

Thursday 18th June, 2020

Dear Shelley parents and caregivers,

We would like to provide a brief update on PSSA sport and Athletics Carnivals scheduled for Semester 2. Restrictions brought about by COVID mean that 2020 sporting activities have been significantly impacted. With restrictions starting to ease, the Blacktown PSSA has given a great deal of time and consideration to sporting events for Blacktown DoE schools for the remainder of the year. Whilst we are already starting to transition back to class and grade sport activities, the following changes will be in place for whole school and inter-school events in 2020:

Athletics Carnivals

Unfortunately we have already had to make the difficult decision that the Shelley PS Athletics Carnivals scheduled for early Term 3 will be cancelled this year. (These events rely on parent and High School helpers who would both be unable to attend the carnivals). The Blacktown Zone, Sydney West and State Carnivals have also been cancelled for 2020.

Winter PSSA

There will be NO winter PSSA competition in 2020.

Summer PSSA

At this time, the Summer PSSA competition will resume as scheduled in Term 4.

Based on the current situation, parents will be unable to attend PSSA games/matches (unless restrictions ease further by Term 4).

What does this mean for Shelley PS Sporting Awards 2020?

- We will be presenting our SPS swimming carnival medals and trophies, as well as the Zone swimming awards, at the end of the year.
- We MAY be able to host our Ball Games carnival in Term 4 and if so, we will then present the trophy to the winning house at the end of the year.
- As there will be no Cross Country or Athletics carnivals, no awards will be presented in 2020.
- With only one of the three major carnivals taking place, we will not have a fair and accurate indication of the Junior and Senior Sports Champions and these awards will therefore not be presented in 2020.
- Given that most sporting events have not taken place, there will be no awards at the end of year for Blacktown or Sydney West representatives, Dance representatives and Rugby League competition representatives.

We recognise that some of these decisions will be disappointing for students and parents. Whilst restrictions have eased and community based sport will be recommencing soon, there are many variables when considering the organisation for school sport.

The PSSA has provided the following information to clarify the situation for parents.

How is school sport different to community based sport?

"The NSW Department of Education is committed to providing opportunities for students to participate in school sporting programs at all levels of participation and values the importance of physical activity in enhancing educational outcomes.

The representative school sport pathway has been in existence for almost 130 years and is extended beyond community based sport. It forms an integral part of a large state based program within the NSW Department of Education's High Potential and Gifted Policy. The pathway which is in place in NSW is recognised around the world as a leader in delivering school sport programs.

The school sport representative pathway relies on the progression of students through stages beginning at a school/community level – zone – association – state and national level. This is a complex process commencing at the start of each year and takes many months to coordinate as students participate and progress through each level. Community sport does not follow a similar pathway and does not have long lead in times when conducting events.

The NSW DoE phased social distancing strategy has meant schools have not had the opportunity to organise their stage of the trials process. Consequently the representative pathway at the Association and State levels cannot be conducted in terms three (3) and four (4) of the school year. It is not possible for schools to rearrange activities at this stage of the year given limitations with venue availability and rescheduling the many educational and sporting events on a school calendar. Additionally current NSW Government guidelines do not allow for large scale events to be held where crowds will be in attendance.

The national body, School Sport Australia, recognised this issue and officially cancelled all national events for 2020 at the conclusion of Term One."

We understand your disappointment and concerns in not being able to participate in these programs during COVID-19 restrictions 2020, and look forward to a return to full sports competition in 2021.

If you have any questions please contact the school and speak to either Mr Duss (PSSA Coordinator), Mrs Williams or myself.

Kind regards,

Ms Jo-Ann Champion

Principal