

NYC MUST OKAY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Catholic High Schools in New York City seeking to resume athletic competition:

The Superintendents of Schools for the Diocese of Brooklyn and the Archdiocese of New York have asked the Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene for New York City, Dr. Dave Chokshi, to give the green light to Catholic High School athletic competition. That was last week, and still no answer.

New York City has published a timetable for the resumption of athletics for the public schools, but has not said a word about a similar schedule for Catholic schools. Unlike the public schools, which have been closed during the pandemic, Catholic schools have been open. Importantly, Catholic student-athletes, unlike their public school counterparts, have maintained a vigorous conditioning and training program, and are therefore ready to resume competitively.

The Catholic Superintendents of Schools have asked that Catholic schools not be grouped with the public schools when setting guidelines. To mandate that Catholic schools “conform to standards and timeframes issued by the Department of Education for [public school] teams is both without rational basis and discriminatory against Catholic school students.” No one can logically argue with that position.

It is expected that the public schools will resume competitive play on April 1. Not to deliver the guidelines to the Catholic schools—when explicit requests have been made—is unconscionable. Time is of the essence.

Dr. Chokshi needs to accede to the reasonable request made by the Catholic schools, and he needs to do so without further

delay. If he does not, Catholics will assume that Mayor Bill de Blasio has given his blessings to this stall tactic. It is time that Catholic school student athletes were treated fairly, and with dispatch.

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