November 17, 2020

**School District**

Re: Facility Usage

Dear Superintendent,

I am writing to you on behalf of the parents, athletes, staff and Board of the (SWIM CLUB).  We are requesting that you consider allowing our club to resume using the High School Pool.  SWIM CLUB has enjoyed a terrific partnership with the SCD for nearly 52 years and has been fortunate to be able to use the pool for training our athletes. The success of our program, as well as the Varsity Girls and Boys Swim Teams, has been built on this enduring relationship.

SWIM CLUB has run a safe competitive swim program since July 6, 2020 at two separate facilities.  We have adhered to a strict COVID safety plan (document included) for the past five months without incident.  Our safety plan is based on the best available information from the CDC, NYS Department of Health, Erie County Department of Health and USA swimming. Swimming is determined to be a low-risk sport by Governor Cuomo and NYSPHSAA.  The Girls Varsity Swim Team along with other section IV teams engaged in a safe swim season this fall.  According to the CDC, there is no evidence of COVID-19 spreading through the chlorinated water used in pools. Proper operation and disinfection of pools inactivates the coronavirus.  Unlike many other sports, competitive swimming does not require direct contact between teammates or coaches and proper social distancing can be maintained. We are advocating to be able to use the pool for purposeful swim training with professional coaches and engaged participants adhering to strict safety protocols to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Physical activity is crucial to the physical and emotional development of our children. For young children and adolescents, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and exercise improved self-esteem, concentration, and risk of depressive symptoms. Being a part of a swim program where children can safely interact with friends has a positive mental health impact.  Additionally, it provides a sense of normalcy during a time of great change and uncertainty.  The mental health of our athletes and all children has always been and will continue to be a priority. Several of our high school athletes are suffering with great anxiety as they see their dreams of swimming in college evaporating since they are unable to train or compete.  CSD can help to provide an opportunity for children to improve their mental health and well-being.

By the SCHOOL DISTRICT denying SWIM CLUB access to the school pools, we have been forced to pay a considerable amount of money to rent other pools. This is not a sustainable model for our organization. Historically, competitive swim clubs in Western New York have used school pools for training purposes. If we do not begin to find a safe pathway to use school pools again swim clubs will be unable to exist.

THE TOWN is home to several of our coaches and the majority of our athlete families. Coaching this team provides a full-time job for three of our coaches.  Additionally, SWIM CLUB has employed several SCHOOL alumni and current students as assistant coaches and lifeguards.

We believe that working together with SCD policymakers and public health officials, we can resume using the facility in a safe way to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission.  We are eternally grateful for the continued support and partnership with the CSD.  We are committed to maintaining the documentation and communication with the school to provide the safety and the opportunity for the activity that our children need.  Thank you in advance for considering our plan. We would be happy to attend the upcoming School Board meeting on January XX, 2021 to discuss the measures we have taken to ensure a safe environment for our athletes and the community.

Best Regards,