

## **2025-26 MHSAA ATHLETIC EQUITY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Tuesday, September 23, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Angelique Gaddy-McElveen, Grand Rapids  
Lisa Hogan, Ann Arbor  
Jean LaClair, Bronson  
Jason Malloy, Westland  
Paris McCarthy, Eastpointe  
Anika McEvans, Detroit  
Rob McRae, Flint

Ramona Mendez, Lansing  
Jenn Schultz, Muskegon  
Kimberly Thornton, Grandville

### **MHSAA STAFF**

Will McKoy (Recorder)  
Tricia Wieferich

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. Following the welcome and introductions, the committee reviewed the Equity Committee's authority and responsibility, and a synopsis of the meeting minutes for 2024-25. The committee members introduced themselves and shared their school duties.

The Athletic Equity Committee, as with any other MHSAA standing committee, has the duty and responsibility to discuss matters of specific interest relating to equity opportunities for women and minorities.

Goals are to include, but are not limited to:

1. Gather statewide data to define equity problems, direct actions, and monitor progress.
2. Promote through motivation, support, and training competent coaches, officials, athletic directors, and governing board members regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender.
3. Sensitize and encourage organizations and employers to affirmatively seek women and minorities for athletic leadership training, placement, and promotion.
4. Promote the benefits of athletics and athletic leadership to students, educators, parents, and community members.
5. Improve communication between the school districts, the MHSAA, governing boards, professional associations, and higher education regarding the need for balanced staffing of athletic programs.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **SPORT OFFICIALS**

The committee was provided information on officials' registration and current plans for recruiting new officials, and there was a discussion about the need to recruit minority officials (gender and racial minorities).

#### **UPDATE MEETING SURVEY**

The committee received a copy of this year's Update Meeting survey questions and was asked to share its feedback regarding the AD In-Service and Update Meeting they attended.

#### **SPORTS PARTICIPATION SURVEY**

The committee discussed the continued post-COVID-19 rise in athletic participation in certain sports, while others continue to decrease. The committee was reminded of the statistics suggesting that 70% of athletes who decide to stop participating do so before they reach high school. The committee listed the proliferation of club sports and specialization as reasons for decreased participation in certain sports (e.g., volleyball, soccer, hockey). The committee discussed the steady decline in girls basketball participation and how the growing interest in girls flag football could negatively affect other sports.

## **MHSAA AWARDS**

The committee was updated on the MHSAA awards selection and nomination process and briefly discussed the need to communicate the awards deadline and nomination process locally.

## **MIAAA EQUITY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The MIAAA Equity Committee, focused on equity and inclusion, provided the committee with an update on what they are doing and their plans for the future.

## **TITLE IX**

The committee discussed the role, if any, the MHSAA should play in ensuring compliance by member schools regarding facility usage, budget considerations, and equipment/supplies. The committee also discussed the MHSAA's need to add new sports (boys volleyball, and field hockey) in compliance with Title IX.

## **TRANSGENDER STUDENTS**

The MHSAA staff reminded the committee that the current policy is in the *MHSAA Handbook*. Staff also updated the committee on the current conflict between federal executive orders and state law. Staff also provided statistics about current transgender athletes in Michigan, reviewed the policy, and felt it was sufficient.

## **MASCOTS & NATIVE AMERICAN IMAGERY**

The committee was provided an updated list of MHSAA schools with current mascots and nicknames that refer to Native Americans in some way and an update on the reasoning for the Representative Council's decision not to approve the committee's proposal. The committee felt that this issue is heading in the right direction.

## **NAME, IMAGE, LIKENESS (NIL)**

The committee was provided with a copy of a possible updated MHSAA Amateur Status policy related to NIL and discussed how the state legislature could affect that policy. The committee also discussed the importance of the MHSAA staying informed of trends associated with NIL and the national landscape.

## **EMERGING SPORTS**

The committee discussed the start of boys volleyball and field hockey in the 2025 school year and if any other emerging sports are on the horizon. MHSAA staff updated the committee on the progress toward the start of girls flag football and what would need to happen. The committee discussed the effect new sports could or will have on sports already offered at schools. The committee acknowledged that school communities would need to decide about emerging sports and how adding sports could negatively affect currently offered sports.

## **HATE SPEECH POLICY**

The committee was presented with a copy of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) hate speech policy. The committee discussed at length its contents, along with its pros and cons. The committee also discussed how such a policy could be structured to meet the needs of schools here in Michigan. The committee requested that the MHSAA continue gathering examples of different hate speech policies from around the country that can be used as a template for what a potential MHSAA hate speech policy could look like.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO STAFF**

The committee has requested that the MHSAA continue gathering examples of different hate speech policies from around the country that can be used as a template for a potential MHSAA hate speech policy in the future.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

None.