

# **SOUTHERN WORCESTER COUNTY LEAGUE**

*“Achieving Excellence Through Athletics”*

Auburn \* Bartlett \* David Prouty \* Grafton \* Leicester \* Millbury

Northbridge \* Oxford \* Quaboag \* Southbridge \* Tantasqua \* Uxbridge

## **SOUTHERN WORCESTER COUNTY LEAGUE RELEASES ATHLETIC ADVISORY**

For Immediate Release:

September 11, 2020

The Southern Worcester County League, through a vote of its principals, has determined the start of the fall-one season to be October 5, 2020. The schools in the league intend to participate in the fall season from October 5 through November 20, which will allow the schools to have a 10-12 game regular season. The earliest start date for the fall season would have been September 21, but, per the guidance from the MIAA Sports Medicine Committee and Board of Directors, schools were not permitted to start athletics until school was back in session. Schools that started entirely remotely would be obliged to secure a School Committee recommendation for participation.

The member schools include: Auburn High School, Bartlett High School (Webster), David Prouty High School (Spencer-East Brookfield), Grafton High School, Leicester High School, Millbury High School, Northbridge High School, Oxford High School, Quaboag Regional High School, Southbridge High School, Tantasqua Regional High School, and Uxbridge High School.

The league principals' joint statement regarding the state of the Fall One Season is as follows:

“We make this decision with the best interests of our respective schools and communities in mind, and with the hope of being able to have as normal a regular season as possible, particularly when we consider the multiple variables presented to us in this pandemic. Our primary responsibility remains the mental and physical well-being of all our students, including our student-athletes. With the number of responsibilities we have to ensure a safe opening to school, balancing against the wants and needs of our communities and the desire to participate in a fall season, the decision to start the season at all was challenging. Providing an additional week or two of planning allows us to prioritize the difficult task of having students and staff safely back in our buildings before we add the variables that come with interscholastic athletics, including safety planning, transportation, mixing of student cohorts, and finalizing athletic schedules.

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“While we know that there are some individuals who will be disappointed with this decision, we remain inspired by the resilience of our athletes, hopeful for the opportunity to have a fall season, and committed to ensuring that our staff and students, including all of our coaches and student-athletes, have a safe return to the 2020-21 school year amidst variables none of us could have ever predicted or imagined. In these unusual and uncertain circumstances, we appreciate everyone’s patience, flexibility, and understanding, and we look forward to being able to cheer on our student-athletes in a couple of short weeks.”