would be a major step in addressing those very real concerns.

We note that the Governor has permitted us to determine whether sports can continue safely. It is our understanding that in a 28-0 vote, the Section XI Health and Safety Committee and Suffolk County Athletic Directors actually recommended that School Districts be permitted to return to play on September 21, 2020. Recreational leagues have been permitted to resume play. Many

www.sachem.edu



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We wish to assure you that we appreciate and share your concern for the health, safety and welfare of all student athletes. Nothing is more important. It is our hope, however, that you will carefully reconsider all options for safely resuming our athletic programs sooner than January 2021, recognizing how important that return to activity is for the social and emotional health of our children.

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