

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, December 4, 2014

Members Present:

Jim Derocher, Negaunee
Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Fred Smith, Buchanan
Orlando Medina, Harrison Township

Staff Members Present:

Tom Rashid
Jack Roberts (Recorder)

Executive Committee Authority and Responsibility – The Executive Committee reviewed its authority under Article VII of the MHSAA Constitution and specifically its responsibility to consider each application for waiver of an eligibility requirement on its individual merits, determining if the regulation serves the purpose for which it was intended in each case or if the regulation works an undue hardship on any student who is the subject of a request for waiver. (These underlying criteria may not be restated for every subject of these minutes.)

The Executive Committee was reminded that it was the responsibility of each member school involved to provide sufficient information about the specific request for the Executive Committee to reach a decision without further investigation. If information is incomplete, contradictory or otherwise unclear or has been received too late to be studied completely, the Executive Committee may deny the request for waiver or delay action. Such requests may be resubmitted to the Executive Committee with additional information at a subsequent meeting or appealed to the full Representative Council.

It is possible that some of the information presented as facts to the Executive Committee by school personnel and others may be inaccurate. However, to avoid constant repetition in this report of phrases such as “it was alleged” or “it was reported,” no attempt is made in the introduction of each waiver request to distinguish between truth, allegation, hearsay, opinion, summary or conclusion. If any information provided to the Executive Committee is inaccurate, any decision of the Executive Committee to grant waiver of a regulation shall be null and void.

The Executive Committee is not authorized to approve waiver based on alleged or actual differences between schools based on “environment,” demographics, curriculum or extracurricular offerings. A determination of undue hardship is a matter addressed to the discretion of the Executive Committee within the educational philosophy and secondary role of voluntary extracurricular competitive athletics in the academic environment. The Executive Committee will avoid making exceptions that would create precedent that effectively changes a rule without Representative Council action or local board of education adoption, which would exceed Executive Committee authority. The contract the MHSAA has with member schools obligates the MHSAA to not change rules during the school year.

Students for whom waiver of a particular regulation is approved must be eligible in all other respects under all sections and interpretations of the regulations prior to their participation.

Adoption of these regulations, as well as policies, procedures and schedules of MHSAA tournaments, is a choice schools make locally when they consider their option of MHSAA membership. Consistent with rulings of the Attorney General and Michigan Supreme Court, schools are not bound by the decisions of the Executive Committee, but the association may limit participation in the post-season tournaments it sponsors to those schools which choose to apply rules and penalties as promulgated by the MHSAA and adopted by each member school’s board of education. The MHSAA exercises no independent authority over schools or students.

Grand Rapids-Ellington Academy High School (Regulation 1, Section 1[D]) – On Aug. 26, 2014, the Executive Committee did not approve a request to waive the 99-student enrollment cap to allow 8th-grade students to participate with high school students. The school's February 2014 enrollment was set at 108 students. Ellington Academy is in its second year of MHSAA membership, adding a grade each year, with its highest grade being 10th grade in 2014-15. The request for 8th-grade participation was in girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball and boys and girls track & field. A request for 6th-grade participation with 7th- and 8th-graders was approved on Aug. 26, 2014.

At the time of the Aug. 26, 2014 request, it was not known by the Executive Committee that the enrollment of 108 students was based on a February 2014 projection of incoming 9th-graders which is traditionally requested by the MHSAA for new schools. In February 2014, the school estimated 59 incoming 9th-graders, and as of Dec. 1, 2014, only 46 9th-graders have enrolled. The current actual enrollment is 82 students across the 9th and 10th grades. In 2015-16, the school will have three grades and likely be well over 100 students. The school would use the allowance for the sports remaining in the 2014-15 school year: boys and girls basketball and boys and girls track & field.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Vanderbilt High School (Regulation I, Section 1[D]) – A request to waive the competition limitation of Interpretation 8 was made on behalf of an 8th-grade student who participates with the high school team as permitted for schools with an enrollment under 100 students. The student played a full middle school basketball schedule of 12 games. The school requested the student be allowed to play all 20 high school games as it only has six high school students participating on its one basketball team.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Delton Kellogg and Martin High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[E]) – The Executive Committee approved a cooperative program in boys golf between these two schools whose combined enrollment of 613 students will continue placement of a team in the Division 3 tournament. Delton Kellogg sponsored boys golf previously and will be the primary school. Support from the Kalamazoo Valley Association and the Southwestern Athletic Conference was submitted.

Atlanta and Fairview High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[E]) – The Executive Committee approved a cooperative program in girls softball between these two schools whose combined enrollment of 190 students will place one team in the Division 4 tournament. Both schools sponsored softball previously; Atlanta will be the primary school. Support from the North Star League was submitted.

Iron Mountain and Norway High Schools (Regulation I, Section 1[E]) – The Executive Committee approved a cooperative program in boys and girls soccer between these two schools whose combined enrollment is 542 students. Iron Mountain sponsored soccer previously and will be the primary school. Support from four future opponents was received.

Alpena High School (Regulation I, Section 7) – A request to waive the previous academic credit record regulation was made on behalf of a 9th-grade student who has been struggling with health issues and was on homebound status for a portion of the first trimester of 2014-15. The student's father has just recently reentered the student's life and is now terminally ill. The student has been in outpatient treatment and on medication since Sept. 23, 2014.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Adrian-Madison High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation and specifically Interpretation 62 (public school of residence) was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who is returning to reside with his divorced father in the same home as previously (Exception 2) – but in the Adrian School District. Because the mother was incarcerated, the student lived with his grandmother and attended Ypsilanti-Lincoln to begin the 2014-15 school year. The student has returned to his former school, which is the district in which the student was enrolled for all his formal education through the 2013-14 school year but is not his school of residence, enrolling Dec. 2, 2014 at Adrian-Madison High School.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Auburn Hills-Oakland Christian High School (Regulation I, Section 9[B]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility at the subvarsity level only was made on behalf of a 9th-grade student whose father's job location changed and whose parents could no longer continue to transport the student to school and commute to work. The student participated in soccer at Southfield Christian and enrolled at Oakland Christian on Nov. 17, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Bellevue High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91st school day of enrollment was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who had filed paperwork for enrollment one week prior but did not enroll (attendance in class) until Oct. 14, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Breckenridge High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 12th-grade student whose medical condition requires medication that indicates the student should avoid long commutes. The student has lived in Breckenridge and attended Midland-Bullock Creek since the 2nd grade. The student has been hospitalized and had a number of surgeries as recently as February 2014. The student lives five miles from Breckenridge High School and 23 miles from Bullock Creek. The student enrolled at Breckenridge on Nov. 12, 2014, and would like to continue to play softball.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Coopersville High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student whose illness caused the student to change schools from Grand Rapids-Union to Coopersville. The student enrolled at Coopersville to begin the 2014-15 school year. The student remains in counseling.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Elk Rapids High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – On Nov. 4, 2014, the Executive Committee did not approve a request to waive the transfer regulation on behalf of a 10th-grade student whose family made a full and complete residential change from the Northville to the Bellaire School District and enrolled at Elk Rapids to begin the 2014-15 school year. The student plays ice hockey, and both Bellaire and Elk Rapids are members of the same nine-team ice hockey cooperative program. Subsequent to this decision, the school requested reconsideration, submitting letters supporting eligibility from Bellaire (the student's school of residence) and Traverse City-St. Francis (the primary school of the cooperative program).

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver for ice hockey only until Jan. 19, 2015.

Fair Haven-Anchor Bay High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who previously attended Macomb-Lutheran North High School before enrolling at Anchor Bay to begin the 2014-15 school year because of financial difficulties and a younger brother who is enrolled at Anchor Bay in special education classes who is in need of this student's help throughout the day.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Gibraltar-Carlson High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 12th-grade student who attended Gibraltar Schools since elementary school except for six school days (Oct. 9-15, 2014) when she moved to the residence of her mother and attended Southgate Anderson. The student returned to her father's home and reenrolled at Carlson on Oct. 16, 2014. The student did not participate in athletics at Southgate Anderson; her only sport is track & field.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Grand Rapids Christian High School (Regulation I, Section 9[E]) – An appeal was made to set aside a decision by the executive director that the motivation for the transfer of an 11th-grade student from Grand Rapids-Forest Hills Central (FHC) into Grand Rapids Christian (GRCHS) was primarily for athletic reasons. The student, who would otherwise become eligible on Jan. 19, 2015, has been deemed ineligible for 180 school days under this finding.

The Executive Committee reviewed: (a) The request to the Executive Committee from GRCHS containing the basis for the appeal and supporting letters; (b) a two-page letter from FHC to the Executive Committee responding to the request to set aside the decision; (c) correspondence and the finding of the executive director; (d) the initial response from GRCHS dated Oct. 10, 2014 and a reply from FHC as requested by the MHSAA dated Oct. 24, 2014; and (e) the original allegation from FHC and correspondence to GRCHS asking for a review.

The Executive Committee took note of the lengthy narratives provided which argue both in support of and in opposition to the finding that this student's and/or his parents' primary motivation for transferring schools was athletics. In this case, there is written evidence preceding the transfer of two text message exchanges in which in the one sequence the parent reports that her son says he's not getting a fair chance and is angry, and in another sequence the parent writes that their son may be pulled from the program because another player's father is the position coach for this student and does not think his son is getting or will get a fair chance.

The Executive Committee affirmed the action of the executive director and did not approve a reduction in the 180-school-day period of ineligibility under this Section.

Hemlock High School (Regulation I, Section 9[C]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student who previously attended Saginaw-Swan Valley High School and participated in the ice hockey cooperative program between these two schools and three other schools. The student enrolled at Hemlock to begin the 2014-15 school year. Support for eligibility was submitted by Swan Valley.

The Executive Committee approved the request for ice hockey only until Jan. 19, 2015.

Hillsdale High School (Regulation I, Section 9[B]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility at the subvarsity level only was made on behalf of a 9th-grade student who participated as an 8th-grader on the high school team for Hillsdale-Will Carleton Academy, which has an enrollment of 73 students. The student has no other high school participation, including as a 9th-grader at Will Carleton this fall. The student enrolled at Hillsdale on Nov. 11, 2014.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver at the subvarsity level only for the remainder of the 2014-15 school year.

Holland-Calvary High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation and specifically Interpretation 84 was made on behalf of a 12th-grade international student present in the United States on an F-1 visa through ASSE which is approved by CSIET for J-1 students but not F-1 students. The student was present on a J-1 visa last year and participated in athletics in 2013-14 at Kelso High School in Washington State. The student was unaware of new MHSAA regulations at the time of her attendance last year or of the fact that the F-1 agency that placed the student this year was not CSIET approved.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver, noting MHSAA international student regulations were passed and publicized in March 2014 and effective Aug. 1, 2014, to students enrolling for the first time in an MHSAA member school.

Jackson-Vandercook Lake High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 9th-grade student who attended Vandercook Lake Schools her entire career except for six school days to begin the 2014-15 school year when the student enrolled at Jackson Preparatory and Early College High School from Sept. 2-8, 2014. The student did not participate in athletics at Jackson Prep and enrolled at Vandercook Lake on Sept. 9, 2014. The student participates in cross country, competitive cheer and track & field which are only sponsored on the varsity level at Vandercook Lake.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Monroe-Jefferson High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student whose family had lived in the Jefferson School District since 1993, attended Monroe-Meadow Montessori for the 9th grade and did not participate in athletics. To begin the 10th grade in 2014-15, the student enrolled at Jefferson. The student plays ice hockey; Jefferson only sponsors a varsity team.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver for eligibility at the varsity level before Jan. 19, 2015, but did approve eligibility at the subvarsity level until Jan. 19, 2015.

New Haven High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student whose father withdrew the student and enrolled him at Madison Heights-Madison from Sept. 9 to Oct. 3, 2014, where the student did not participate in athletics. The student reenrolled at New Haven on Oct. 8, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver for immediate eligibility but approved the request for waiver on the student's 91st school day of enrollment at New Haven beginning Oct. 8, 2014.

Richland-Gull Lake High School (Regulation 1, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 12th-grade student who attended Gull Lake High School in grades 9-11 and nine school days to begin the 2014-15 school year (Sept. 2-12, 2014) when the student enrolled at Hastings Virtual School. The student reenrolled at Gull Lake on Sept. 15, 2014.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Stephenson High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who has had a difficult upbringing including a birth mother who is in drug treatment and ongoing conflicts with his stepmother. The student struggled previously both academically and socially while living in Wisconsin and now resides with his grandparents and is passing all of his classes. The student signed up to attend Stephenson the week of Sept. 22 and attended classes on Monday, Sept. 29, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver for immediate eligibility but approved the request for waiver effective with the student's 91st school day of enrollment at Stephenson High School beginning Sept. 29, 2014.

Traverse City West High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 12th-grade international student who was enrolled in a high school in Oklahoma as a J-1 visa student in 2013-14 and participated in basketball. The student is now attending Traverse City West on an F-1 visa.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver, noting that Interpretation 84 states, "Eligibility through an MHSAA Approved International Student Program is for a maximum of the first two consecutive semesters or three consecutive trimesters at any secondary school in the United States, after which the student is ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition at any MHSAA member school for the next academic year (next two consecutive semesters or next three consecutive trimesters)."

Vermontville-Maple Valley High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11th-grade student who moved to the home of her grandmother in the Maple Valley School District because of an unhealthy home environment with her mother. A criminal court case is in process regarding abuse by the mother's boyfriend against the mother. The student previously attended Charlotte and enrolled at Maple Valley on Oct. 15, 2014.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Wayne Memorial High School (Regulation I, Section 9[F]) – A request to waive or interpret the athletic related transfer regulation and period of 180 school days of ineligibility was made on behalf of a 10th-grade student who previously attended Detroit-Frederick Douglass High School. The student's basketball coach at Frederick Douglass was hired by Wayne Memorial, causing the family to make a full and complete residential change over the summer into a portion of Westland located in the Romulus School District. The student enrolled at Wayne Memorial to begin the 2014-15 school year. Because the student did not meet an exception to the transfer regulation, the student was considered ineligible under the athletic related transfer regulation for 180 school days. The family then moved to a home in the Wayne Memorial attendance area.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver, noting that Section 9(F) states, in part: "Even if the student's circumstances subsequently satisfy one of the exceptions of Section 9(A) that would normally allow a transfer student immediate eligibility, the student shall remain ineligible for 180 scheduled school days at this MHSAA member school."

Subvarsity Waiver Requests Meeting All Conditions of Section 9(B) – The Executive Committee approved immediate eligibility at the subvarsity level for the following transferring 9th- or 10th-grade students (after entering 9th grade, before completing 10th grade) **who have not previously participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest in any MHSAA sport at the high school level** (whether MHSAA member schools or not) and who do not qualify for one of the 15 stated exceptions to the transfer regulation and have transferred for reasons having nothing to do with athletics, discipline or family finances and would not require Executive Committee evaluation or comparison of school demographics or curriculum:

Requesting High School	Grade	Former High School	Date of Enrollment	Length of Subvarsity Eligibility Status
Bad Axe	10	Georgia	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Blanchard-Montabella	9	Stanton-Central Montcalm	Dec. 1, 2014	Remainder of 14-15 school year

Requesting High School	Grade	Former High School	Date of Enrollment	Length of Subvarsity Eligibility Status
Concord	9	Jackson Prep & Early College HS	Sept. 24, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Concord	10	Marshall	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
East Lansing	10	Lansing-Waverly	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Flint-Kearsley	10	Grand Blanc	Oct. 23, 2014	Remainder of 14-15 school year
Flint-Kearsley	10	Crossroads Online	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Grand Rapids-Ottawa Hills/U Prep	10	East Kentwood	Sept. 4, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Kentwood-Grand River Prep	9	Grand Rapids-Ellington Academy	Oct. 17, 2014	Remainder of 14-15 school year
Muskegon-Oakridge	9	Muskegon-Mona Shores	Oct. 1, 2014	91 st scheduled school day from Oct. 1, 2014
New Haven	9	Shelby Twp-Shelby Jr High	Oct. 8, 2014	91 st scheduled school day from Oct. 8, 2014
Port Huron Northern	10	St. Clair	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Royal Oak	10	Farmington Hills-Mercy	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
St. Clair Shores-Lake Shore	9	Clinton Township-Chippewa Valley	Oct. 13, 2014	91 st scheduled school day from Oct. 13, 2014
St. Johns	9	Belding	Nov. 18, 2014	Remainder of 14-15 school year
St. Joseph-Lake Michigan Catholic	10	Russellville, AR	Nov. 3, 2014	Remainder of 14-15 school year
Warren-Cousino	10	Fraser Arts Academy in the Woods	Sept. 5, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Warren-Cousino	10	Fraser Arts Academy in the Woods	Sept. 5, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015
Warren-Cousino	10	St. Clair Shores-Lakeview	Sept. 2, 2014	Jan. 19, 2015

Flint-Michigan School for the Deaf (Regulation II, Section 6) – A request was made to waive the 600-mile round-trip travel limitation to permit the boys and girls basketball teams' participation in two events held at the Kentucky School for the Deaf which involve deaf schools from Ohio, Georgia, Kentucky and Michigan. The first will be held Jan. 9-11, 2015, and a second tournament Feb. 6-7, 2015, in Danville, Kentucky which is 846 miles round-trip from Flint. Approval has been given in years past for these events.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Ada-Forest Hills Eastern, Grand Rapids-Forest Hills Central and Forest Hills Northern High Schools (Regulation II, Section 11) – A request to waive the three-player out-of-season coaching limitation was made on behalf of the boys and girls tennis coaches from these three schools of the same district whose out-of-season activity has been limited because of changes in the operation of indoor tennis courts in the Grand Rapids area. Three have closed and one will not schedule court time for other than club members. The request was to permit each individual school coach to work with three students from that coach's school only, while a coach from another school of this same district may be practicing with three students incidental to that coach's workout "under the same roof."

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver through the 2014-15 school year.

Pinconning and Pinconning-St. Michael's Middle Schools (Regulation III, Section 1[D]) – The Executive Committee approved a cooperative program in girls volleyball between these two member schools. St. Michael's is a new member middle school. Pinconning Middle School sponsored volleyball previously and will be the primary school.

Hillsdale-Will Carleton Academy Middle School (Regulation III, Sections 1 & 2) – A request was made to waive the enrollment and maximum age sections of the eligibility regulation at the junior high/middle school level on behalf of a 9th-grade student with Down Syndrome who became 17 years of age prior to Sept. 1, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the requests for waiver, noting that Section 2 limits the Executive Committee's authority for waiver of the maximum age rule to one year. This student would have to be under 16 years of age on Sept. 1, 2014 to be a candidate for waiver. This student is eligible at the high school level where she is enrolled.

Representative Council Meeting – The Executive Committee previewed the schedule for the Council's Dec. 5 meeting.

Trophies and Medals – The MHSAA trophy and medal agreement expires at the end of the 2014-15 school year. A proposal from ESCO was made to extend the MHSAA trophy and medal contract for five years through the 2019-20 school year, maintaining the same terms of the agreement with no increase in price for two years through the 2016-17 school year and an opportunity to review prices and costs for the remaining three years, subject to MHSAA agreement and approval of any price increase or agreement term. Note: ESCO has delivered exceptional service and product and virtually eliminated the breakage problems that plagued the MHSAA previous to 2009-10 when ESCO began supplying both trophies and medals. Previously, the Executive Committee renewed the initial three-year agreement (2009-2012) for another three years through the end of 2014-15. What is proposed now is an eighth straight year without an increase in costs.

The Executive Committee approved these terms for extending the agreement between the MHSAA and ESCO.

Next Meetings – The next meetings of the Executive Committee are scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015, at 1 p.m. in East Lansing (Classification Committee precedes at 9:30 a.m.); Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. in East Lansing (Audit & Finance Committee follows); Thursday, Mar. 26, 2015, at 9 a.m. in East Lansing (Rep Council follows on Mar. 27); Wednesday, Apr. 22, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. in East Lansing (Audit & Finance Committee follows); Sunday, May 3, 2015, at 10 a.m. in Glen Arbor (Representative Council follows at 1 p.m.); and Wednesday, June 10, 2015, at 9 a.m. in East Lansing.