

**MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING**

East Lansing, December 6, 2013

**Members Present:**

Jim Derocher, Negaunee  
Scott Grimes, Grand Haven  
Vic Michaels, Detroit  
Dave Derocher, Reese  
Ken Dietz, Watervliet  
Kyle Guerrant, Lansing  
Kris Isom, Adrian  
Carmen Kennedy, St. Clair Shores  
Maureen Klocke, Yale  
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake  
Orlando Medina, Harrison Township  
Jason Mellema, Pewamo-Westphalia  
Steve Newkirk, Clare  
Pete Ryan, Saginaw  
Fred Smith, Buchanan  
Paula Steele, Perry  
John Thompson, Brighton  
Al Unger, Kingsford  
Alvin Ward, Detroit

**Also Present:**

Scott Eldridge, Lansing  
Mike Flanagan, Lansing  
Cody Inglis, Traverse City  
Chris Miller, Gobles  
Bill Zaagman, Lansing

**Staff Members Present:**

Randy Allen  
Tony Bihn  
Jordan Cobb  
Andy Frushour  
Nate Hampton  
John Johnson  
Geoff Kimmerly  
Gina Mazzolini  
Andi Osters  
Tom Rashid  
Jack Roberts (Recorder)  
Mark Uyl  
Kathy Vruggink Westdorp

**Accounts of Meetings** – Motion by Steve Newkirk, supported by Kris Isom, to approve the following accounts of meetings: Representative Council meeting of May 5-6, 2013; Executive Committee meetings of May 5, June 12, Aug. 7, Aug. 27, Sept. 10, Oct. 2 and Nov. 6, 2013; and Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting of Sept. 20, 2013. Adopted.

**REPORTS**

**Administration** – The executive director provided updates regarding recent personnel decisions. He reported that Wilson will provide the official ball for the MHSAA Football Playoffs commencing with the 2014-15 school year.

Andy Frushour, with the assistance of Student Advisory Council members Kiersten Mead, senior at Saginaw-Swan Valley, and Connor Thomas, junior at Marlette, reported on several ongoing programs to promote student leadership.

The executive director reviewed the 2013 Update Meeting Opinion Poll, highlighting responses to questions related to discussion and action items on the Representative Council's agenda.

**Legislation** – Bill Zaagman presented the report of Governmental Consultant Services, Inc., discussing general, school and sports issues before the Michigan Legislature.

**Litigation** – Attorney Scott Eldridge reported to the Council on the status of legal matters of interest to the MHSAA.

The executive director summarized the number of requests made by member schools and granted by the MHSAA Executive Committee to waive the maximum age limit (Regulation I, Section 2) and the maximum enrollment and participation rules (Regulation I, Sections 4 and 5); and the written guidelines that are provided to schools when making such requests were provided to the Council. Discussion ensued regarding the limited circumstances which might cause the Executive Committee to approve requests for athletic eligibility during additional semesters or trimesters of enrollment.

This was followed by attorney-client privileged discussions.

**National Federation** – The executive director described the launch of the NFHS Network for which he serves as chair of the board. Content is currently being contributed from 45 entities in 37 states. The NFHS Network has produced more than 2,000 state high school association tournament events (73 in Michigan). School broadcast content is being provided from 750 schools nationwide (including 42 schools in Michigan that are actively producing content). In this first year of operations, the network is deploying a variety of production strategies, and both subscription and authenticated subscriber models are being utilized for viewing. Guaranteed revenues to the MHSAA will offset a portion of the revenue lost when Comcast declined to continue its MHSAA broadcast package.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

**Health & Safety** – The Representative Council reviewed a first quarter report card regarding the association’s efforts to address “Four Thrusts for Four Years” to enhance the experience of students in interscholastic athletics and help the policies and procedures of Michigan schools keep pace with advancing trends in student-athlete health and safety.

The first thrust – promoting heat and humidity management for all sports in all high schools – was advanced by the Council’s adoption in March of the “Model Policy to Manage Heat and Humidity”; the staff’s comprehensive promotion of the policy in print, online and at face-to-face meetings; and member schools’ prompt acceptance and administration of the policy for practices and competitions.

The second thrust – raising expectations for coaches’ preparedness by requiring more initial and ongoing health and safety training – has three components:

- (1) Last May the Council adopted the requirement beginning in 2014-15 that all assistant and subvarsity coaches at the high school level must complete annually the same rules and risk management meeting requirement as varsity head coaches or, in the alternative, must complete one of the free online health and safety courses designated on MHSAA.com for this purpose.
- (2) At this meeting the Council is to take action on the requirement beginning in 2015-16 that all varsity head coaches at the high school level must have a valid CPR certification.
- (3) At its March 2014 meeting the Council is scheduled to take action on the proposal to require the Coaches Advancement Program Level 1 or 2 for any person hired for the first time as a varsity head coach at any MHSAA member high school after July 31, 2016.

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Jason Mellema, to approve the requirement that, beginning Aug. 1, 2015, all varsity head coaches at the high school level must have a valid (current) certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Adopted.

The third and fourth thrusts address practice policies (to improve acclimatization and reduce head trauma) and game rules (to reduce head trauma and the frequency of each sport’s most injurious situations). Because of the critical attention to football on all levels nationwide, a task force was appointed to supplement the MHSAA’s committee process.

The Council reviewed the Football Task Force Practice Proposals which will be reviewed by the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association and the MHSAA Football Committee in January, then presented at the February League Leadership Meeting and then the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association before being returned to the Representative Council for action in March.

**Junior High/Middle School Issues** – The Representative Council considered the possible reasons for declining membership at the junior high/middle school level; but of more importance, the Council focused on this fundamental challenge: How to maintain policies that encourage multiple sport experiences for students at the junior high/middle school level while at the same time adjusting those policies in terms of the grade level served and the numbers and lengths of contests allowed in order to be more attractive to junior high/middle school students and parents and to school districts which desire additional competition opportunities in the school setting for students prior to high school.

The following specific questions were addressed:

1. **6<sup>th</sup>-Graders** –
  - a. Should the MHSAA Constitution (Article II, Section 1) be revised to include grade 6?
  - b. Should Interpretation 262 be replaced by wording that allows member schools to permit participation by 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students on teams with 7<sup>th</sup>- and/or 8<sup>th</sup>-graders, **without** the MHSAA Executive Committee's advance approval, in sports other than football, ice hockey and wrestling?
2. **Contest Limits** – Should season limitations be increased in some sports (a sport committee-by-sport committee review is in progress)?
3. **Contest Lengths** – Should the game lengths be increased in some sports?
4. **Tournaments** – Should the MHSAA provide regional (not statewide) tournaments at the junior high/middle school level?

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Steve Newkirk, to appoint a Task Force to address these questions in a comprehensive manner during 2014 and, as consensus develops, to bring recommendations to the Representative Council. Adopted. This Task Force is to conclude its work by the Council's Dec. 5, 2014 meeting; and as sport committee recommendations related to these topics are developed during the 2013-14 school year, they will be permitted to advance independently to both the Junior High/Middle School Committee and the Representative Council, as well as this Task Force.

**International Students**- Council members were provided statistics which demonstrate the enrollment growth of non-foreign exchange F-1 visa students, particularly at nonpublic schools. Responses of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel and policies of a sampling of statewide high school associations were reviewed. Potential policies for MHSAA adoption were discussed, including policies that would limit the level of eligibility of international students who have not been placed by a CSIET-listed program and strengthening other aspects of the MHSAA transfer and undue influence rules. Action is scheduled for the Council's March meeting.

**Scrimmage Rules** – Tom Rashid provided a report from constituent meetings in response to the Council's request last May that the MHSAA Soccer Committee's recommendation to allow any number of scrimmages before the first contest be a membership-wide topic of all sports. This topic is also being discussed by all MHSAA sport committees. The Council will review all this input in May before taking action regarding any sport or all sports.

**All-Star Regulation** – Mr. Rashid provided a report from constituent meetings in response to the Council's request last March that the MHSAA Football Committee's recommendation to allow students to participate without loss of eligibility in all-star contests be a topic for statewide discussions held during the summer and fall that would consider all sports. The Council discussed the potential positive and negative impact of such a rule change on all sports and reviewed ideas for limited opportunities to participate in certain types of all-star events. The staff will prepare one or more proposals for the Council's review and possible adoption at its March or May meeting.

**Football Playoffs** – At its May 2013 meeting, the Representative Council did not approve the Football Committee recommendation to reformat the Football Playoffs to identify the eight divisions prior to the season, require automatic qualifiers to win seven games and emphasize strength of schedule through enhanced playoff/bonus points when determining the expanded field of additional qualifiers. Elements of this proposal were to be discussed at constituent meetings during 2013-14.

Mr. Rashid and Nate Hampton reported that there appears to be no consensus or momentum to change the current playoff system on the basis of any proposal identified so far. An idea that is perceived as an improvement for some schools or in some locations is seen by other schools or in other places as more problematic than the current system.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Baseball/Softball Finals** – In 2008, an agreement was made with the Battle Creek/Calhoun County CVB to commit four MHSAA tournaments to Battle Creek during calendar years 2009 through 2013, subject to certain conditions, and permits the MHSAA to exercise two one-year options. On Aug. 16, 2013, the MHSAA exercised the first one-year option for its Team Wrestling and Girls Volleyball Tournaments only. At the same time, the MHSAA notified Battle Creek that the MHSAA was in the initial stages of planning to relocate the Baseball and Softball Semifinals and Finals as early as 2014. The staff's recommendation was presented by Mark Uyl.

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Ken Dietz, to conduct a three-day MHSAA Baseball and Softball Semifinals and Finals at Michigan State University in East Lansing in 2014. Adopted.

**Officials** – Mr. Uyl provided an analysis of the declining numbers of MHSAA registered officials, and he described efforts to reverse those trends, including new requirements for newer officials and additional MHSAA promotional efforts.

Mr. Uyl identified inappropriate business practice by some officials assigners and individual officials, and he made suggestions for reducing such business practices. The MHSAA Officials Review Committee has prepared a recommendation to the Council at its May meeting that will require schools which use assigners to use only those assigners who have met MHSAA requirements.

**Women in Sports Leadership Award** – There were eight candidates for the Women in Sports Leadership Award, reduced from 11 nominees by the MHSAA Awards Committee. These were presented to the Representative Council for a vote. The name of the recipient will be released at an appropriate time and the recipient will be honored during the Women in Sports Leadership Conference, Feb. 2, 2014.

**Charles E. Forsythe Award** – There were four candidates, reduced from eight nominees by the Awards Committee, for the Charles E. Forsythe Award presented to the Representative Council for a ballot vote. The name of the recipient will be released at an appropriate time and the recipient will be honored during the Boys Basketball Final Tournament on March 22, 2014.

**Meeting Expenses** – Expenses for this meeting were approved at the specified hotel rate for accommodations, the IRS-specified meal allowance and a 40¢ per mile mileage allowance round-trip.

**Future Meetings** – The next meeting of the Representative Council will be held on Friday, March 22 2014, 8:15 a.m. at the MHSAA building in East Lansing. The spring meeting of the Representative Council will be held May 4-5, 2014, at Treetops Resort in Gaylord. The fall meeting will be held on Friday, Dec. 5, 2014, at the MHSAA building in East Lansing.

The meeting was adjourned.