



***REPRESENTATIVE
COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 5-6, 2024***

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MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Gaylord, May 5-6, 2024

Members Present:

Chris Adams, Camden
Eric Albright, Midland
Jay Alexander, Detroit
Judy Cox, Auburn
Ross Fort, Lansing
Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Jennifer Thunberg, Freeland
Sean Jacques, Calumet
Jeff Kline, Mt. Morris
Jason Malloy, Westland
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Chris Miller, Gobles
Anna Rigby, Harbor Springs
Chris Riker, Portage
Fred Smith, Bangor
Adam Stefanski, Boyne City
Dr. Arnetta Thompson, Wyoming
John Thompson, Brighton
Alex Tiseo, Marquette

Staff Members Present:

Brad Bush
Sam Davis
Andy Frushour
Dan Hutcheson
Cody Inglis
Geoff Kimmerly
Cole Malatinsky
Will McKoy
Andi Osters
Jon Ross
Mark Uyl (Recorder)
Jamie VanDerMoere
Kathy Westdorp
Paige Winne

Accounts of Meetings – Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the minutes of the Representative Council meeting of March 22, 2024; the Executive Committee meeting minutes of March 21 and April 17, 2024; and the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting minutes of April 18, 2024. Adopted.

REPORTS

The following reports were provided to the Council.

Administration – MHSAA membership during the 2023-24 school year was 754 high schools and 774 junior high/middle schools as of April 1, 2024. This compares with 750 and 767, respectively, as of April 1, 2023. In addition, there were 60 elementary schools with 6th-grader participation.

As of April 17, 2024, there were 392 **cooperative program agreements** for high schools for 720 teams (an increase of 16 programs and 28 teams over the previous year). There were 119 cooperative program agreements for 399 teams for junior high/middle schools (an increase of 9 programs and 23 teams). The most frequent sports involved in cooperative programs at the high school level are (in order) ice hockey, girls softball, girls and boys swimming & diving and boys lacrosse. At the junior high/middle school level, the sports most frequently involved in cooperative programs are football, boys and girls track & field, and boys and girls cross country.

There was 1 **eligibility advancement** application received during the 2023-24 school year. This compares with 3 during 2022-23; 0 during 2021-22, 0 during 2020-21, 3 during 2019-20, 3 during 2018-19, 6 during 2017-18, 5 during 2016-17, 5 during 2015-16, 4 during 2014-15, 14 during 2013-14, 15 during 2012-13, 9 during 2011-12, 15 during 2010-11, 2009-10 and 2008-09, and 7 during 2007-08. The highest number of applications was 94 during the 1991-92 school year.

There were 128 **Educational Transfer Forms** processed for the 2023-24 school year through April 18, 2024. Other than 114 during the 2020-21 school year (which cannot be compared to previous years because of the COVID-19 pandemic), previous years' numbers were 132 for the 2022-23 school year, 153 for the 2021-22 school year, 213 for the 2019-20 school year, 215 for the 2018-19 school year, 219 for the 2017-18 school year, 237 for the 2016-17 school year and 266 for the 2015-16 school year. Public-to-public school transfers continue to be the most common (84), and the divorce exception (#8) is the most frequent reason (49) for the Educational Transfer Form to be used.

There were 49 "**Travel Forms for Out-of-State Practice**" filed during 2023-24, compared to 49 the year before. The highest number filed was 113 during the 2007-08 school year. The lowest was 40 during the 2003-04 school year. The requirement began in 1994-95. Staff will continue to monitor these numbers in light of the recent change that will allow teams on spring break to hold up to four scrimmages against other MHSAA member school teams.

A listing of **violations** by schools and officials between April 9, 2023 and April 17, 2024 indicated that the total number of violations for the year was lower than the previous year, which was an all-time high. Staff reported a decrease in the penalties for schools and coaches in rules meetings and failure to attest to requirements.

Athletic Director In-Service and Update Meeting programs conducted by the MHSAA attracted more than 832 registrants in 2023-24, which was an increase from the 768 participants the previous school year. The schedule for the fall of 2024 in-person meetings was presented. Topics for those meetings were identified throughout this meeting. For the 14th year, two in-service programs for athletic department administrative assistants are being planned for September due to high interest in recent years.

The MHSAA **Coaches Advancement Program (CAP)** has already involved more than 2,000 participants once again in 2023-24, with 1,440 registrations in CAP 1. CAP programs continue to be developed and held throughout the year, and include the added value benefits of insurance, *GamePlans* and SCECHs. This has been a successful year with many CAP programs held in many area high schools and at the MHSAA, as well as in Michigan colleges and universities. As of April 19, 2024, individuals will have completed 41,145 Coaches Advancement Program levels since the start of the 2004-05 school year.

A brief update was given on concussion insurance claims, coaching compliance reports and concussion report data. Staff highlighted the benefits of the MHSAA-provided concussion insurance program, along with the data and challenges of getting 100% compliance from schools in reporting coaching requirement completion and concussions.

For the third consecutive year, **officials' registrations** increased. This year's increase was 397 officials from last year, continuing the rebound from the low of 7,907 in 2020-21, caused by the lingering pandemic challenges in recruiting and retaining officials. A report on the partnership with Ref Reps was provided which will give schools a turnkey curriculum program for officials' education. One of the reasons for registered officials leaving the game is the lack of sportsmanship from adults, coaches and spectators. This environment and culture within school sports must continue to be addressed.

Officials Reports for the spring 2023, fall 2023 and winter 2023-24 seasons were provided. The reports were broken down not only by sport but also by level: varsity, junior varsity, and sometimes also 9th-, 8th- and 7th-grade levels. The frequency of sportsmanship problems is statistically rare in sports conducted by MHSAA member schools when compared to other levels of non-school sports, but data was provided that shows trends and situations that must be addressed

now. One positive data point again was that the number of “repeat offenders” of ejected coaches and players, who now must complete an online sportsmanship course before being eligible to return to competition, was extremely low which shows that this requirement is achieving the desired results. Data was also provided on the review process for ejections and the subsequent suspension for individuals who are ejected for flagrant physical contact, misidentification, and misapplication of playing rules.

Brief updates were given on the new AD Connection program and student services from the 2023-24 school year along with plans and goals for next year and beyond.

National Federation of State High School Associations – Staff provided an update on the NFHS Network. As of April 20, there are 598 MHSAA member high schools in the NFHS Network which is an increase of 3 schools from last year at this time. Challenges and opportunities regarding the NFHS Network were discussed. Staff also provided an update on Bally Sports Detroit in light of corporate restructuring by the parent company.

National issues regarding transgender policy, NIL, amateurism, and current NCAA challenges were discussed, and Council members will continue to receive regular updates as these issues continue to evolve and develop, which could impact school sports in Michigan.

Legislation – A brief report was provided which included that the current focus in the State Legislature is devoted to the budget process. The key issue for MHSAA member schools continues to be pending NIL legislation.

Litigation – An update was provided on current legal items that involve the association.

ONGOING BUSINESS

MHSAA Building Renovation Update – A brief report was given on the Phase II plans and timeline for renovating the public areas of the John E. Roberts office building. It is anticipated that all of the work will conclude by early fall 2024.

Winter Calendar Discussion – Staff presented possible calendar options for winter sports. Current concerns include the length of the winter sports season along with the late finish in March, which now impacts several schools and spring break. Council members provided good feedback on a number of fronts. It was noted that recent surveys of member schools strongly support this change for the winter calendar.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Fred Smith, to adopt the new winter calendar for the 2025-26 school year and beyond. Adopted.

Emerging Sports – Staff led a discussion on emerging sports within the membership. The four sports under consideration were girls field hockey, girls & boys water polo, boys volleyball and girls & boys indoor track and field. A long conversation took place on each of these four sports, along with the possible impact new opportunities would have on existing sports. Title IX considerations were also discussed at length.

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to adopt girls field hockey (fall) and boys volleyball (spring) as MHSAA tournament sports beginning with the 2025-26 school year. Adopted.

REGULATIONS

Regulations I through V of the *MHSAA Handbook* and their interpretations were submitted for review by the Representative Council.

Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Alex Tiseo, to approve the consent package of miscellaneous changes for the purpose of organization, clarity or updating and to incorporate changes or interpretations previously adopted by the Representative Council. Adopted.

Regulation I, Section 9(E-4)- Athletic Related Transfer (Link Rule)- Motion by Jennifer Thunberg, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the following:

(4) One of that high school's coaches served as a **school employee or third-party contractor at the former school**, personal sports trainer, conditioner, or instructor (paid or volunteer) for that student. Note: The ineligibility will apply to all sports a student previously participated in during the previous or current season when transferring into a school where a non-sport-specific instructor (**e.g. school employee/third-party contractor** or strength and conditioning coach) is on staff. Adopted.

Regulation II, Section 9(C) – Football Practice and Competition – Motion by Chris Adams, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the following:

A school may not take part in an interscholastic scrimmage session with other schools until the Wednesday of the second week of practice as long as the team has conducted football practice on at least seven (7) separate previous days. A joint practice session with two or more schools is considered a scrimmage session. and cannot take place until a team has conducted football practice on at least seven (7) different days previously. Adopted.

MHSAA Handbook, Concussion Policy (page 120) – Motion by Alex Tiseo, supported by Adam Stefanski, to approve adding references to “practices” in the policy. Adopted.

MHSAA Managers Materials- 50/50 Raffles – Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Sean Jacques, to approve the following:

MHSAA tournament hosts can conduct 50-50 raffles provided the host site manager requests and receives the appropriate license from the State of Michigan. Adopted.

Lastly, a discussion took place on international students. The Council reviewed current eligibility rules for students on J1 and F1 visas, and the implications each type of visa have on the length of eligibility in both public and non-public schools. No change was made to current regulations for international students, but the issue of visas, direct placements, approved programs and length of eligibility will be studied further during 2024-25.

CLASSIFICATION

The Summary of MHSAA Tournament Classification for 2024-25 was provided to Council members. The proposal from the committee was addressed in the regulation changes portion of the agenda.

OFFICIALS

Motion by Chris Adams, supported by Chris Miller, to approve the Officials Review Committee recommendation to modify Regulation V, Section 3(D-7):

Any coach or player who is ejected for spitting at, hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing or intentionally and/or aggressively physically contacting an official at any time during that season, or who commits such acts after being ejected, shall be suspended for the next fourteen (14) calendar days of competition from the date of the incident. Following this penalty with completion of the required online sportsmanship course, the school district shall inform the MHSAA on school letterhead that the ejected individual has been reinstated to the team as

a player or coach and is eligible for future days of competition. When the coach is ejected for spitting at, hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing or intentionally and/or aggressively physically contacting an official at any time during that season, or who commits such acts after being ejected, the coach is not eligible to coach in the MHSAA tournament for that sport that season. The disqualified coach shall not be present on site or within sight, sound or communication. This MHSAA tournament penalty for the coach is in addition to the fourteen (14) calendar days of competition suspension. Adopted.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Sean Jacques, to approve the Officials Review Committee recommendation to set a minimum number of officials required to work an event for each sport to assist with issues regarding officials working shorthanded beginning with 2024-25. This change in policy will be published in the *MHSAA Officials Guidebook*. Adopted.

SPORTS MEDICINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Motion by Jason Malloy, supported by Chris Riker, to approve the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee recommendation to require, starting with the 2024-25 school year, that high schools must attest by each season's established deadline that their high school sports coaches have emergency action plans specific to location, which are posted, dispersed, rehearsed, discussed, and documented within their practice plans. This new requirement will be published in *MHSAA Handbook*, Regulation II, Section 3. Adopted.

Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee recommendation to require, starting with the 2024-25 school year, that MHSAA tournament host sites must have an AED within visible distance (within 1-3 minutes) of the event. Adopted.

COMMITTEES

In mid-May, the Council was supplied with a description of MHSAA committees, a review of the committee appointment procedures adopted by the Representative Council, a list of those who had identified themselves as candidates for committees in 2024-25, and a list of schools not represented on any committees for the past five years. Council members were encouraged to submit nominations for committees, making special efforts to provide nominations from superintendents, principals, small schools, females and minorities, and any school that has not been represented in recent years. The staff will compile the suggestions and submit them to the Executive Committee for review and appointment.

Names of committee members selected to serve during the 2024-25 school year will be published in *benchmarks*. The only exceptions are those committees involving the selection of tournament officials and award recipients. Some committees were identified as having converted to online and email or conference call formats.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Baseball – Motion by Jay Alexander, supported by Adam Stefanski, to approve the Baseball Committee recommendation to require all schools, starting in the 2025 season, to submit the pitch count information by noon the following day of the game to an electronic form for all individuals and pitches from the previous game(s). This is for varsity competition only. Adopted.

Basketball – Motion by John Thompson, supported by Eric Albright, to approve the Basketball Committee recommendation to seed the entire District (all teams) using the current MPR system. Adopted.

Staff also provided data from the 2024 MHSAA Girls and Boys Semifinals and Finals (24 total games) of possession and times shots were taken to better assess the future need for a shot

clock. It was noted that the average offensive possession time before a shot was taken during these 24 games was 13.5 seconds, which was similar to the data collected in 2023.

Bowling – Motion by Adam Stefanski, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to allow hosts to deviate from the traditional Friday-Saturday dates, and conduct the Bowling Regional events on two consecutive days, Wednesday-Saturday, for the purposes of increased bowling center availability and scheduling flexibility. Adopted.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to add bowling to the list of sports allowing students to participate in a subvarsity and varsity match on the same day under Regulation II, Section 10. Adopted.

Girls Competitive Cheer – Motion by John Thompson, supported by Sean Jacques, to approve the Competitive Cheer Committee recommendations:

- Allow in a braced suspended forward roll pyramid that the flyer and at least one bracer(s) have a hand-to-hand/arm connection, which can be done with one or both hands/arms of the bracer and connected to one hand/arm/foot of the flyer. This may only be performed to a cradle position or in a forward suspended roll and may not include any twists.
- Allow a backward suspended roll when it originates from the cheering surface, and both hands of the flyer maintain continuous hand-to-hand, hand-to-arm contact with the original bases or back spot to be legal.
- Allow in an inversion, a temporary loss of contact with the flyer when transitioning to a double-based sponge with both feet of the flyer in the hands of the bases or to a cradle or to a shoulder-level or below stunt.

Adopted.

Cross Country / Track & Field – Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Jeff Kline, to approve the Track and Field Committee recommendation to establish an early automatic qualifying window to allow athletes to qualify for the MHSAA Finals throughout the regular season at any meet that meets the Early AQ meet guidelines and standards beginning with the 2025 season. Adopted.

Staff also provided an update on an initiative by a longtime member of the cross country community who is pursuing property to construct a dedicated cross country course in southwest Michigan. Council was given a summary of the previous conversations and staff will continue to update the board when any new development and information becomes available.

Football – Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Jay Alexander, to approve the Football Committee recommendations to establish a maximum enrollment cap for Division 8 football schools at 250 students. Adopted.

Motion by Chris Adams, supported by Jennifer Thunberg, to not approve the Football Committee recommendation to expand the use of the “5-quarter rule” to allow students to play 5 quarters in one day. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Chris Miller, to not approve the Football Committee recommendation to seed playoff Regionals instead of Districts. Districts would be formatted 1 v 8 and 4 v 5 on one side of the bracket, with 2 v 7 and 3 v 6 on the other side of the Regional bracket Adopted (no change).

Discussion also took place on 8-player football and the Strength of Schedule formula for playoff qualification. This issue will be discussed at the next Football Committee meeting.

Golf – Motion by Chris Riker, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the Golf Committee recommendation to establish a MHSAA Golf Site Selection Committee to review Regional tournament groupings and determine host schools and courses. Adopted.

Motion by Anna Rigby, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to not approve the Golf Committee recommendation to establish in each Division of golf, beginning in 2024-25, the two lowest-scoring teams from each region automatically qualify for the MHSAA Finals. Six additional qualifying teams would advance to the Finals based on their Wanamaker rating (generated by the team's best eight regular season 9-hole qualifying rounds). This would result in 18 teams qualifying in each Division, which would not change the current number of athletes represented at the Finals. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Jeff Kline, to not approve the Golf Committee recommendation to amend *MHSAA Handbook* Interpretation 173(a) as follows: a. A student may participate in the (a) one qualifying round of the Michigan Amateur Tournament conducted by the Golf Association of Michigan and (b) one qualifying round of the Michigan PGA Open Qualifier Tournament without counting against his/her two non-school competitions during the season allowed under Section 12. An event held on not more than three consecutive calendar days at the same venue is considered a single event (for the purposes of this section only). Adopted (no change).

Ice Hockey – Motion by Eric Albright, supported by Judy Cox, to approve the Ice Hockey Committee recommendation to add two regular season games to the MHSAA maximum from 25 to 27 games. Not Adopted (no change).

Girls Lacrosse – Motion by Chris Riker, supported by Jay Alexander, to approve the Girls Lacrosse Committee recommendation to provide for the allowance in girls lacrosse, the option to participate in no more than five quarters in a day with overtime considered an extension of the fourth quarter. For multi-team tournaments, if two school teams are at the same event, allow participation in no more halves or quarters than what is being played by the school's highest team level that day. Adopted.

Soccer – Motion by John Thompson, supported by Sean Jacques, to approve the Soccer Committee recommendation to seed the entire District (all teams) using the current MPR system. Adopted.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to not approve the Soccer Committee recommendation to amend the Limited Team Membership rule for soccer to allow in-season scrimmage participation at club tryouts on published dates that are open to all students. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Chris Riker, to approve the Soccer Committee recommendation to institute a running clock in the first half when the goal differential is eight or more. Adopted.

Swimming & Diving – Motion by Arnetta Thompson, supported by Jennifer Thunberg, to approve the Swimming & Diving Committee recommendation, beginning with the 2024-25 school year, that all times entered for both individual and relay events at the MHSAA LP Championship Meet must be times that (a) are the fastest achieved in actual varsity competition during the current season and (b) can be electronically verified on SwimCloud.com. Adopted.

Tennis – Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Eric Albright, to approve the Tennis Committee recommendation to allow staff to determine if too few schools are sponsoring tennis to continue having eight (8) regionals by using 288 schools, or 72 per division sponsoring tennis, as the number to reduce the number of Regionals to six (6). Adopted.

Wrestling – Motion by Jason Malloy, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the Wrestling Committee recommendation to award a “team” championship (and runner-up) in Girls Wrestling based on individual points earned at the Individual Wrestling Finals. Adopted.

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Jeff Kline, to approve the Wrestling Committee recommendation to amend the penalty for a wrestler competing at an ineligible weight class in team dual competition. Adopted.

OPERATIONS

Calendar – Motion by Sean Jacques, supported by Jason Malloy, to approve the Quick Reference Calendars for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years, as well as the seven-year calendar of MHSAA events, reflecting changes required by other Representative Council action. Adopted.

Meeting Expenses – Motion by Chris Miller, supported to Chris Riker, to approve the meeting expenses for the specified hotel rate, the IRS-stipulated amounts for meals, and a 40¢ per mile mileage allowance, round trip. Adopted.

Future Meetings – The next meeting of the Representative Council is Dec. 6, 2024, at the Jack Roberts Building in East Lansing. The March meeting of the Representative Council will be the morning of Friday, March 21, 2025, in East Lansing. The May meeting of the Council will be Sunday and Monday, May 4 and 5, 2025 and will be held in Gaylord again for at least the next two years (May of 2025 and 2026).

Budget – In taking a view of MHSAA finances over the past three years, the association has done an excellent job in managing and rebuilding the association’s financial position. The MHSAA has experienced good budget performance in 2021-22 and 2022-23, and with a positive financial forecast for 2023-24, with reserves being returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The 2024-25 budget does not include any ticket price increases. The building “refresh” project will be completed by the fall of 2024 with the existing cash surplus and funding was confirmed for the second year of the “AD Connection” program. New expenses approved by the Council included increases in tournament officials fees and Team Final reimbursements. Staff will finalize itemized expenses and define what is, and what is not, reimbursed in terms of medical coverage, event security, etc., on an individual sport basis. Finally, all host manager’s honorariums will be paid electronically to the host manager. The presented budget included revenue of \$14,791,500 and expenses of \$14,790,602 for an anticipated budget surplus of \$898.

Motion by Jennifer Thunberg, supported by Chris Adams, to approve the 2024-25 budget. Adopted.