

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

MHSAA, February 7, 2018, 9:30 a.m.

Members

Damon Amey, Saginaw
Jeff Dassance, Eaton Rapids
Steve Graf, Bloomfield Hills
Don Gustafson, St. Ignace
Craig Kueffner, Mason
Jolinda Lucas, Grand Rapids
Steve Newkirk, Clare
Kevin Sankey, Big Rapids

Members absent

Jordan Ackerman, Oxford
Ken Dietz, Watervliet
Brian Masi, Northville
Jody Noble, Okemos
Edward Tomlin, Detroit

MHSAA Staff

Cody Inglis

The MHSAA Junior High/Middle School Committee met for the second of two 2017-18 meetings to review topics identified for discussion by the MHSAA staff, Representative Council and member schools.

The Junior High/Middle School Committee started its meeting reviewing committee responsibilities and purpose including the uniqueness of an MHSAA committee meeting twice in a school year. A thorough review of the first meeting of the JH/MS committee was done including a review of the meeting minutes. The first meeting of the JH/MS Committee focused on discussion, study of data and talking about potential ideas to advance in JH/MS. This second meeting focused on three big topics that have been discussed over the course of the school year with MHSAA sport committees as well as other constituent groups. These topics include contest limits for the JH/MS level, a review of the MHSAA limited team membership rule and potential MHSAA sponsorship of regional and state competitions in JH/MS sports.

MHSAA JH/MS game and contest limits

This uniqueness of each MHSAA sport has presented challenges for the JH/MS Committee to forward a proposal regarding each sport's contest limits. Last year a recommendation was forwarded to the MHSAA Representative Council representing the sentiments of the committee to expand each sport's maximum contest limits in both number of games or days of competition, as well as increasing the amount of multigame events in days not followed by a school day. This year, MHSAA sport committees discussed this issue at their meetings throughout the past year and forwarded the essence of their discussions to the JH/MS Committee. The consensus did not increase the number of weeks of each season (13 weeks) but in some cases increased the number of games and in others, increased the number of games allowed on a day. This school year, the JH/MS Committee was presented four sports (baseball, softball, soccer and basketball) desires to increase competition limits in their sports.

MHSAA JH/MS Limited Team Membership discussion

Last year, a recommendation from the JH/MS Committee was made to the MHSAA Representative Council to modify the Limited Team Membership rule to allow student-athletes at the JH/MS level to compete in up to two outside events in the same team sport in the same season. While there was much discussion, the Representative Council tabled this proposal in order to get more feedback and opinions from schools during the 2017-18 school year. The committee's goal for this proposal would be to bring non-school athletes into school-based athletics sooner and as an option to include non-school competition in their experience. The JH/MS committee reviewed the survey data as well as expressed some of their thoughts on this topic. This included some committee members questioning the need to have any Limited Team Membership rule at all at the JH/MS level. Some other committee members expressed that this potential change could be a "hook" for drawing the non-school sport athlete into the mix of school based educational athletics. The JH/MS Committee forwarded a proposal to the MHSAA Representative Council to increase the amount of non-school events allowed in teams sports to two, which would mirror the individual sport rule at the JH/MS level.

MHSAA JH/MS Regional and Statewide tournaments

MHSAA Survey data shows there is some support for regional and statewide competition in the individual sports like Cross Country, Track and Wrestling. Support for team sport regional and state competition is not there at this time and outright rejected by most surveyed. The JH/MS Committee suggested that potentially more structure and specifics should be given to schools in the future and this may adjust thinking on this concept. The committee also felt strongly that the MHSAA sport committees and respective coaches associations in some sports should give feedback regarding the tournament structure and details. The JH/MS Committee would like the sports of Cross Country, Track, Swimming and Wrestling to be involved in planning and discussion at the MHSAA sport committee and Coaches Association levels and submitted a proposal to the Representative Council.

MHSAA Presenting Sponsorship

An update of the current MHSAA pilot program on “Presenting Sponsorship of JH/MS events” was completed. “Money and messaging” was the philosophy behind these existing events. The events have continued to be well received by leagues, conferences, administrators, coaches and the student-athletes themselves. One of the big takeaways was the power of the MHSAA brand. The power and positivity of the MHSAA brand is something that will be used to get additional JH/MS programs into school membership. Committee discussion also took on the next stage of presenting sponsorships and ideas of developing MHSAA JH/MS specific trophies and medals, banners and other ideas to enhance this burgeoning market for the MHSAA. The JH/MS Committee recommends that the MHSAA continue to develop and expand opportunities for the “Presenting Sponsorship” concept.

Recommendations:

- a. Increase Regulation IV, Section 10 contest limits and days of competition in the following sports as discussed by the MHSAA sport committees. Underscored is new.
 1. Baseball/Softball – 12 days of competition over 13 weeks with doubleheader games counting as 1 day of competition.
 2. Basketball – 12 games over 13 weeks with 1 game a day allowed, except that 2 games may be played on a day not followed by a school day up to four times a season. Each of the doubleheader days counts as one of the 12 games.
 3. Soccer – 12 games over 13 weeks with 1 game a day allowed except that 2 games may be played on a day not followed by a school day up to two times a season. Each of the doubleheader days counts as one of the 12 games. (8-0)
- b. Revise Regulation III, Section 12 (A) – Limited Team Membership - to allow a middle school student to compete in two non-school events, during the season in team sports (an “event” is one occurring on not more than three days.) This would make the team sport rule in JH/MS athletics the same as the individual sport model that currently exists. (8-0)
- c. Approach MHSAA sport committees and sport coaches associations to determine the details, specifics and timeframe of conducting JH/MS regional or state competitions in the sports of Cross Country, Track, Wrestling and Swimming. (8-0)
- d. Continue to develop and expand opportunities for the “Presenting Sponsorship” of already existing JH/MS meets, invitationals and tournaments conducted by leagues, conferences and schools around Michigan. (8-0)