

2024-25 MHSAA JUNIOR HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, February 13, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – held via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT

Miyasim Bazzi, Dearborn
Keith Cravotta, DeWitt
Michael Johnston, Jenison
Jason Kemler, Manistee
Garnett Kohler, Yale
Jolinda Lucas, Grand Rapids (MIAAA)

Jason Morris, Chelsea (MIAAA)
Brian Southworth, Decatur
Adam Stefanski, Boyne City

MHSAA STAFF

Brad Bush (Recorder)

The MHSAA Junior High/Middle School Committee met to review topics identified for discussion by the MHSAA staff, Representative Council, and member schools. The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the first 2024 committee meeting. A review of changes in regulations over the past 5-7 years related to middle school athletics were discussed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

MHSAA WEBSITE; ADDITION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL SECTION TO THE MHSAA WEBSITE

There was a recommendation from the committee in 2023-24 to update the website with a section devoted specifically to middle school athletics. This part of the MHSAA website is now live. The committee encouraged more education for athletic directors to know where it is located and to encourage middle school administrators to use this new section of the website. The webpage includes links to all the areas middle school administrators would use. Two committee members will be present at the MIAAA conference in March to help discuss the website during the middle school presentation.

HIGH SCHOOL MEETINGS AT MIDDLE SCHOOLS

The committee discussed *MHSAA Handbook*, Regulation F, Section 10, Interpretation 102, and the potential for allowing unlimited numbers of middle school meetings conducted by high school coaches from the feeder high school. The committee felt there needed to be a limit to the meetings that more closely align with the current rule. More discussion of this interpretation was encouraged moving forward.

ELIGIBILITY ADVANCEMENT FORM AND 8TH-GRADE “REDSHIRT”

The Eligibility Advancement Form was reviewed and discussed. The potential for more students to qualify exists due to many students that were held back during the pandemic. The committee recommended that staff continue to discuss this issue at the annual fall AD In-service. The committee also recommended that local schools make decisions on students repeating middle school grades, even when they appear to be for athletic reasons. The committee believed they have seen an increase in parents wishing to repeat a grade for athletic advantages. This was a continued discussion from the first committee meeting of the year. This will continue to be a topic for the committee.

LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP RULE

The Limited Team Membership rule was discussed, and it will be a focus of the middle school presentation at the MIAAA conference in March. It was decided that more education related to the middle school portion of this rule is important.

COMMON START DATE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS

The committee recommended that there be an earlier common start date for middle school athletics. To avoid confusion, as schools start earlier across the state, the committee believes that there should be one start date one week after high school athletics start. Many members also expressed this would make it easier for leagues to complete a four-season schedule. The recommendation also includes the desire for the MHSAA to make the rule clearer for all schools.

WAIVER APPLICATION PROCESS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY FOR 7/8 GRADERS

The waiver process was discussed for schools under 125 to allow 8th-grade students to have high school eligibility and for schools under 75 students to allow 7th-grade students to have high school eligibility. The committee believes that this rule opens the ability for students, that are high school eligible, to be able to transfer without meeting an exception, which other high schools must meet. This gives these students an unfair advantage. The committee recommends that middle school students, that are high school eligible, follow high school transfer requirements for the purposes of high school eligibility.

CPR AND EAP RULES

The new requirements for the 2024-25 school year were reviewed and discussed. There was discussion of the need for more AEDs in schools and portable units for all venues. There was very positive response from the committee related to the requirements of an EAP for schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Fall sports practices for 6th, 7th and 8th-grades may begin one week following the start of high school fall sports. (9-0)
2. Students in 7th or 8th-grade that are eligible for high school competition are subject to the high school transfer rules while in middle school and competing at the high school level. Students would gain eligibility at any high school when beginning 9th-grade. (9-0)