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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 28, 2021

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SECTION VI MOVES WRESTLING, CREATES NEW CALENDAR

The Executive Committee of Section VI earlier today voted to move wrestling to the spring sports season. The decision came after the Health Departments in the five counties that make up the Section, released a joint statement of concern.

The statement cited the most recent Weekly Report, released January 26 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The statement read, *'In the interests of limiting risks and protecting the health of athletes.....WNY health department leaders strongly recommend that interscholastic wrestling cancel or postpone their winter 2021 seasons.'*

"Our Executive Committee met with representatives from all five counties and chose to follow the pleas of our health officials and the CDC, to pause our wrestling season," Section President, Brett Banker said. "We never discussed canceling wrestling completely although that was an option. We know that a move to spring may cause conflicts with athletes and coaches, however we are thankful we had this alternative."

Wrestling moves to the revised spring season of May 10-June 30 along with baseball, softball, tennis, lacrosse and track. The Section voted to inform the state association that they will not participate in state play this spring.

"As difficult as it was, by removing our teams from state competition in the spring, we can now extend our calendars and offer more contests for our athletes," Banker continued. "We anticipate that with this move, our athletes will likely complete full seasons, which they lost last year."

The current winter season which will include basketball and ice hockey will begin on February 1 with Sectional Championships completed by March 27. Bowling, Rifle, Swimming and Skiing were allowed to start on January 4th. The state had already canceled state championships for

Fall 2 and winter. The season that NYSPHSAA refers to as Fall 2 with football, volleyball, and cheerleading will now run March 22-May 15.

For now, the Section is not allowing spectators to attend contests however according to Banker, "We are prepared to reassess where we are with infection rates and other data, the week of February 22. We certainly want families to be able to watch their athletes compete. But we need to offer districts the opportunity first to roll out protocols and gauge how successful they are."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark DiFilippo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more legible than the last name "DiFilippo".

Mark DiFilippo
Executive
Director
Section VI, NYSPHSAA, Inc.