



Eugene Brooks Intermediate School  
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Good afternoon,

Today, all of the athletic directors from the school districts that comprise Section IX membership, of which Webutuck is a full member, voted on the start date for interscholastic competition for the 2020-2021 school years. Accordingly, Webutuck will begin our athletics program on November 30, 2020. This date will be the start of **winter sports**. Please note, the Webutuck Central School District will update families and student-athletes, who participate in winter sports, on medical clearances, practices, and games as soon as verified information is available to disseminate.

It is equally important to note that the decision coming out of Section IX, as with all decisions during this pandemic, is one that represents the culmination of many meetings, discussions, and planning sessions. With nearly every school district in Section IX beginning the new school year on a remote learning platform, ultimately, the decision to postpone the start of fall competition became all but a foregone conclusion. Each district athletic director met with their respective superintendents throughout the process to analyze the data and we believe the correct decision, based upon the limited options available, is the best arrangement for the Webutuck Warriors and it is a decision that we fully support.

Unfortunately, **all fall sports** in Section IX will be postponed to **March 1, 2021**. Last night, the New York Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), the governing body for interscholastic sports in New York, decided to also move the “high-risk” sports of football, volleyball, and competitive cheer to March 1. (High risk is directly regarding the high possibility student-athletes have of transferring the COVID-19 virus between players and, ultimately, schools.) All other fall sports, according to a separate NYSPHSAA ruling, will begin on September 21 for those sections who voted to allow the remaining fall sports to take place. Again, Section IX will NOT play fall sports until March 1. The difference between sections will only impact state tournament play, not local schedules.

This is not the answer we were hoping to play out; these decisions have left ALL school districts in Section IX without the option of playing the fall sports of soccer, field hockey, girls swimming, cross country, girls tennis, and game day cheer until March. This is also the case for some, but not all, other districts in New York State. New York State schools are broken up across 11 different sections and the superintendents and athletic directors within each section voted for what they believed to be in the best interest of their respective school and athletic districts. For Webutuck and the other member schools from Section IX, there was simply no tenable plan to allow student-athletes a return to school on September 21 when students are on a distance learning plan.

Finally, there is an ebb and flow to athletic decisions very similar to what we have seen unfold for the academic component of our school day. Information changes rapidly and I will continue to update our community on the events that transpire within the world of athletics. As with all things, please feel free to reach out to me with questions or concerns. We will begin planning for our winter sports season now and, again, please look for that information to come out in the days and weeks ahead. I look forward to getting the athletics component of education up and running and will continue to advocate on behalf of the Webutuck Warriors in all areas of athletic planning component of education.

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