

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
ATHLETIC EQUITY COMMITTEE MEETING
East Lansing, September 29, 2022

Members Present:

Nikki Norris, East Lansing
Aaron Biggar, Traverse City
Tania Woodard, Detroit
Ross Gauthier, Almont
Monica Pierce, Jackson
Jason Malloy, Westland

Anika McEvans, Detroit
Orlando Medina, New Haven
Kimberly Thornton, Grandville
Meg Seng, Ann Arbor
Steve Wilson, Bronson

Staff Members Present:

Will McKoy
Brent Rice

Tricia Wieferich (Recorder)

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 am. Following the welcome and introductions, the committee reviewed the Equity Committee authority and responsibility along with a synopsis of the meeting minutes from 2021. The committee members introduced themselves sharing their school duties.

EQUITY COMMITTEE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Equity Committee, as with any other MHSAA standing committee, has the duty and responsibility to discuss matters of specific interest relating to equity opportunities for women and minority men and women and to make recommendations of action to the Representative Council.

Goals are to include, but are not limited to:

1. Gather statewide data to define equity problems, direct actions and to monitor progress.
2. Promote through motivation, support and training competent coaches, officials, athletic directors, and governing board members regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender.
3. Sensitize and encourage organizations and employers to affirmatively seek women and minorities for athletic leadership training, placement, and promotion.
4. Promote the benefits of athletics and athletic leadership to students, educators, parents, and community members.
5. Improve communication between the school districts, the MHSAA, governing boards, professional associations, and higher education regarding the need for balanced staffing of athletic programs.

Sports Officials

The committee was provided information relating to officials' registration and current plans for recruiting new officials. The committee suggested the following strategies to assist in recruiting new officials:

1. Assignors attending parent meetings to stress the importance of good sporting behavior and foster positive relationship between spectators and officials.
2. Recruit minority officials through AAU and non-school leagues.
3. MHSAA should allow officials to rate schools and give feedback about schools.
4. Introduce a state-wide officials appreciation week (one per season).

Update Meeting Survey

The committee was provided a copy of this year's Update Meeting survey. The committee was asked to share its feedback regarding the AD In-Service and Update Meeting they attended.

Cooperative Programs

The committee was provided a copy of the 2021-22 Cooperative Program Summary. The committee briefly discussed the summary and wanted to ensure that the MHSAA took into consideration any rising trends in cooperative programs instead of the organic building of sports

teams. The committee suggested that MHSAA conduct a survey to determine if cooperative programs are helping in the way they were originally designed.

Sports Participation Survey

The committee discussed the drop in participation by gender and how 70% of athletes who decide to stop participating do so before they reach high school. The committee discussed possible ways to encourage young athletes to continue participation in athletics into and through high school.

MHSAA Awards

The committee was provided an update of the MHSAA awards taskforce formed to examine the MHSAA awards selection and nomination process. During the discussion, the committee agreed with the need for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award. The committee also discussed how the current nomination and selection process could be updated.

Head Adornments

The committee was provided a list of the most current NFHS head adornment policies for all the tournament sports we offer. A quick discussion occurred with no action needed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Title IX (JH/MS Seasons)
2. Use of Racial Slurs During Contests
3. Transgender Students

Title IX:

The committee discussed the current four-season model used by most JH/MS leagues and conferences in Michigan. Staff explained that MHSAA does not regulate when sports are played within those seasons as those decisions are left up to member schools through league and conferences. The committee also discussed the role if any the MHSAA should play in ensuring compliance by member schools

Racial Incidents Between Member Schools:

MHSAA staff facilitated a discussion by the committee about the MHSAA's role if any to resolve race issues between member schools. MHSAA solicited feedback from the committee about the need to create a set of mediation/ conflict resolution guidelines for schools to follow if communication breaks down during the aftermath of a racial incident. The committee believes that the MHSAA should play a role in assisting member schools by way of education, mediation/conflict resolution, a reporting system to log trends in racial incidents, along with the possibility of requiring racial sensitivity training for offenders. The committee will assign taskforce to assist with the creation of proposed materials.

Transgender Students:

MHSAA staff informed the committee that the current policy can now be found in the MHSAA handbook. The committee was provided statistics about current transgender athletes in Michigan and reviewed the current policy and felt the policy was sufficient.

Open Floor

During the open floor portion of the meeting, the committee discussed the need for an additional meeting date to work on the abovementioned projects related to conflict resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

The committee did not put forth any motions for recommendation(s) to the Representative Council.