

2025-26 MHSAA SWIMMING & DIVING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Eve Claar, Ann Arbor
Rob Damuth, Grand Rapids (MISCA)
Jerrod Dohm, Grand Blanc
Casey Kern, Haslett
Rich Kieft, Holt (MATS)
Darrin Millar, Royal Oak
Jackie Rank, Oxford

Jim Schafer, Portage
Connor Thomas, Mason (MIAAA)
John Thompson, Brighton
Adrian Trzebitowski, Swartz Creek

MHSAA STAFF

Andi Osters (Recorder)

The 2025-26 MHSAA Swimming & Diving Committee met in the John E. “Jack” Roberts MHSAA building to review swim and dive topics and championships for both girls and boys. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process and the charge of the Swimming & Diving Committee. Agenda items from correspondence, staff, committee members, and the swim coaches association were compiled.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

REVIEW OF BACKSTROKE LEDGE EQUIPMENT

Committee members reviewed feedback regarding the NFHS rule change permitting the use of backstroke ledges. Overall, the equipment has been well received by coaches and backstroke swimmers, with members noting improved consistency and confidence in starts. Some concern was expressed for inexperienced swimmers encountering the equipment for the first time, particularly at away meets where athletes may not have had prior exposure. The committee agreed that as more pools install backstroke ledges, familiarity and comfort with the equipment will continue to improve statewide.

UPPER PENINSULA HEAT SIZES

Representatives from the Michigan Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association raised concerns about small heat sizes at the Upper Peninsula Boys and Girls Swimming & Diving Finals. Committee discussion centered on the qualifying standards used to populate heats and ensure a competitive championship experience. The committee supported MHSAA staff exploring potential adjustments to qualifying-time algorithms, including the use of models consistent with Lower Peninsula Finals that rely on five years of historical data and entry percentages rather than a flat three-year average.

OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING

For the first time, the committee reviewed a comprehensive list of varsity swimming coaches who have received waivers to the 4-player out-of-season coaching limitation under *MHSAA Handbook* Interpretation No. 240. The committee agreed that the waiver process is functioning as intended, with approved coaches operating within established thresholds and expectations. MHSAA staff indicated that waiver requests will continue to receive close review before being forwarded to the Executive Committee for consideration.

MHSAA CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY PROCESS

For the third consecutive year, the committee discussed the need for improved transparency, clarity and consistency in the entry process for MHSAA Finals meets. For more than 20 years, entry management has been handled independently by Finals venues using HyTek software and email-based submissions. While this system has generally been effective due to multiple layers of manual review, it remains labor-intensive and vulnerable to inconsistency.

With the increased use of online platforms such as SwimCloud, electronic entry submission and time verification have become more common across the swimming community. Most Michigan pools already utilize HyTek software, which integrates with SwimCloud. To streamline the process and improve accuracy, the committee advanced a proposal to require that all entries for MHSAA Finals be submitted through SwimCloud. Under this model, meets would be hosted within SwimCloud, entries submitted directly through the platform, and results posted centrally. Ongoing discussions with SwimCloud and MHSAA staff are focused on aligning this approach with existing third-party partnerships used in other MHSAA tournament sports, including track & field, cross country, golf and tennis.

Discussion also occurred on Finals venues, content for MHSAA rules meetings, diving participation trends, and the 2025 MHSAA Update Meeting Survey results.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Beginning in 2026-27, require that all entries for MHSAA Girls and Boys Swimming & Diving Final meets (L.P. and U.P.) be completed via SwimCloud. (9-0)