

Hello LWHS Parents and Students –

It was great to see so many of you when you came to pick up your laptop, get your picture taken, and pick up textbooks and class materials. The joy in your eyes masked much of the disappointment we each feel regarding the fact that we are not yet able to be on campus for school, sports, and activities. I continue to be amazed by the resiliency and GRIT in our students, and I know these qualities will aid you in the coming months.

We are looking forward to restarting sports. Lake Washington, along with all schools in the KingCo Conference, will participate in the WIAA's adjusted seasons. Season 2 will be our normal winter sports and has a planned start date of December 27th. Our Fall sports are moving to Season 3, scheduled to start March 1<sup>st</sup>. (Football has a planned start date of February 17<sup>th</sup>, due to the additional practice requirements.) The Spring sports season is Season 4, slated to start April 26<sup>th</sup>; this season will also include Dance/Drill's competitive season.

To assist us in planning certain aspects of our return to sports, we urge all families to register NOW for the sports in which their students intend to participate (or are considering participating). Registering immediately will not only assist us in our planning effort, but also allow our coaches to keep you informed of important information regarding the upcoming season. The sports registration system can be found here: <https://lakewashington-wa.finalforms.com/> Once at that link, parents AND students must each sign in to their accounts and complete the registration paperwork. \*\*Note: If you have never signed into Final Forms, look for the "never signed in?" link in the fine print of the log-in window after clicking either Parent or Student (whichever is appropriate to you).

Because the open coaching period in the summer was largely lost as a result of the pandemic, the WIAA has created a new open coaching period *for schools in counties that reach Phase 3 of the state's re-opening plan*. If King County reaches Phase 3 soon, Lake Washington plans to offer strength training and conditioning activities, open fields/gyms and potentially sport specific instruction led by our coaches, during this open coaching period. More details regarding these offerings will be coming soon (another reason to sign up for sports now!).

We ARE NOT collecting payments (either for ASB membership or for sport participation) at this time. Therefore, please IGNORE the directions (in Final Forms) indicating that payment is needed. We will collect payments at the actual start of the sports seasons.

I know how difficult the loss of sports and activities has been to you - my family is experiencing it ourselves as my children miss another sports season this fall. I serve as your Athletic Director because of my passion for the critical importance of educational-based athletics in the lives of young people. School-based sports are unlike any other sports program. Thanks for your patience and understanding as together we navigate the uncertain future filled with hope and optimism.

Finally, I would encourage every family to have their child participate in a sport. Never has the power of school-based sports been more important (in my opinion) as it is now. Our students need the camaraderie, the relationships, the laughter, the physical outlet, and the mental well-being that sports participation brings. Every season we have at least one non-cut sport for our young women and men. I urge you to take advantage of these opportunities.

Please contact me if you have any questions. In the meantime, please take good care of yourselves and of each other, extend a little extra grace and patience to all, and follow the COVID prevention guidelines.

My best to each of you!

Rick O'Leary

Athletic Director

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