

OFFICIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, September 30, 2013

Members Present:

Debby Karabess-Betts,
Dale Kleffman,
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake
Phil Long, Swartz Creek
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Bruce Moore, Essexville
Bruce Moss, Alma
John Mueller, Williamston
Nick Nolde, Escanaba

Mike Robillard, North Muskegon
Pete Ryan, Saginaw
Ken Schmaltz, Coloma
Jeff Spedoske, DeWitt
Gil Urban, St. Joseph

Staff:

Tony Bihn
Cole Malatinsky
Gina Mazzolini
Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The 2013-14 MHSAA Officials Review Committee met to review topics involving high school officiating. After introductions were completed, the committee reviewed the terms of appointment to the Officials Review Committee, as well as the charge and mission of the group relative to the MHSAA decision making process.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review of 2012-13 Actions: The committee received a copy of the minutes from last year's Officials Review committee.

Officials Recruitment & Retention: MHSAA staff reported historical data and current registration numbers in light of a renewed focus on recruiting new officials. Staff shared information relative to recruiting and retention efforts from a statewide and local perspective. A great deal of time was spent during the summer officials meetings bringing attention to the need for more officials in light of decreasing registrations the past three years. Items of note included concerns over officials being assigned doubleheaders in some sports where two separate crews could work, schools using fewer number of officials for games in some sports (1 official only in sub-varsity volleyball) and issues created by assigners and officials. Committee members provided several suggestions and ideas on this topic.

A long discussion took place regarding registration requirements for new, novice (2-4 year officials) and experienced officials. Conversation centered on potential requirements for first time officials and potential clinic requirements for novice officials moving forward. Information was provided on the MHSAA's current offerings of low-cost camps and clinics geared toward novice officials. The committee directed MHSAA staff to incorporate an "Officiating 101" component into the registration process. Officials will be required to complete an online component which would combine the *Officials Guidebook* exam content along with people and conflict skills instruction presented in a new online format.

Summary of Officiate Michigan Day and NASO-Grand Rapids: Many committee members were in attendance this past July in Grand Rapids for Officiate Michigan Day and the NASO Summit. The feedback from this summer's event was overwhelmingly positive, and the MHSAA intends to sponsor a large-scale officiating event every 2-4 years to build on this summer's successfully event.

Arbiter Sports Update: Tony Bihn, MHSAA Director of Information Technology, provided an update on all the Arbiter products being used in partnership with Arbiter Sports such as Arbiter Game, Arbiter One and Arbiter 360. MHSAA staff continues to meet with groups of schools and assigners as the Arbiter Game product moves forward with additional features and functionality being added every week. Mr. Bihn stressed the need for schools and assigners to continue providing constructive feedback to staff as progress continues on this project.

Officiating Business Practices: A long conversation took place regarding concerns with some questionable business practices with which some assigners and officials are involved, specifically dealing with taxation issues and the payment of officials directly by some assigners. Other areas of unethical practices were also discussed, and the committee was convinced that more direction needs to be provided to assigners to address the most serious of these issues.

There was strong consensus to propose to the Representative Council a new regulation that would require schools, when using and paying a third-party non-school assigner, to only use MHSAA Registered Assigners. To become, and remain in good standing a Registered Assigner, a person would need to comply with the Standards for Assigners as published in the *Officials Guidebook*. These standards will be expanded and revised to directly address some of the troubling business practices and behaviors being demonstrated by a small group of assigners.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. New *MHSAA Handbook*, Regulation II, Section 7 C- High schools and others which sponsor competition for member high school teams, and utilize and pay for the services of a third-party, non-school assigner for high school officiating contests, shall use only those assigners who are registered with the Michigan High School Athletic Association for the current year (14-0).