

**Oneonta City School District**

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Tom Brindley

Superintendent

September 3, 2020

Dear Oneonta City School District Families,

Hoping that you continue to be well. As is the case with the beginning of every new school year, there is a sense of excitement surrounding this one as well despite the unfortunate circumstances that our community finds itself in. I am writing today to share a decision related to Fall athletics and the Oneonta City School District. For a host of reasons, we will be suspending our Fall athletics program. This is a very difficult decision, but one that is being made with the best interest of all involved. Mr. Mackey, our Athletic Director, and I have listened, spoken with, or read a host of information and resources and albeit unfortunate, this decision is the one that keeps our students, their families, our coaches, and those with whom we compete against safer.

One might ask if this decision is directly related to the COVID-19 outbreak being experienced in our community? Although this has certainly informed the decision, it is not solely why we have come to this conclusion. Requiring our students in physical education classes, instrumental music, and chorus classes to maintain 12 feet of separation but allowing athletes to participate in competitive sports just does not compute. These are just a couple of the considerations that weighed into this decision. Mr. Mackey's counterparts shared many other concerns that also influenced this decision.

In the coming days and weeks other schools may, or will, be making similar decisions and announcements. One of our fiercest competitors and rival has made the same decision. We will now await guidance from the league as they work through scheduling scenarios in the hopes of preserving all three high school athletic seasons later in this school year. We will certainly be lobbying to have fall sports take place at some point later in this school year. I recognize that this will be tremendously disappointing but I thank you for your understanding and will await with great anticipation the time when we can come together as a community to cheer our Yellowjackets on to victory. Until then, please stay well and be safe.

Sincerely,

Thomas Brindley