**STATEMENT FROM THE NEW JERSEY CROSS COUNTRY TRACK AND FIELD COACHES ASSOCIATION (NJXCTFCA):**

It has been reported by coaches of our association that there are districts in the State of New Jersey who are reducing or eliminating spring coaching stipends during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The New Jersey Cross Country Track and Field Coaches Association is calling on all school boards and districts across our great state to fully compensate their spring coaches, in all sports, during this unprecedented time. This is the right thing to do. A few reasons:

1) Spring sports are IN SEASON. Although games and competitions are not occurring, coaches are working virtually with their athletes to provide a positive experience. They are providing positive support, virtual workouts and feedback, running virtual team meetings, and organizing athlete-to-athlete check ins with captains, among other things.

2) Districts are still paying their teachers, administrators, and support staff. Why should coaches be treated any differently? Coaches are teachers and educators and are working hard to support their athletes virtually during this crisis, the same as classroom teachers and administration.

3) Many coaches are making sacrifices with other jobs and income in order to coach. The stipends these professionals are depending on might not seem like a lot to a district, but it is to a coach who has budgeted for this income.

4) The money for spring stipends in each district has already been budgeted for this year, and won't be cut off. If districts are looking to save money, they should look first to the tens of thousands of dollars they are saving in busing, entry fees, site preparation and officials fees while competition is suspended.

5) Spring coaches start work on the spring season well ahead of the actual season. Although the hours worked during March, April and May may differ this year, districts should consider the many days and hours that spring coaches work year-round outside of their competitive season.

We thank you for the consideration of paying all New Jersey spring coaches their full stipend.

Sincerely,

The New Jersey Cross Country Track and Field Coaches Association (NJXCTFCA)

