

2025-26 MHSAA BASEBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, January 15, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jay Alexander, Detroit
Tom Bullinger, Tecumseh
Rob Fay, Houghton
Kris Herman, Maple City (MHSBCA)
Shayne Mishler, Montrose
Matt Moffett, Cedar Springs

Matt Seidl, Pinckney
Brett Steele, Battle Creek
Justin Thorington, Traverse City
Don Watchowski, Novi (MIAAA)

MHSAA STAFF

Brad Bush (Recorder)

The 2025-26 MHSAA Baseball Committee met in the John E. “Jack” Roberts MHSAA building to review baseball topics and the tournament series. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process and the charge of the Baseball Committee. Agenda items from correspondence, staff, committee members, and the baseball coaches’ association were compiled. Agenda items from the 2024-2025 meeting were reviewed. A thorough review of all new NFHS rules and points of emphasis were presented to the group.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

NEW NFHS RULES / DOUBLE FIRST BASE

Brad Bush reviewed new NFHS rules with the committee. The 2027 implementation of the double first base was discussed. There was concern shared regarding the cost of implementing this across the state. In addition, the lack of supporting safety-related research was a concern to the committee. The committee agreed that waiting until 2027 for implementation was the correct option. Information was shared regarding the MHSAA request to return this as a rule optional for states. More information will be shared with athletic directors and coaches later in the spring.

SCRIMMAGES AND SPRING TRAVEL

The committee was concerned about making sure all coaches and athletic directors understand the difference between a game and a scrimmage. The need to make sure that both teams know it is a scrimmage and all rules are followed defining it as a scrimmage. Not charging admission, defining it as a scrimmage, and altering at least one rule to allow it to be a scrimmage was discussed. Part of the discussion included concerns about scrimmages that are being held that are reported on social media as a game, including scores, box scores, and statistics. This should not be happening. The MHSBCA presented concerns about schools that travel for spring trips and are unable to find a team to scrimmage. Coaches request the opportunity to practice with other schools which are on a spring trip. A proposal was passed unanimously to allow schools to scrimmage another school from a contiguous state when they are on an approved out-of-state trip for practice. The committee felt this matches the current rule for competition in contiguous states.

PITCH COUNT

The committee discussed the survey results from the fall regarding pitch count. There was lengthy discussion about the merits of a pitch count system vs. number of outs in a week. The committee asked that MHSAA staff have further discussion on this topic. There was agreement that coaches should have some type of discipline when a pitch count violation occurs. There was also discussion related to the removal of a team from the MHSAA tournament when a violation occurs. MHSAA staff will have more discussion related to forfeiture by a team when this occurs, and staff will continue to emphasize the importance of the pitch count person communicating at the tournament sites.

MPR AND TOURNAMENT SELECTION PROCESS

The possibility of using MPR to seed the District, like other sports, was discussed and agreed that baseball would like to move in this direction at some point. There was concern that if seeding became a reality this could change scheduling and how coaches approach non-league games. The committee felt it was important to continue to study this topic. The committee was in full agreement that, when possible, the Site Selection Committee should consider sites that are hosting softball. When possible, preference should be given to schools that can host both softball and baseball, which helps local athletic directors and fans see both sports on the same day. The MHSBCA agreed to conduct a survey of schools who now have artificial turf fields. This will be used to help in the site selection process.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS AND AEDs

The committee reviewed the requirements for MHSAA tournament hosts, specifically that an AED be within three minutes of the tournament site. It was recommended that tournament hosts include this information at the district draw meetings in the spring to ensure that at least one AED will be on-site for the MHSAA Baseball Tournament.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Allow teams that are traveling outside of the contiguous states, with an approved Out-of-State Travel Form, be allowed to scrimmage a school-based team that is from Michigan or a contiguous state. (10-0)