



To: NJSIAA Advisory Committee

From: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director

Date: December 1, 2023

RE: Classification Proposal – Charter School and Cooperative Sports Programs

NJSIAA staff proposes changes to the Association’s classification procedures for charter school and cooperative sports programs. The classification procedures are provided for in the Association’s Bylaws – Article III – Classification of Member Schools.

Charter Schools:

- NJSIAA currently has 27 charter school members.
- The number of charter schools sponsoring a particular sport varies widely but can have a significant impact – for instance, 24 charter schools sponsor basketball.
- There can be inconsistency in the varsity status of their programs, especially with newer charter school members.
- This inconsistency can negatively impact the public-school classifications.

Cooperative Sport Programs:

- The number of cooperative sports programs continues to increase each year.
- Excluding Ice Hockey, the sports with the most amount of cooperative programs are:
 - Swimming – 18
 - Wrestling – 17
 - B Lacrosse – 10
 - Football – 7
- NJSIAA rules continue to evolve to allow schools flexibility to co-op on an emergent basis while also allowing schools the flexibility to replace a partner school as necessary.
- The increasing trend in program requests will continue while the need for flexibility is going to become more important in the future.
- While many cooperative sport programs are stable, there are many that are dissolving or changing during their 4-year approval period.
- This level of activity can negatively impact the public and non-public classifications since combined enrollments are relied on that may not be in place for the entirety of the two-year classification cycle.

Proposal:

In an effort to minimize the impact due to inconsistency and variability noted above, I am proposing that sport-specific classifications exclude charter schools and cooperative sports programs to ensure the schools in each section and group are classified as accurately as possible. Once the classifications have been run for each sport, then all charter schools and cooperative sports programs sponsoring a varsity

team in the sport will be manually inserted into the appropriate section and group based on their northing number and enrollment.

Rationale:

This proposal will allow greater flexibility for the classifications to accommodate the changing status of charter schools and cooperative sports programs without impacting other schools in any section or group that have consistent varsity status and host their own stand-alone program.