

NORTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE

Stafford High School, 145 Orcuttville Road, Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076

DAMIAN FRASSINELLI
President
Stafford High School
(860) 851-8333



BRIAN MALTESE
Vice President
Granby Memorial High School
(860) 844-3020

December 8, 2021

CIAC Soccer Committee,

This letter is being sent on behalf of the North Central Connecticut Conference in regards to the placement of "Schools of Choice" in the CIAC Soccer Tournaments. The current model being used, while well-intentioned in its derivation, is not equitable in its implementation. In its present form the 'success in tournament' of Schools of Choice is determined by making the semi-finals or finals in two or three of the last three years. Previously, the threshold for success was determined by advancement to the quarterfinals, and this typically kept schools who draw from multiple towns out of the CIAC smaller divisions. This allowed for more competitive equity amongst the small schools that draw from only their geographic boundaries. When the CIAC Soccer Committee chose to move the threshold to semi-finals, an "elevator effect" took place, where Schools of Choice moved up, then dropped back down to Class S for not reaching the semi-final threshold. Due to this up/down pattern, small, border-fixed schools have to now hope that open-bordered schools are up in another division on the year that they happen to have assembled a group of talented players in order to make a State Championship bid.

The NCCC proposes that the CIAC Soccer Committee consider the following changes:

- Move "success in tournament" back to quarter-finals or better. We understand that this might mean a team with a 'bye' might only win one game to advance to the quarter-finals. That said, they have a 'bye' because they have earned it by being one of the top teams in the division, and it is highly likely that they would have won their first round game if they were assigned one.
- Add verbiage that teams descending due to a lack of success, do so one division at a time, and don't drop two divisions at once.

We believe that those two modifications would move the tournament in the direction of the fairness and equity that the CIAC Mission Statement clearly articulates.

Respectfully,

Damian Frassinelli, NCCC President
NCCC Athletic Directors

Bolton Canton Coventry East Granby East Windsor Ellington
Granby HMTCA Rockville SMSA Somers Stafford Suffield Windsor Locks