



# media information



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## School Sports Take A Holiday

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 20 –** For the first time this summer, all schools in the Michigan High School Athletic Association's membership must enforce a "dead period," when school coaches have no contact with students in an athletic setting on or off school premises.

The dead period is a minimum of seven consecutive days, with each school deciding when those days will occur. In surveys conducted this spring more than 90 percent of MHSAA member schools indicated that their dead period will include the Fourth of July.

"Some of our constituents think a dead period is long overdue, and some don't think seven days is enough," said John E. "Jack" Roberts, Executive Director of the MHSAA. "It is what it is, a de-escalation of pressures on kids and coaches out-of-season, one of several coming to school sports in Michigan."

The creation of the dead period is one of three actions taken by the Association's Representative Council a year ago which have been widely publicized and went into effect on June 1. The others are the creation of a preseason down time before each sports season and a ban on curriculum offerings focusing on a single MHSAA post-season tournament sport.

The preseason down time prohibits schools from conducting open gyms and other activities for a period of 6 to 14 days prior to the start of each season which could be construed as out-of-season practice or even tryouts for a team. The down times are from August 1 to the first practice date in fall sports, 14 calendar days before the first practice date for each winter sport, and from March 1 until the first practice date in spring sports.

In the school curriculum, effective with the 2007-08 school year, if a class offers instruction specific to an MHSAA tournament sport, the class must offer instruction on at least of three topics in equal proportion taught to all students enrolled, and the class must be open to all students.

"The down time will allow schools to more clearly distinguish the start of each practice and its tryout period," said Roberts. "There have also been a number of schools conducting classroom offerings which have appeared to their opponents as school-sponsored out-of-season practice, especially in football."

(more)

## **2-2-2 – School Sports Take A Holiday**

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,600 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.

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