

OFFICIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, September 26, 2016

Members Present:

Randy Allen, Mason
Brad Bush, Chelsea
Paul Gaudard, Flint
Brian Gordon, Novi
Don Gustafson, St. Ignace
Jim Haskins, Grand Rapids
Freddy Krieger, Baroda
Bill Park, Lake Ann
Keith Richardson, Burton
Mary Spade, Bangor

Jeff Spedoske, DeWitt
Jeremy Valentine, Whitmore Lake
Gary Wagenschutz, Warren

Staff:

Tony Bihn
Sam Davis
Laura Roberts
Mark Uyl (Recorder)
Faye Verellen

The 2016-17 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

Officials Fees: The committee reviewed the new tournament officiating fees which included increases in all sports for the 2016-17. Data was also shared from the most recent regular season pay survey, and discussion took place on how that information was used in setting the increased fees for this current school year and beyond.

Officials Recruitment & Retention: MHSAA staff reported on the new online official's course that all first-time officials must complete as part of the registration process in an effort to improve the education and retention of new officials. The committee was also provided updated historical data and current registration numbers in light of a renewed focus on recruiting new officials, along with demographic information of those currently registered. Staff shared information relative to recruiting and retention efforts from a statewide and local perspective. This included the new "Help Wanted, Just Whistle" campaign which includes multi-media spots on both television and radio, along with partnerships with local associations, universities and high schools in getting involved with job fairs, classes and league meetings. Committee members offered some additional groups for outreach in terms of recruiting. The committee also reviewed the program where member schools, Approved Associations and Registered Assigners are provided two complimentary registrations for any first-time official. A long conversation took place on how to better communicate with assigners and local associations in making sure that new, beginning officials get assignment opportunities early on to keep

them interested and encouraged to grow, learn and develop. Another discussion topic was an overview of the former officials survey which recently launched. This data and feedback will be used to improve the officiating experience in hopes of increasing retention rates. Finally, information was provided on the emphasis from the Representative Council on recruitment and retention, along with early plans for recruitment “regional strike teams”.

Rating System Demonstration: Staff provided a demonstration of the new online rating system that member schools are using to rate officials. The group was very supportive and positive about the new system and the ease that schools now have in submitting accurate and timely ratings.

MHSAA Officiating Contract Terms: A long discussion took place on current officials contract language that covers Act of God situations and officials compensation along with other instances where games or contests are being cancelled due to low numbers or schools having to drop programs altogether.

Arbiter Sports Update: Staff 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. The MHSAA will continue to use Arbiter for more tournament assigning and payment of tournament officials. A suggestion was made for the MHSAA to establish “first assignment dates” in sports so all assigners can work together to get games covered rather than have the earliest assigner get all of the “first choice” officials.

2016-17 Camps & Clinics: An update was given with the schedule for the low-cost officiating camps and clinics being offered during the current school and plans for next summer’s offerings in several sports. There was little to no support for required or mandatory clinics as a condition for tournament assignments.

Weather Rule and Technology: A good conversation took place on the current 30 minute rule for lightning and thunder in light of technology that is currently being used by schools and officials to monitor weather situations. There are some situations where available weather technology would suspend a contest sooner than seeing or hearing lightning/thunder and others where technology would allow return to play sooner than waiting the required time once a weather system has clearly moved from the area. Staff will continue to investigate the availability and cost of such systems in light of the current rules and regulations involving weather and game suspension regulations.

Additional Items: A brief update was provided from the Midwest Officials Summit along with a quick overview on the MHSAA Officials Insurance program.

Correspondence: The committee reviewed an email from a registered MHSAA official that resides across the border in northern Ohio. The email proposed a change in the current policy that allows registered but out-of-state officials to work in the first round of a MHSAA tournament, only. The committee did not support expanding the policy to allow officials in this situation to work in the later rounds of the tournament (Regional-Final).

Recommendations to the Representative Council:
None