Dear Strath Haven Students and Parents,

Today, Governor Wolf cancelled in-person classes through the end of the school year, effectively ending the 2020 spring sports season. While most of us saw the writing on the wall for some time now, the news still brings sadness to all of us involved in education and interscholastic athletics. While the cancellation of the spring season pales in comparison to the greater tragedies in this pandemic, it is still important to recognize the disappointment it brings to many in the community.

My first thoughts are for our seniors and their families. There are so many celebrations lost due to this pandemic, and today’s news likely hit hardest for you. I know this too well, as we’re experiencing it in my own family with my youngest brother. My siblings all feel for Bill (who attends Haverford HS) and are proud of him, but the milestone is almost as important for my parents. Like many of our senior parents, they envisioned a more conventional ending to their ninth and final child’s high school career.

I hope our senior athletes know how much we appreciated leadership, effort, and resilience this year. Many of our spring athletes were also integral members of our fall and spring teams who had historically successful seasons. More importantly, they provided steady guidance and were strong role models for our underclassmen in what was already a roller coaster year before the COVID-19 outbreak. I wish you the best of luck with your future pursuits. You will be remembered by our faculty and community for years to come!

To senior parents, thank you for the countless hours you have devoted working snack bars, attending booster meetings, and shuffling athletes to and from school on nights and weekends. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

We are working to have some form of recognition in lieu of senior nights, and I will share more information when it becomes available.

The grief of this lost season often overshadows our underclassmen, but their emotional investment in the season also deserves merit and attention. This year would have been an important developmental year for many underclassmen to build skills and prepare for the future. For others, this could have been their first varsity experience or an opportunity to take a more prominent role in the line-up. I understand these lost opportunities hurt as well, but your efforts thus far can still bear fruit next year.

For now, keep in contact with your coaches and continue to prepare for seasons to come. We always remind our athletes that many games are won or lost based on off-season workouts. Positive peer pressure led many of you to pack the weight room and track in the past. While you cannot train side-by-side for the foreseeable future, your teammates still depend on you to be ready to go when sports resume.
In the meantime, I will try to make lemonade out of lemons where I can. I hope to redirect funds budgeted for spring expenses to invest in uniforms and supplies for next year. While we cannot buy more time on the fields, track, and tennis courts for our spring athletes, we hope to help our younger athletes look good when we return next year.

Finally, I want to encourage you to share your support for our coaches as well during this difficult time. While officially coaching is “seasonal employment,” they poured countless hours year-round to prepare for this spring season. Many of them would do anything to get one more competition in for their athletes this spring.

I have never looked forward to a fall season as much as I do now. While it seems a long way off, we will hear clanging field hockey cages, bouncing volleyballs, and shrill whistles before we know it. Until then, please enjoy time with your families over this abbreviated spring break!

Sincerely,

Patrick Clancy
Athletic Director
Strath Haven High School