

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

MHSAA Office, January 6, 2009

Members Present:

Mike Alley, St. Clair
Bob Guse, Cassopolis
Lloyd Dozeman, Holland
Terri Clock, Muskegon
Keith Eldred, Williamston
Rich Franklin, Athens
Rudy Godefroidt, Hemlock

Kay Johnson, Morenci
Steve Newkirk, Clare
Jeff Phillips, Owosso
Bill Taylor, South Haven
Rob White, Saline

Staff Member Present:

Randy Allen, Recorder

The MHSAA Junior High/Middle School Committee met in the MHSAA Office Building to review topics suggested for discussion by the MHSAA Staff and member schools.

CALENDAR ISSUES/FALL START DATES

The committee discussed the earliest allowed date for the start of fall practice, currently the Monday before Labor Day. Several schools and conferences had expressed concern to the MHSAA that with the calendar moving to its latest orientation in 2009, it would be difficult for leagues & conferences with four season schedules to complete two seasons before the December holiday break. A number of options were considered to allow an earlier start date. Although some concern was expressed for students reporting earlier for fall sports, the committee supported a change to the 4th Monday in August for schools, leagues and conferences that wished to exercise an option for an earlier start.

HANDBOOK REGULATIONS

The committee reviewed the MHSAA 6th grade task force report studying expanded participation by 6th grade students in Junior High/Middle School athletic programs. A task force was created at the recommendation of this committee in 2008 with Representative Council approval. No clear consensus for allowing 6th grade participation has developed through surveys, Council discussion or other membership feedback; but with more 6th graders located in the same building with 7th and/or 8th graders the committee supported the task force concepts for further Council consideration. It was generally accepted that the broader issue of 6th grade participation should advance for more membership discussion as well.

With academic eligibility requirements changing at the 9-12 grade level for MHSAA member schools, the committee reviewed the existing MHSAA Junior High/Middle School academic requirements. It was agreed that the current standards best serve grades 7-8 and no change was advanced. The committee also reviewed the out-of-season 3-player rule coaching restriction and whether grades 7-8 should be excluded, but no change was recommended. Current regulations regarding length of season and contest limits were reviewed with no changes suggested.

A proposal from the football committee for changing the length of football quarters from 8 minutes to 10 minutes was discussed. The committee felt that Interpretation #264 meets the needs of programs with large numbers for additional participation and did not support the change to 10 minute quarters.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Under regulation IV, Section 10, change the fall season start dates for Junior High/Middle school practices from the current Monday before Labor Day to the 4th Monday in August effective in 2009-10. (12-0)
2. Oppose the football committee recommendation to allow 10 minute quarters in Junior High/Middle School football games. Retain the current 8 minute quarter limit. (12-0).
3. Support the 6th grade participation task force concept and Clarifying Commentary to the Representative Council for further consideration. (9-3)