



To: NJSIAA Program Review Committee

From: Colleen Maguire, NJSIAA Executive Director

Date: October 12, 2021

RE: Fencing Tournament Proposal

Background:

During the 2019-2020 winter season, approximately 2,400 student-athletes participated in boys or girls fencing, from approximately 55-member high schools, which accounts for about 1% of our total participation. With the exception of gymnastics, boys and girls fencing is NJSIAA's lowest participation sport.

Given the low level of participation for fencing, NJSIAA absorbs a disproportionate net loss on an annual basis – the average net loss is approximately \$25,000 per year. This compares to an annual net loss of about \$20,000 per year for boys and girls swimming, \$25,000 per year for boys and girls cross country and \$20,000 per year for boys and girls golf – all sports with expensive facility-related costs, minimal revenues to offset the costs, and significantly higher amounts of participation.

NJSIAA currently hosts four different tournament levels for boys and girls fencing – Districts, Team tournament, Squad tournament and an Individual tournament. NJSIAA does not currently sponsor four tournaments in any other sport. Each tournament level requires the use of neutral site hosts with significant expenditures on equipment rental, tournament staffing and officials.

Proposal:

NJSIAA staff requests approval to eliminate the Squad tournament during the upcoming 2021-2022 season and beyond. By eliminating the Squad tournament, this will bring the boys and girls fencing post-season in line with other sports that offer both a team and individual tournament, it will reduce the need for neutral site hosts which are becoming increasingly more difficult to solicit, and it will reduce the total net loss absorbed by the Association, which will allow for those resources to be used for other programs – such as the start-up costs for a girls ice hockey state championship tournament. The Squad tournament averages a net loss of approximately \$7,000 - \$8,000 each year. Lastly, by preserving the individual tournament, NJSIAA is providing an opportunity to those student-athletes who may be attending a member school that does not host a boys or girls fencing team. This is consistent with other NJSIAA sports that have both a team and individual component.