



To: NJSIAA Advisory Committee
From: Colleen Maguire, Director of Finance
Date: December 2, 2019
RE: Legislation Proposal

The NJSIAA Staff, in conjunction with the NJ Football Coaches Association, respectfully submits a proposal to remove the sentence in the NJSIAA Constitution that prohibits a state-wide champion in football.

NJSIAA Constitution (p. 32)

Article IX, Championships

The Association may award trophies and prizes in such sports as deemed advisable, and determine State or District championships, when, in the judgement of the Executive Committee, it is deemed feasible and possible. ~~No state championship, however, shall be declared in football.~~

Rationale:

Football is the only NJSIAA sport that does not compete for a state-wide championship. Also, the NJSIAA is the only state-wide athletic association that does not recognize a state-wide champion in football. With the success this past season of the public school Regional Championships, there is much interest from both the NJ Football Coaches Association as well as the student-athletes to pursue any and all options available in order for NJSIAA member schools to compete for a state-wide championship.

However, before much effort and time is spent exploring all options, the NJSIAA Staff feels it is important that the membership first vote on the removal of the sentence in the Constitution that currently prohibits member schools from competing for a state-wide championship.

Both the NJSIAA Staff and NJ Football Coaches Association recognize there are many concerns with moving to a state-wide championship, such as: the length of the season, the number of games played, or the potential elimination of Thanksgiving Day games. Both the NJSIAA Staff and NJ Football Coaches Association are committed to a thorough discussion and review of any proposed plan by all stakeholders throughout the entire state to ensure the health and safety of the student-athletes. Both are also committed to protecting traditions, such as Thanksgiving Day football, so there will be no impact on these traditions.

Therefore, should this legislation pass and the limitation on state-wide football champions be removed, then the goal will be to have a new playoff format proposal submitted to this Committee in December 2020 for their consideration. Both bodies are committed to a vote of the entire membership on any playoff format that will recognize a state-wide football champion. Lastly, any new playoff format proposal will not take effect until the 2022-2023 school year, which coincides with a future scheduling cycle.