



To: NJSIAA Program Review Committee

From: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director

Date: September 12, 2022

RE: NJSIAA Cross Country Tournament Regulations

Background:

NJSIAA hosts a Cross Country Meet of Champions (MOC) that is a hybrid event for both teams and individuals – the same race is used to recognize and award the top 20 individual finishers and the top six teams. While NJSIAA has moved away from events that award the top team in the state (i.e., Tournament of Champions), it wishes to keep the hybrid nature of this event in place given the ease of awarding top finishers in both categories from the same event.

Currently, the first and second place team in each Group meet qualify for the MOC, in addition to the next eight teams with the fastest total times of their top five runners across all Groups (wildcards). The top 10 individuals in each Group meet qualify for the MOC, in addition to the next 10 individuals with the fastest time across all Groups (wildcards).

NJSIAA staff, in consultation with the Cross Country tournament staff, have been reviewing the qualification criteria for both categories and recommends certain modifications to the criteria. These recommendations are based on a detailed review of the MOC race results over the past three complete seasons. The recommendations will ensure that no student-athlete misses out on qualifying for the MOC because they are competing in a more competitive section or in a section with larger participation and will ensure that the state's fastest runners are participating in the MOC.

Proposal:

The first-place team in each Group meet will qualify for the MOC, in addition to the next eight teams with the fastest total times of their top five runners across all Groups (wildcards). Under this proposal, the second-place team in each Group will no longer automatically qualify for the MOC. The top 10 individuals in each Group meet qualify for the MOC, in addition to the next 30 individuals with the fastest times across all Groups who have not already qualified via their team (wildcards).

In addition, based on feedback received from the Cross Country Committee, NJSIAA is also proposing an increase to the number of individuals that advance from each section to the State Group Championships – from ten (10) to fifteen (15). As with the above proposal concerning the MOC, this increase in runners qualifying for the next round will ensure that those student-athletes in more competitive sections or with larger participation have an opportunity to compete in the next round of the state tournament.