



Mission Statement
Grand Forks Public Schools will provide an environment of educational excellence that engages all learners to develop their maximum potential for community and global success.

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Date: January 11, 2019

To: Matt Fetsch, NDHSAA Executive Director
NDHSAA Board of Directors

Re: Addition of Esports

On behalf of Central and Red River High Schools, and on behalf of Mike McNeff, Superintendent of Rugby Public Schools, with additional supporting letters of interest from Carrington, Dickinson, Drake-Anamoose, Dunseith, Hillsboro, Jamestown, Mandan, MLS, Northern Cass, St. John, TGU, Turtle Mountain Community School, and Westhope, I am requesting NDHSAA consideration of sponsoring esports as an activity with a live state championship beginning during the 2020-21 academic year.

As you know, esports is one of the fastest growing activities across the nation. Currently, the PlayVS platform hosts sanctioned season and state tournaments in eight states with an additional six states running regular seasons without a live state tournament. Although only one school in North Dakota is currently hosting a competitive esports team, our discussions with colleagues across the state show a strong interest in adding this activity to their schools' programming. We believe that the twelve school threshold for adding an activity will easily be met during the 2019-20 school year.

Because the PlayVS platform hosts both fall and spring seasons, schools will have the ability to join together in two seasons without the sponsorship of the NDHSAA. Those seasons would allow schools to acclimate themselves to esports competition prior to an NDHSAA sponsored regular season and sanctioned state championship during the 2020-21 academic year.

The fall regular season starts in late October and runs through December with the season tournament occurring in January. The spring regular season starts in late February and runs through April with the season tournament occurring in May. Tournament play is conducted as a single elimination bracket. All competitions are scheduled by PlayVS, and regular season matches are played online with both schools staying at their home sites.

The financial impact on schools will be minimal.

1. Most schools' computer labs are already good enough to host esports games. Although schools may find that they wish to upgrade video cards, keyboards, or monitors, the basic computer lab in most schools will be enough to host the game platforms.

2. Because competitions are hosted remotely, there are no travel costs to schools.
3. Schools will need to find a supervisor/coach. Another added benefit of esports is that the coach does not necessarily need to be well-educated regarding esports. Most of our students will be more knowledgeable about the games than our coaches are, so any adult who can provide guidance with teamwork, communication, strategic thinking, leadership, cooperation, coping skills, perseverance, etc., can serve as an esports coach.
4. Currently, the PlayVS platform charges \$64 per player, per season.

Participation on esports teams are open to all students, and there is no participation cap to the size of a team. In this manner, schools can encourage participation from a diverse group of students, including students who may not be currently representing the school in other athletic or activity programs. If any board members have further questions about the potential benefits of esports programs or about our current club program at Red River High School, I can answer those questions during a board meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. A. Red', written in a cursive style.