



michigan high school athletic association

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MHSAA to Conduct Meetings on Less-Than-11 Player Football

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Jan. 6 – The Michigan High School Athletic Association will conduct a series of meetings this month to determine interest on the part of its smallest schools for a football format utilizing fewer than 11 players. The meetings will take place at Escanaba High School on Jan. 12 at 1 p.m., in Indian River at the Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Ile Educational Service District building on Jan. 13 at 10 a.m., and in East Lansing at the MHSAA office on Jan. 29 at 9:30 a.m.

The Representative Council authorized the meetings at its Dec. 5, 2008 meeting, following a review of a survey conducted of member schools in the fall. Every Class D and C school in the MHSAA membership has been invited to attend.

The meetings will review the formats used in other states for fewer than 11 players. Twenty-one state associations conduct postseason tournaments under three different formats. The nine-player game takes place in Maine, Minnesota and North Dakota; eight-player football exists in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington and South Dakota; and the six-player version is played in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico and Texas.

Rules differences between the 11 player and the reduced-player formats, the impact of the game on neighboring schools, and a potential MHSAA-sponsored reduced-player football playoff will also be discussed at the meetings. Feedback will be reported to the MHSAA Football Committee and the Representative Council at upcoming meetings.

In the 1930s, approximately 75 small schools sponsored six-player football in Michigan. Sponsorship declined throughout the 1950s as smaller school districts consolidated, giving way to eight-player and eventually to 11-player teams.

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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