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## OSAA cancels spring sports season



Natalia Gonzalez sends a backhand over the net in a McNary girls tennis match last spring.

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

When Oregon Gov. Kate Brown made the decision on Wednesday, April 8 to close schools due to the coronavirus, the OSAA decided that it was best if they followed suit.

Just hours after Brown's announcement, the OSAA elected to cancel the spring sports season for 2020.

"Today's heart wrenching decision is difficult for all members of the OSAA family," said Peter Weber, OSAA executive director. "We empathize with students and school communities, especially our graduating seniors, but recognize that these cancellations will allow our collective focus to remain where it's most needed at this time — on the health and safety of all Oregonians."

On March 18, the OSAA suspended the spring sports season initially until April 28. After the executive board held a virtual meeting on April 1, Weber was expecting the OSAA to have a decision on whether the season would be canceled, or if the OSAA would attempt

to provide an abbreviated season, at the board's next meeting on April 15.

But when Brown made the announcement, Weber was prepared to act quickly.

"We weren't caught off-guard. We knew this was likely coming," Weber said. "We had made the decision that we were going to be aligned with the schools if (Brown) came out and shut things down before (the 15th), so we wouldn't have to worry about getting everyone on the board back together."

Current OSAA policies that prohibit the use of school facilities will remain in effect. The policy also prevents coaches from organizing or directing workouts and practices, which will remain in effect until further notice.

The executive board will meet in the coming weeks to discuss policies for summer activities, along with academic eligibility concerns for fall 2020 that have been expressed by member schools and families.

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## Youth baseball/softball planning for potential season

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Even though the OSAA canceled the spring season for prep sports due to the coronavirus, youth baseball and softball are still holding out some hope.

"My board is still very much in favor of having a season still," said Keizer Little League President Ryan Siegel. "I am talking with our District 7 staff and other league presidents about our options as a district in whole."

"We're going to do whatever we can to have a season, it's just going to look a lot different," added McNary

Youth Baseball president Bo Lane.

In March, the MYB board of directors made the decision to suspend all league activities until April 29. But after Oregon Gov. Brown Kate Brown closed schools for the remainder of the school year on April 8, MYB made the decision to cancel their T-ball and Double-A programs for this season.

"Without access to school fields, our hands were tied, and so were the programs that we partner with," Lane said.

As for the rest of their JBO program — which includes minors, juniors, seniors, as well as their softball teams — MYB is still waiting for decisions to be made at the district level.

The MYB softball program is a part of Valley League Softball while the baseball programs transitioned to Clackamas County Junior Baseball Association (CCJBA) for the 2020 season.

Misty Gendharr, the president of CCJBA, said in a Facebook post that she believes that the organization will have a start date in May, but it remains to be seen how it will look.

Lane believes that they could still play anywhere between 12 and 18 regular season games and then have tournament play in late-July or early-August.

"Everything is still up in the air. But one thing's for sure, we want to make something work," Lane said. "It's heartbreaking for the kids right now that they don't get to play the game that they love."

KLL, on the other hand, made the decision in mid-March to postpone all activities until May 11 — which was the recommendation from Little League International. But even after the OSAA decided to cancel the season, Siegel and the KLL

board is still looking at May 11 as a plausible return date.

"One of the most popular options right now is to have an extended season, possibly going into late June early to mid-July, especially for the younger divisions that are not involved with the All-Stars tournament," Siegel said. "Plans as of now is that we are still looking at May 11th to start but that could very well change. A lot of other leagues rely on school fields to play games on and if those aren't available other

options will have to be pursued."

However, KLL's plan will depend on how Little League International decides to move forward and if there will be a Little League World Series or not.

"Our biggest hold up right now is waiting to hear what Little League International plans on doing with the Little League World Series," Siegel said. "Their decision will help us figure out our season."



Jaxon DeFabis fires to the plate for Keizer Little League in the 50/70 13-U state tournament last summer.

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Phone: 503.390.1051 • www.keizertimes.com

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Eric A. Howald  
editor@keizertimes.com

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
Matt Rawlings  
news@keizertimes.com

**COMMUNITY REPORTER**  
Lauren Murphy  
reporter@keizertimes.com

**ADVERTISING**  
Stephanie Wittman  
advertising@keizertimes.com

**PRODUCTION MANAGER & GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Andrew Jackson  
graphics@keizertimes.com

**LEGAL NOTICES**  
legals@keizertimes.com

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Leah Stevens  
billing@keizertimes.com

**RECEPTION**  
Lori Beyeler

**INTERN**  
Brooklyn Flint



**EDITOR & PUBLISHER**  
Lyndon Zaitz  
publisher@keizertimes.com  
2019-2020 President  
Oregon Newspaper  
Publishers Association



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