

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, March 23, 2017

Members Present:

Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Fred Smith, Benton Harbor
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Kris Isom, Adrian
Alvin Ward, Detroit

Staff Members Present:

Tom Rashid
Jack Roberts (Recorder)

Executive Committee Authority and Responsibility – The Executive Committee reviewed its authority under Article VII of the MHSAA Constitution and specifically its responsibility to consider each application for waiver of an eligibility requirement on its individual merits, determining if the regulation serves the purpose for which it was intended in each case or if the regulation works an undue hardship on any student who is the subject of a request for waiver. (These underlying criteria may not be restated for every subject of these minutes.)

The Executive Committee was reminded that it was the responsibility of each member school involved to provide sufficient information about the specific request for the Executive Committee to reach a decision without further investigation. If information is incomplete, contradictory or otherwise unclear or has been received too late to be studied completely, the Executive Committee may deny the request for waiver or delay action. Such requests may be resubmitted to the Executive Committee with additional information at a subsequent meeting or appealed to the full Representative Council.

It is possible that some of the information presented as facts to the Executive Committee by school personnel and others may be inaccurate. However, to avoid constant repetition in this report of phrases such as “it was alleged” or “it was reported,” no attempt is made in the introduction of each waiver request to distinguish between truth, allegation, hearsay, opinion, summary or conclusion. If any information provided to the Executive Committee is inaccurate, any decision of the Executive Committee to grant waiver of a regulation shall be null and void.

The Executive Committee is not authorized to approve waiver based on alleged or actual differences between schools based on “environment,” demographics, curriculum or extracurricular offerings. A determination of undue hardship is a matter addressed to the discretion of the Executive Committee within the educational philosophy and secondary role of voluntary extracurricular competitive athletics in the academic environment. The Executive Committee will avoid making exceptions that would create precedent that effectively changes a rule without Representative Council action or local board of education adoption, which would exceed Executive Committee authority. The contract the MHSAA has with member schools obligates the MHSAA to not change rules during the school year.

Students for whom waiver of a particular regulation is approved must be eligible in all other respects under all sections and interpretations of the regulations prior to their participation.

Adoption of these regulations, as well as policies, procedures and schedules of MHSAA tournaments, is a choice schools make locally when they consider their option of MHSAA membership. Consistent with rulings of the Attorney General and Michigan Supreme Court, schools are not bound by the decisions of the Executive Committee, but the association may limit participation in the postseason tournaments it sponsors to those schools which choose to apply rules and penalties as promulgated by the MHSAA and adopted by each member school’s board of education. The MHSAA exercises no independent authority over schools or students.

Bridgman and New Buffalo High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[D]) – The Executive Committee approved the addition of boys tennis (varsity only) to a cooperative program which already exists in wrestling between these two schools whose combined 2017-18 enrollment of 483 students will continue placement of one team in the Division 4 tournament. Both schools sponsored boys tennis previously; Bridgman will be the primary school. Support from the BCS Conference was received.

Harbor Springs and Petoskey-St. Michael Academy High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[E-1]) – The Executive Committee approved a subvarsity cooperative program in girls soccer between these two schools for the spring of 2017 due to a demonstrated history of inadequate participation. Harbor Springs sponsored girls soccer previously and will be the primary school. A cooperative program already exists between these two schools in girls tennis. Support from the Lake Michigan Conference was received.

Scottville-Mason County Central and Pentwater High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[E]) – The Executive Committee approved the addition of 11-player football (varsity and JV teams) to a cooperative program which already exists in girls soccer between these two schools whose combined 2017-18 enrollment is 435 students. Mason County Central sponsored football previously and will be the primary school. Support from the West Michigan Conference was received.

McBain-Northern Michigan Christian High School (Regulation I, Sections 2, 4 & 5) – A request to waive the maximum age and semesters sections of the eligibility regulation was made on behalf of a student who was born with cerebral palsy. She started school later than most children and is in her fifth year since first enrolling in the 9th grade. She is less than one year behind the maximum age limit. She participated in field hockey at East Grand Rapids and in soccer in the 12th grade at Northern Michigan Christian. She is 5'5" tall and weighs less than 100 pounds.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Howell High School (Regulation I, Section 7) – A request to waive the previous academic credit record regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who has medical issues and was hospitalized for 22 days in the fall of 2016. The student has been in counseling since October 2015. The student has credit in three of seven classes for the first semester of 2016-17 and is two classes short of 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time Howell student. The student is enrolled in six courses for the second semester.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Adrian High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91st school day of enrollment was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student who attended Adrian-Lenawee Christian High School and enrolled at Adrian on March 13, 2017.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver effective with the student's 91st school day of enrollment at Adrian High School starting March 13, 2017.

Bridgman High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student whose family will be relocating to New Zealand for the second semester of the 2017-18 school year because the father, who is a physician, has an opportunity to practice medicine overseas. The student and an incoming 9th-grade sister will be returning to enroll at Bridgman for the start of the 2018-19 school year and live in their former residence which is in the Stevensville-Lakeshore Public School District.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Burr Oak High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student who was the victim of harassment by another Sturgis High School student in her own home in January 2016. The student attempted to stay at the former school and change class schedules but was struggling emotionally, socially and academically. The student enrolled at Burr Oak, the neighboring district, on Feb. 6, 2017. Support for eligibility was submitted by the former school.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Croswell-Lexington High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91st school day of enrollment was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who attended Yale High School and enrolled at Croswell-Lexington on March 8, 2017.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver effective with the student's 91st school day of enrollment at Croswell-Lexington High School starting March 8, 2017.

Dollar Bay High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation and specifically Interpretation 62 (public school of residence) was made on behalf of a 12th-grade student who is moving from her divorced mother in Wisconsin to her father's home in the Lake Linden-Hubbell School District. The student attended Dollar Bay Schools for grades 7, 8, 10 and 11 and Lake Linden-Hubbell for the 9th grade. To begin the 12th grade in 2016-17, the student moved with her mother and stepfather to Wisconsin. An otherwise completed Educational Transfer Form was submitted.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Grand Blanc High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation and specifically Interpretation 62 (public school of residence) was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student from Virginia whose father has accepted a position with the school district and made an offer on a house that stated residents could choose either Grand Blanc or Goodrich Schools. After making the offer, the family was informed the house, which has a Grand Blanc mailing address, was located in the Goodrich School District.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Howard City-Tri County High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91st school day of enrollment based on compelling circumstances was made on behalf of 10th- and 11th-grade siblings who attended Tri County Schools their entire career except for a six-week period from Feb. 6 to March 17, 2017 when the students enrolled at Newaygo for academic reasons. The students' single mother's job has transferred to Troy and the students will be residing with elderly grandparents who live in Howard City. The students reenrolled at Tri County on March 20, 2017.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver effective with the student's 91st school day of enrollment at Tri County High School starting March 20, 2017.

Jackson Preparatory & Early College High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student whose older sister was assaulted by another student at Vandercook Lake in the summer of 2016. The student who committed that assault has siblings that attend the former school, making it very uncomfortable for the student and affecting the entire family.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Kalkaska High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation and permit the use of a second Educational Transfer Form was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who is returning to Kalkaska after enrollment at Mancelona during the 2015-16 school year and participation in softball. An Educational Transfer Form was signed on April 8, 2015 for the student's participation at Mancelona. The student reenrolled at Kalkaska on Jan. 23, 2017, after she moved to her father's residence.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Lake Odessa-Lakewood High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student who attended Lakewood Schools from Kindergarten through 7th grade and lived with his parents in the Lakewood School District most of his life until his parents divorced in 2013. The student's mother died in 2014 and the student then moved to Laingsburg to live with his father. The student attended Laingsburg Schools for the 8th, 9th and one half of the 10th grade and participated in athletics. On Feb. 3, 2017, the student reenrolled in Lakewood and is living in the school district with an aunt.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Portage Central High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who moved between divorced parents into his father's residence in Vicksburg to begin the 2016-17 school year. Vicksburg neglected to complete an Educational Transfer Form for the student, which caused him to participate while ineligible in six football games at Vicksburg (games 3-9), which have been forfeited to opponents. The student attended Portage Schools for grades 7-10 and played the first football game for Portage Central in the fall of 2016 before moving to his father's home in Vicksburg. In January 2017, the father was incarcerated for one year and the mother moved to the Climax-Scotts School District. The student has moved in with an uncle in Portage and enrolled at Portage Central on Feb. 7, 2017. The student had attended Portage Schools from the 7th through 10th grades before his one semester at Vicksburg where he participated while ineligible.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Traverse City Central High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who was expelled from Clio at the end of the 2015-16 school year and attended the Michigan Youth Challenge Academy from Aug. 1 through Dec. 16, 2016. Rather than return to Clio where the student had made bad decisions, the student moved to the residence of his stepmother in the Traverse City Central attendance area and enrolled on Jan. 24, 2017. The birth mother, stepmother and father determined that the student should not return to Clio. The father and stepmother have been living apart for over one and one-half years but are not divorced (Exception 2). The birth mother has remarried and would not be able to care for the student.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Webberville High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 9th-grade student who attended Webberville Schools since Kindergarten except for four and one-half school days from Jan. 30-Feb. 8, 2017 when the student attended Fowlerville High School. The student reenrolled at Webberville on Feb. 8, 2017.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Subvarsity Waiver Requests Meeting All Conditions of Section 9(B) – The Executive Committee approved immediate eligibility at the subvarsity level for the following transferring 9th- or 10th-grade students (after entering 9th grade, before completing 10th grade) **who have not previously participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest in any MHSAA sport at the high school level** (whether MHSAA member schools or not) and who do not qualify for one of the 15 stated exceptions to the transfer regulation and have transferred for reasons having nothing to do with athletics, discipline or family finances and would not require Executive Committee evaluation or comparison of school demographics or curriculum:

Requesting High School	Grade	Former High School	Date of Enrollment	Length of Subvarsity Eligibility Status
Ann Arbor-Pioneer	9	Northville	Jan. 30, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Gaylord	9	Home School	Jan. 30, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Grand Blanc	9	Flushing	Feb. 3, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Grand Rapids-West Catholic	9	Illinois-Benet Academy	Jan. 23, 2017	Reminder of 16-17 school year
North Adams-Jerome	9	Jonesville	Feb. 1, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Owendale-Gagetown	9	Cass City	Nov. 21, 2016	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Plainwell	9	Portage Central	Mar. 13, 2017	91 st school day of enrollment
Reese	9	Millington	Feb. 21, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
South Haven	9	Bangor	Jan. 30, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Union City	9	Coldwater	Feb. 1, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Vermontville-Maple Valley	10	Illinois	Nov. 28, 2016	Remainder of 16-17 school year
Williamston	9	Lansing Catholic	Jan. 30, 2017	Remainder of 16-17 school year

Ann Arbor-Pioneer High School (Regulation II, Section 11) – Pursuant to Interpretation 241, a request to waive the four-player rule for the 2016-17 school year was made on behalf of a newly hired assistant boys and girls swim coach who would run an off-season swimming program through either the Ann Arbor Recreation and Education Department or through the Saline Swim Team (a non-school club team). His primary source of income is coaching non-school swimming. The program will be open to the general public and run from March-May. It is anticipated that 40-100 students ages 11-18 will participate from the Ann Arbor Public Schools and other surrounding districts. Approximately 15-20 of the participants will be current Pioneer students. This program will be an alternative to the more strenuous club swim schedules offered in the area, involve weight training and dry land conditioning, and not participate in swim competitions as many other club swim programs have done. The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver for another coach in this same program in the 2015-16 school year.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver for this coach for the 2016-17 school year.

Byron Center High School (Regulation II, Section 11[H]) – Pursuant to Interpretation 241, a request to waive the four-player rule for the 2017-18 school year was made on behalf of the head girls and boys swimming & diving coach who is employed as the aquatics director of the Byron Center Community Pool and also coaches the Byron Center Dawgs Swim Program. It is anticipated that the “BCD” program will have 250 participants ages 5-24, including students from several neighboring schools and districts: Grand Rapids-South Christian, Caledonia, Zeeland East and West, Holland, Holland Christian, East Kentwood, Jenison, Thornapple Kellogg, Otsego, Allegan, Grandville, Rockford, Wayland and Byron Center. It is estimated that 20 girls and 15 boys from Byron Center Schools in grades 7-12 will participate in the “BCD” program in 2017-18. This coach has been granted a waiver for employment while with Holland High School previously and with Byron Center for the past few years.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver for this coach for the 2017-18 school year.

MKO Middle School Athletic Conference (Regulation IV, Section 10) – A request was made to allow this league to begin middle school football practice five days earlier than allowed by the regulation on Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2017. Practice is permitted on the 14th Monday before Thanksgiving (Aug. 21, 2017). The early start date would allow schools the option to have three additional days of practice so they may scrimmage on the Wednesday or Thursday of the last week of August prior to Labor Day so as to have nine practice days prior to the scrimmage. It would also permit schools to not practice on the Friday or Monday of Labor Day. The MKO Conference offers four seasons of participation with winter sports beginning on Monday, Oct. 16, 2017, and this would permit some time off between fall and winter seasons.

In March 2016, the Representative Council did not approve a proposal from the Junior High/Middle School Committee to change the date for all schools but rather suggested schools or leagues with four seasons seek Executive Committee waiver of the current start date. The request was approved in this case.

Next Meetings – The next meetings of the Executive Committee are scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 8:30 am in East Lansing (Audit & Finance meeting follows); Sunday, May 7, 2017, at 10:30 am in Glen Arbor (Rep Council meets that afternoon); and Wednesday, June 14, 2017, at 9 am in East Lansing.