

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

East Lansing, December 4, 2015

Members Present:

Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Dave Derocher, Reese
Kyle Guerrant, Lansing
Kris Isom, Adrian
Sean Jacques, Calumet
Maureen Klocke, Yale
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake
Orlando Medina, Harrison Township
Cheri Meier, Ionia
Jason Mellema, Pewamo-Westphalia
Chris Miller, Gobles
Steve Newkirk, Clare
Pete Ryan, Saginaw
Fred Smith, Benton Harbor
John Thompson, Brighton
Al Unger, Kingsford
Alvin Ward, Detroit
Pat Watson, West Bloomfield

Also Present:

Scott Eldridge, Lansing
Don Gustafson, St. Ignace
Chris Iannuzzi, Lansing
Kurt Tiesman, Lansing
Bill Zaagman, Lansing

Staff Members Present:

Tony Bihn
Jordan Cobb
Andy Frushour
Nate Hampton
Cody Inglis
John Johnson
Geoff Kimmerly
Gina Mazzolini
Andi Osters
Tom Rashid
Jack Roberts (Recorder)
Mark Uyl
Kathy Vrugink Westdorp

President Scott Grimes welcomed Don Gustafson, superintendent at St. Ignace Area Schools and veteran MHSAA registered official. Mr. Gustafson is the first person from the Upper Peninsula to be elected to a statewide position on the Representative Council. His term begins with the organizational meeting that is convened immediately after the current meeting is adjourned.

Accounts of Meetings – Motion by Steve Newkirk, supported by Dave Derocher, to approve the following accounts of meetings: Representative Council meeting of May 3-4, 2015; Executive Committee meetings of May 3, June 10, Aug. 5, Aug. 26, Sept. 9, Sept. 30 and Nov. 4, 2015; and Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting of Sept. 28, 2015. Adopted.

REPORTS

Legislation – Bill Zaagman presented the report of Governmental Consultant Services, Inc., discussing general, school and sports issues before the Michigan Legislature.

Litigation – Attorney Scott Eldridge reported to the Council on the status of legal matters involving or of interest to the MHSAA.

Administration – The executive director commended staff for extraordinary service in communicating the purpose and principles of school sports, noting especially ...

- The *Second Half* by MHSAA managed by Geoff Kimmerly;
- "This Week in High School Sports" produced by John Johnson;
- *benchmarks* edited by Rob Kaminski;
- MHSAA.com managed by Rob Kaminski.

The executive director introduced Kurt Tiesman of Rockbridge Sports Group who coordinates corporate sales for the MHSAA. Several recent successes include the Michigan National Guard becoming the presenting sponsor of several MHSAA tournaments.

It was reported that the proposed amendment to Article II, Section 1 of the MHSAA Constitution was adopted by a vote of 561 to 87. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, this will allow school districts the option to join the MHSAA starting at the 6th-grade level and will permit 6th-graders to participate with 7th- and 8th-graders without MHSAA Executive Committee waiver.

The executive director provided a brief overview of the MHSAA's fall tournaments. Andi Osters reviewed recent initiatives to improve promotion of tournaments and to enhance the spectator experience at tournaments, including a new vendor for online ticket purchases at cross country, group ticket sales for the Football Finals, and expanding social media tools.

Andy Frushour reported on several student services, including the yearly Sportsmanship Summits conducted at four locations during November, the upcoming Battle of the Fans and the online Captains Course that was developed in Michigan and has been completed by more than 8,200 students nationwide.

Tony Bihn provided an oral report of efforts the MHSAA makes to protect the privacy of its constituents, to frustrate cyberattacks and to prepare for information system disasters. Kathy Westdorp described the insurance policies the MHSAA has purchased to provide protection in the event of data compromise and computer fraud. Council members were reminded of insurance policies that protect them in their capacity as MHSAA board members. The existing indemnification policy for board members and others is in the process of being revised by legal counsel and will be presented to the Council for approval in March.

The executive director reviewed the 2015 Update Meeting Opinion Poll, highlighting responses to questions related to discussion and action items on the Representative Council's current meeting agenda.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Health & Safety – The Representative Council was provided a report regarding the MHSAA's efforts to improve the four "H's" of health and safety, in each case examining the status of recent changes or initiatives, then the most pressing current issues, and finally other issues on the radar for future focus. The most prominent topics of this long report and discussion were:

- **Health Histories**
 - **The earliest date for preparticipation exams.** The 2015 MHSAA Update Meeting Opinion Poll shows weak support for a more lenient policy and longer effective period for preparticipation physicals.
 - **The future of electronic health history records.** The 2015 MHSAA Update Meeting Opinion Poll reveals the membership is open to permitting the use of electronic forms that accumulate students' health histories so that only changes (not entirely new forms) are required each year. This would not change the requirement that a physical exam occur and the form be signed each year by the MD, DO, Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant. The MHSAA will continue to monitor the rollout of electronic forms in the states of Georgia, Minnesota, Ohio and Tennessee.
- **Heads**
 - **Head Injury Reports.** The executive director commended Kathy Westdorp and Cole Malatinsky for efforts to attain nearly 100 percent compliance by high schools with the requirement to report possible concussions that occurred at practices and contests of fall sports. Ms. Westdorp identified issues that slowed compliance during the first season. She reported that this new requirement increased demonstrably both awareness and education relative to concussion care in Michigan school sports.

- **Concussion Detection Pilot Programs.** The executive director again commended Kathy Westdorp for her oversight of the pilot programs that not only have focused increased attention to concussion education and detection in the 62 schools involved during the fall season, but also have increased awareness and discussion of concussion care among the constituents of other schools as well as the media and general public. On average, pilot schools reported a higher number of concussions than other high schools. From her regular oversight throughout the fall and from surveys returned from pilot schools late in the fall, Ms. Westdorp identified successes so far and countermeasures being implemented to overcome challenges during the first season of the pilot programs.
- **Concussion care insurance.** Mark Uyl provided a general summary of claims under the concussion care insurance the MHSAA has purchased at no expense to schools or families to encourage prompt, professional medical attention is available for suspected concussions regardless of family circumstances.

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Karen Leinaar, to approve the release of preliminary data accumulated during the fall season as a result of required head injury reports, concussion detection pilot programs, and concussion care insurance. More comprehensive data is to be reserved for the complete 2015-16 school year report in the summer of 2016. Adopted.

- **Concussion Protocols.** The Council discussed removal from play protocols. It was noted that the leadership of most schools favors the current requirement that only an MD, DO, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner may provide the written approval to return a student to activity, and that the approval must be unconditional. A smaller group of local school leaders and others would prefer language that is both broader in terms of authorized medical professional categories and more limited in the training and experience that professionals must have – e.g., “appropriate licensed medical professional trained in the recognition and care of concussions.” There is concern that this wording is open to too much interpretation and shifts liability from medical offices to school districts.
- **Soccer.** The MHSAA Soccer Committee will discuss recent actions by US Soccer to reduce heading in youth soccer.
- **Girls lacrosse.** There continues to be a deep divide in the girls lacrosse community regarding head protection – some seeing this as an imperative, others legitimately concerned that head protection will lead to a rougher and less safe game. Ms. Westdorp reported that an ASTM standard for women's lacrosse helmets will be established by Jan. 1, 2017. Head protection will continue to be optional under US Women's Lacrosse rules; but if head protection is worn, it will have to meet the new ASTM standard, which is intended to provide some protection for ball-to-head and stick-to-head situations, not head-to-head collisions.
- **Football.** The Council was advised that the MHSAA Football Committee will revisit the Football Practice Policies adopted prior to the 2014 season in light of subsequent actions by other states and the National Federation of State High School Associations.
- **Heat**
 - **Practice limits for all sports.** The 2015 MHSAA Update Meeting Opinion Poll indicates that more than 87 percent of 619 respondents favor practice limitations similar to football (three-hour maximum for a single practice and five-hour maximum on days with multiple practice sessions).

- **Hearts**
 - **CPR requirement for high school varsity head coaches.** Only three member high schools failed to comply with the first-time requirement in the fall of 2015 that all of their head coaches have a valid certification in CPR by the deadline (Sept. 17) or be prohibited from coaching or attending any MHSAA tournament where the non-compliant coach's team was participating. Eighty percent of high schools arranged in-person CPR training for all their high school varsity head coaches, and two-thirds of high schools included assistant and subvarsity coaches in this school-arranged in-person training.
 - **“Anyone Can Save A Life” program.** The implementation booklet for this program, developed in Minnesota, was sent to all high school athletic directors in June, and there have been many reminders to suggest utilization of this resource to revitalize local emergency action plans.
 - **“MiHEARTSafe Schools.”** This program, developed by a multi-agency work group of the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, has been supported by the MHSAA. It references the MHSAA preparticipation physical examination/medical history form and the MHSAA's head coach CPR requirement.

The Council was provided statistics and observations regarding compliance with two of the recent enhancements to coaches preparation relative to health and safety:

- **Risk management meeting requirement for high school assistant coaches.** Eleven member schools failed to attest by the deadline that all their fall season assistant and subvarsity coaches completed the rules/risk management meeting requirement in 2015.
- **CAP requirement for high school varsity head coaches hired for the first time in Michigan after July 31, 2016.** Ms. Westdorp described the MHSAA's efforts to prepare for this requirement, focusing on delivery of content by MHSAA trained facilitators and the MHSAA's tracking of compliance at the local level.

The Council also discussed the reemerging issue of overuse injuries that is receiving increased national attention. The executive director will appoint and coordinate a task force consisting of both staff members and local school personnel to create and implement tactics during 2016 that will capitalize on the renewed concerns for specialization and increasing support for the multi-sport experience for youth and adolescent athletes.

Junior High/Middle School Issues – In March of 2015, at the time the Representative Council was approving for submission to the membership the proposal to amend the MHSAA constitution to permit schools the option to join the MHSAA at the 6th-grade level, the Council reviewed a comprehensive list of changes that this amendment would suggest or even require to be made in the *MHSAA Handbook*. That list, revised as necessary, was presented to the Council for additional review. Most attention was devoted to the application of out-of-season coaching rules to 6th-graders. A draft of the 2016-17 MHSAA Membership Resolution was reviewed. The Council will vote on these matters in March.

Transfer Issues – Staff provided an oral report on recent experiences and trends relative to Section 9(E) and 9(F) of Regulation I – the athletic **motivated** and athletic **related** sub-sections of the Transfer Regulation. In spite of widespread concern for athletic motivated or related transfers, the 2015 MHSAA Update Meeting Opinion Poll reveals more sentiment to relax than tighten the Transfer Rule, especially for students who have not participated in a high school sport previously or who are seeking eligibility at only the subvarsity level. Concerns remain for high profile transfers in metropolitan areas.

The Council received both written and oral reports regarding international student transfers, especially addressing problems and solutions related to direct placements and dormitory program.

Council members were also apprised of concerns regarding the exception to the Transfer Regulation for residential students of boarding schools and of some progress toward reduced use of this exception by one or more boarding schools on a voluntary basis.

Out-of-Season Coaching Rules – Staff provided an oral report and Council members offered observations of the impact of recent rules revisions, including the change from a “three-player” rule to a “four-player” rule out of season during the school year.

Cross Country Regionals – Cody Inglis provided a report on progress to address incomplete teams and unbalanced Lower Peninsula Cross Country Regionals. Update Meeting Opinion Poll results were reviewed. A special task force to prepare proposals for the Council is continuing to meet.

Minimum Participation – Advancing a topic from last May, Cody Inglis described minimum participation policies of surrounding states as a prelude to considering if the MHSAA should consider for all sports the policy it now has for alpine skiing, ice hockey and soccer. Based on the research presented, there was no sentiment by the Council to advance a minimum participation policy to additional sports in Michigan.

Calendar – Advancing another topic from last May’s Council meeting, Kathy Westdorp provided a review of two issues in schools that could affect or be affected by the school sports calendar in Michigan: the balanced calendar and standardized testing.

NEW BUSINESS

Looking Forward – Council members provided oral and written input regarding the “next big thing” the MHSAA should be alert to in the way of serving athletic administrators, coaches, officials, students and others.

Girls Lacrosse – Motion by Steve Newkirk, supported by Vic Michaels, to approve the Girls Lacrosse Committee recommendation to not accept the new overtime rule of US Women’s Lacrosse and to retain the current overtime procedures of MHSAA girls lacrosse. Adopted.

Ice Hockey – Cody Inglis provided a report on plans to address (1) the number of schools in the Regionals of the MHSAA tournament, and (2) seeding of the MHSAA tournament.

Women in Sports Leadership Award – There were six candidates for the Women in Sports Leadership Award recommended by the MHSAA Awards Committee. These were presented to the Representative Council for a vote. The name of the recipient will be released at an appropriate time and the recipient will be honored during the Women in Sports Leadership Conference Feb. 7, 2016.

Charles E. Forsythe Award – There were six candidates recommended by the Awards Committee, for the Charles E. Forsythe Award presented to the Representative Council for a ballot vote. The names of the recipients will be released at an appropriate time and the recipient will be honored during the Boys Basketball Finals Tournament on March 26, 2016.

Meeting Expenses – Expenses for this meeting were approved at the specified hotel rate for accommodations, the IRS-specified meal allowance and a 40¢ per mile mileage allowance round-trip.

Future Meetings – The next meeting of the Representative Council will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2016, 8:15 a.m. at the MHSAA building in East Lansing. The spring meeting of the Representative Council will be held May 1-2, 2016, at The Homestead Resort in Glen Arbor. The fall meeting will be held on Friday, Dec. 2, 2016, at the MHSAA building in East Lansing.

The meeting was adjourned.