

## **OFFICIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING**

East Lansing, September 24, 2018

### **Members Present:**

Mark Barton, Flushing  
Mike Brya, DeWitt  
Don Gustafson, St. Ignace  
Jerry Haggerty, Wayland  
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake  
Ross Martin, Portland  
Joseph McCormick, Brownstown Twp.  
Vic Michaels, Detroit  
Ronald Nagy, Hazel Park  
Mike Roy, Vicksburg  
Steven Shutich, Jenison  
Mark Stewart, Traverse City  
Gilbert Urban, St. Joseph

### **Members Not Present:**

Mike Bakker, Fenton  
Brad McCormack, Whitmore Lake

### **Staff Present:**

Tony Bihn  
Sam Davis  
Brent Rice (Recorder)  
Faye Verellen

The 2017-18 MHSAA Officials Review Committee met to review topics involving high school officiating. After introductions were completed, the committee reviewed the terms of appointment to the Officials Review Committee, the charge and mission of the group relative to the decision-making process and the minutes from the previous meeting.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Training Sessions and Meetings:** MHSAA staff reported on the success of Officiate Michigan Day II – approximately 500 officials were in attendance and positive reviews were received for presenters and clinicians. A summary was provided by staff from the Midwest Officials Summit in Lincoln, NE. The Summit provided excellent information and new ideas for tackling common officiating issues amongst the Midwest states. It was also reported that the Association and Assigners Summer Meeting for 2019 and 2020 will be conducted online in preparation for the 2021 Officiate Michigan Day III to be held in conjunction with the NASO Officials Summit.

**Registration, Recruitment, and Retention:** The committee was provided both data-driven and anecdotal evidence for national and state trends in officials' registration numbers. Driving factors continue to be personal circumstances and job/family conflicts, poor sportsmanship by adult coaches and spectators and assigner/official politics and relationships. Committee interest was gauged as to whether an effort should be proposed to encourage member schools to develop a sportsmanship council or committee that would be responsible for tending to officials at scheduled contests (meeting at arrival, walking with them at intermission, escorting them to vehicles at contest conclusion) and for having a leadership role in promoting good sportsmanship during contests.

MHSAA recruitment efforts were discussed. These included mandating a "Recruiting Coordinator" position for Local Approved Associations, the implementation of a formal officials mentor program, and targeted recruitment campaigns. It was suggested that further concerted efforts be made towards the college-age demographic.

**Training and Development:** The committee was provided examples of in-season bulletins that are being distributed regularly to provide officials with common areas of concern and interest, interpretations of rules, and mechanics training and reminders. The utilization of a video rules library was explained and discussed. Standardizing camps and clinics was presented as a potential, future requirement for maintaining good standing as an official with the MHSAA. The use of an incentive-based program to encourage attendance at these recognized camps/clinics was discussed, as well.

**School Contest Cancellation Policies:** A robust discussion occurred regarding cancellation policies as it relates to officials' pay. Concerns were voiced that schools are put in difficult situations when they have to cancel contests, especially when it is the fault of the opposing school. The MHSAA staff reiterated that the clarified policy last actually benefited schools because it set a limit on when officials were entitled to fees. The main point of discussion seemed to indicate that the awareness of the policy, rather than the policy itself, is what has increased the number of instances where officials have sought to enforce this provision. The consensus the policy served a good purpose and could be adjusted in its effective time period from a contest date and whether it should be the offending school that is tasked with payment of the officials when a cancellation occurs.

The "Act of God" policy was also briefly discussed to determine whether language should be inserted to include "playing surface conditions" along with acts of God.

**Future Policy Proposals:**

Staff presented ideas for future proposals for the officials program. They included a flat-fee registration for officials that would encourage multi-sport registration, provide added training and insurance benefits, increasing postseason tournament fees to keep up with current trends and and requiring more stringent standards for schools and coaches in the rating of officials.

Discussion took place on the rating system's purpose and possible improvements to create a more effective tool for determining the qualifications of officials. Topics ranged from adding intermediary options (halves) to the current scale, requiring schools and coaches to rate a percentage of officials to remain in compliance and to set a shorter time period for submission of ratings following a contest.

**Officials Guidebook:**

Committee members were provided a copy of the revised *Officials Guidebook* for 2018-19 and were informed that some sections have been edited for clarity and the reduction of redundancies. Staff explained that an overhaul of the *Officials Guidebook* can be expected for 2019-20 to provide further clarity and better organization.

**Committee Comments:**

One member made a suggestion that wing officials in football be permitted to switch sidelines at halftime, especially when tempers were flaring in the first half between a particular sideline and official. This was discussed briefly with some support but both logistical and mechanical concerns were noted.