

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

East Lansing, March 21, 2025

Council Members:

Chris Adams, Camden
Eric Albright, Midland
Jay Alexander, Detroit
Mike Bakker, Fenton
Ross Fort, Lansing
Chris Hartman, Kingsford
Sean Jacques, Calumet
Jeff Kline, Mt. Morris
Jason Malloy, Westland
Dr. Monica Merritt, Plymouth
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
Jennifer Thunberg, Freeland

Also Present:

Scott Eldridge, Lansing

Staff Members Present:

Tony Bihn
Brad Bush
Jordan Cobb
Sam Davis
Andy Frushour
Dan Hutcheson
Cody Inglis
Geoff Kimmerly
Cole Malatinsky
Will McKoy
Andi Osters
Jon Ross
Adam Ryder
Mark Uyl (Recorder)
Kathy Westdorp
Paige Winne

President Eric Albright welcomed all Council members and staff, including new Council member Dr. Monica Merritt.

Accounts of Meetings – Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to approve the minutes of the Representative Council meeting of Dec. 6, 2024; the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings of Dec. 5, 2024, Jan. 8, 2025 and Feb. 13, 2025; and the minutes of the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting of Feb. 17, 2025. Adopted.

REPORTS

Legislation – The Council reviewed a report from Governmental Consultant Services, Inc. regarding activities of the Michigan Legislature that could directly or indirectly affect member schools' administration of interscholastic athletics.

Litigation – The Council received a report on legal issues in which the MHSAA has been engaged.

Administration – MHSAA staff provided a series of brief reports on winter tournaments, the MIAAA Conference, the WISL Award and the current status of MHSAA television contracts for the Football and Basketball Finals. The Council supports the staff's continued efforts to look for a new television partnership while knowing all events could be streamed on the existing NFHS Network. Council members provided excellent input and staff will work to prepare data and metrics for the May 2025 Council meeting. Staff will also develop a proposal to require NFHS Network cameras to host at the Regional level and beyond in some sports for further Council discussion and consideration.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Girls Field Hockey Committee – High school field hockey in Michigan has been formally governed by the Michigan High School Field Hockey League (MHSFHL) since 2021. Prior to that, oversight was provided by the Michigan field hockey coaches. The transition to league governance was a strategic move aimed at creating a standardized structure and aligning field hockey with the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). This goal will be realized in the 2025-26 school year when the MHSAA officially sponsors the sport with a postseason tournament.

For multiple years, the Michigan high school field hockey tournament has operated under a two-division structure, with championship trophies awarded exclusively at the Finals level. The tournament is played over two weeks, with the Finals traditionally held on the last Saturday in October. Although the number of schools sponsoring field hockey has fluctuated slightly in recent years, participation has remained relatively stable. In 2024, 36 schools sponsored the sport, with 35 competing in the state tournament, compared to 35 in 2023 and 32 in 2022.

On November 26, the Girls Field Hockey Committee convened to discuss key topics related to the addition of girls field hockey as an MHSAA-sponsored sport. The committee included a mix of large schools and the smallest school that sponsors the sport, including both public and private schools. It included schools that have long sponsored the sport and won multiple championships, as well as schools that have only recently added the sport.

The committee engaged in extensive discussions covering season limitations, tournament structure, and rule adoptions.

Motion by Jenni Thunberg, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the following girls field hockey proposals and the new section for girls field hockey in Regulation II, Section 10.

Implement *MHSAA Handbook* regulations for girls field hockey for the 2025-26 school year, including but not limited to:

- a. Contest limits of 18 dates and 4 scrimmages.
- b. Introduction of the "fifth quarter" rule
- c. Guidelines for multi-team tournaments and cooperative programs.

Adopted.

Motion by Sean Jacques, supported by Jeff Kline, to conduct the girls field hockey tournament in a single-division format using MPR to identify the top 4 seeds, placing those four schools in separate regions with all other teams placed in regions based on geography.
Adopted.

Motion by Mike Bakker, supported by Jenni Thunberg, to adopt a traditional set of fall schedule dates, with the Finals held on the last Saturday in October.

- a. First Practice – August 11, 2025
- b. First Contest – August 15, 2025
- c. Final – October 25, 2025

Adopted.

Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to adopt the reduced-player and one-on-one overtime procedures for postseason tournaments, with optional use in regular-season bracketed tournaments. See the last pages of these minutes for details. Adopted.

New & Emerging Sports – Staff once again reviewed the current MHSAA policy regarding tournament sport sponsorship and the threshold for emerging sports. An update was provided on the conversations that occurred at the MIAAA Conference, considering discussions that took place by the Council last December. This topic will be revisited at the May meeting, given the recent proposal approved by the Track & Field Committee.

Ice Hockey Committee – The Michigan High School Hockey Coaches Association presented on the committee proposal to add two additional games for next school year. The presentation provided background, rationale and information relative to the recommendation that was also before the Council last May.

Motion by John Thompson, supported by Chris Miller, to approve adding two additional ice hockey contests beginning in the 2025-26 school year. Adopted.

Amateur Status Update – A brief discussion took place on proposed NIL legislation that did not pass in 2024. Historical background and rationale were provided for current amateur status rules, and the Council reviewed draft revisions to current MHSAA Amateur Status regulations that address student employment. Further discussion and possible action will take place at the May 2025 Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Competitive Cheer Committee – In 2026, Central Michigan University has indicated a facility conflict with their arena on the current dates needed for the 2026 MHSAA Competitive Cheer Finals. This conflict with the MAC Indoor Track & Field Championships at CMU in 2026 appears to be an issue once every seven years. If the MHSAA wishes to remain at CMU for the Competitive Cheer Finals in 2026, a calendar adjustment must be made.

Motion by Sean Jacques, supported by Arnetta Thompson, to allow practice to begin three (3) Mondays prior to Thanksgiving. This would be November 10, 2025. Adopted.

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Jenni Thunberg, to approve the following. Due to facility constraints at Central Michigan University for 2025-26 only, adjust the Girls Competitive Cheer tournament calendar to one week later. This would place Districts on Feb.20-21, Regionals on Feb. 28, and the Finals on March 6-7 for the 2026 tournament, only. The tournament dates would return to one week earlier in 2027 and beyond. Adopted.

Meetings – The Representative Council reviewed expenses for this meeting and the schedule for the May 2025 Council meeting. Motion by Jay Alexander, supported by Jenni Thunberg, to approve expenses for the March Council meeting. Adopted.

Audit & Finance Committee Report – This committee is responsible for reviewing past financial performance and future projections, reviewing and making revenue and expense recommendations for MHSAA programs, and finalizing the annual budget for the Council's approval in May. The Council reviewed the minutes of the committee's Feb. 13 meeting.

The Council was also provided with the proposed AD Connection Program background and recommendation, along with other areas that will be discussed by the Audit & Finance Committee at the April meeting. These include a review of mileage rates and current changes to overall expenses, television contracts, and the payment method of manager's honorariums.

Motion by Chris Adams, supported by Chris Riker, to approve the recommendation to make the AD Connection Program a permanent program of the MHSAA. Adopted.

The Council discussed the Audit & Finance Committee recommendation for National Federation (NFHS) Annual Meeting attendance by Council members in Chicago this coming summer.

Motion by Sean Jacques, supported by Arnetta Thomspson, to approve the Audit & Finance Committee recommendation for the NFHS Annual Meeting attendance by Council members and to approve the specific reimbursement limits for those attending the 2025 meeting in Chicago. Reimbursement will be after the meeting and based on actual length of stay and required paperwork. Adopted.

Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the Audit & Finance Committee recommendations regarding staff compensation for 2025-26. Adopted.

MHSAA Handbook, Regulation II – Section 10 – NEW 6. GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY – A student or team shall participate in no more than five quarters in a day, in no more than three games and/or interscholastic scrimmages of girls field hockey in one week (Monday through Sunday), including regular and MHSAA tournament play. An individual team is limited to one game per school day.

A student or team shall participate in no more than four interscholastic scrimmages and in no more than 18 games, exclusive of the MHSAA tournament. Overtime is considered an extension of the fourth quarter insofar as this section is concerned. A student or team may participate in a multi-team tournament in which the total allowable playing time for any team is no more than 150 running time minutes and the event counts as one of the 18 regular-season contests (and one of three dates, Monday-Sunday). The following provisions would apply:

- a) A student or team shall participate in no more than three multi-team tournaments in its season schedule. Each tournament must be held on a single day and count as one of the 18 games of competition allowed.
- b) No more than 25-minute running time halves can be played, with no overtimes permitted; the games shall end in a tie. The clock stops for injuries, with one timeout allowed per team per half or two regulation games may be played.
- c) Multi-team tournaments may only be held on non-school days or days not followed by school.
- d) If a student or team participates in a multi-team tournament, that student or team shall participate in no more than two regulation games or interscholastic scrimmages that week, Monday through Sunday, in addition to the multi-team tournament.
- e) For purposes of the "fifth quarter" rule: If two teams from one school 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. For example, if the varsity team is playing three 25-minute half games for a total of six halves, a player playing both JV and varsity on the same day can play in six total halves that day.

2025-26 MHSAA PLAYING RULE ADOPTIONS – GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY

Goal-Differential Rule

- 1) The 8-goal differential rule is in effect for the MHSAA Tournament and regular-season varsity play. It is optional for leagues and schools to adopt for subvarsity regular-season competition. A game shall be terminated when a team is ahead by 8 goals or more anytime after the first half is completed. (Note: officials must be aware of this adoption by schools or leagues before the contest begins). This game counts toward one of the 18 allowed contests.
- 2) When there is a six-goal differential:
 - The clock becomes a running clock at a six-goal differential (only stopping on injury or time out).
 - The game clock will revert to normal timekeeping if the goal differential becomes five.

Overtime Procedures

MHSAA Tournament Overtime Procedures – The required MHSAA tournament procedures are:

- 1) Play a 10-minute overtime period with a team of six field players and one goalkeeper. Teams do NOT change goals at the end of the regulation game. The winner of the coin toss shall choose to be on offense or defense to begin the overtime period. On a penalty corner, there shall be three defensive players and a goalkeeper behind the end line.
- 2) If the game remains tied after the 10-minute period is played, then it will go to the one-on-one overtime procedure. A series of five shots on goal shall be taken by individual players in a one-on-one situation (attacker vs. goalkeeper). To begin this procedure, the attacker stands on the 25-yard line, and the goalkeeper stands on the goal line. Play continues for 8 seconds (10 seconds on a grass field), with follow-up shots permitted.

NOTE: A foul or violation by the attacker ends the procedure. For an unintentional foul by the goalkeeper, the one-on-one shall be retaken. For an intentional foul by the goalkeeper, a penalty stroke shall be awarded. Any player on the approved roster may take the penalty stroke. The procedure also ends when: (1) the 8 (or 10) seconds has elapsed; (2) a goal is scored; (3) the ball goes out of play over the end line, sideline.

Regular-Season Overtime Procedures

There will be no overtime in the regular season. Leagues and conferences may have an overtime option for end-of-season bracketed tournaments (see above overtime procedures). In this section, overtime is considered an extension of the fourth quarter.