

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

MHSAA, January 4, 2011

Members Present:

Kathy Bondsteel, Jonesville
Duska Brumm, Vermontville
Gary Buslepp, Grosse Pointe
Al Gulick, Warren
Bob Guse, Cassopolis
Jason Mellema, Ravenna

Steve Newkirk, Clare
Kevin O'Rourke, Rockford
Tony Petkus, Fennville
Brad Robinson, Fraser

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.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL ACTION

The committee reviewed proposals recently approved by the Representative Council. It was noted that the allowance for playing two basketball games on a day not followed by a day of school is being considered by many leagues and conferences as more awareness grows of the provision and its benefits. With the committee recommendation and Council approval for the softball pitching distance to remain at 40 feet for JH/MS games while the high school distance changes to 43 feet in 2011, it was determined that schools or conferences that wish to use 43 feet for JH/MS games ask for a rules deviation. The change in the fall start date to the 4th Monday in August was also regarded as successful.

HANDBOOK REGULATIONS

Several MHSAA Handbook regulations were reviewed. The committee took specific action in two areas. First, the committee recommended an increase in the academic standard for athletic eligibility from the current requirement of passing 50% of a full class load to passing 66% of a full class load in the current and previous semester. It was felt that this is a more appropriate academic requirement and better prepares JH/MS students for high school athletic participation, and that the 50% standard was too low as in some cases a student would only have to pass two classes to be eligible.

Second, in reviewing the JH/MS wrestling season limits language in Regulation IV, Section 11 it was recommended to eliminate language referencing written requirements between parents, coaches and principals to determine minimum weights as it does not reflect current accepted practices.

The current regulation restricting athletic participation at the grade 7-8 level to no more than one sport preseason was reviewed, but no change recommended as the committee felt such a limit was appropriate. A discussion took place regarding out-of-season coaching restrictions and it was suggested to add language in Regulation II, Section 11-H to reinforce that rule also applies to coaches at the JH/MS level. Age limits and combined team regulations were reviewed. The committee supported the addition of new language in Interpretation 259 to clarify when combined grade 7-8-9 teams are allowed, and also supported the deletion of Regulation IV, Section 10-C if staff and Council determines the language no longer applies and is unclear in its intent.

Also reviewed were regulations pertaining to home school eligibility, alternative school eligibility, 6th grade participation waivers, scrimmage rules, undue influence and restrictions under the Limited Team Membership rule. No changes were recommended as all language and regulations were reinforced to be satisfactory and appropriate. A discussion took place about adding a required number of practice dates prior to the first contest, but there was no support for a proposal.

GENERAL TOPICS

Changes to the MHSAA physical examination documents were reviewed with no edits or changes suggested. Several topics were recommended for the JH/MS sessions at the MIAAA annual conference in March with special emphasis on the practice restrictions of Interpretation 11 regarding

JH/MS students being present at high school practice sessions and out-of-season coaching regulations. The Wolverine Conference request to allow JH/MS and high school practice to be conducted together with students in direct participation with each other was not supported by the committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Change the Junior/Middle school previous and current term academic requirements in MHSAA Handbook Regulation III, Sections 7 & 8 to passing 66% of a full class load for athletic eligibility. Change the enrollment requirement in Regulation III, Section 1(A)-3 to 66%. (9-1)
2. In Regulation IV, Section 11 under wrestling rules and weight classes, eliminate weight certification items 4-a, 4-b, and 4-c. (10-0)