

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

East Lansing, March 25, 2022

Council Members Present:

Eric Albright, Midland
Jay Alexander, Detroit
Brad Bush, Chelsea
Nicole Carter, Novi
Judy Cox, Auburn
Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Kyle Guerrant, Lansing
Kris Isom, Adrian
Sean Jacques, Calumet
Jason Malloy, Westland
Mark Mattson, Glen Lake
Jason Mensing, Ottawa Lake
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Chris Miller, Gobles
Chris Riker, Portage
Meg Seng, Ann Arbor
Adam Stefanski, Boyne City
John Thompson, Brighton
Alex Tiseo, Marquette

Also Present:

Jon Beckman, Ishpeming
Scott Eldridge, Lansing

Staff Members Present:

Tony Bihn
Jordan Cobb
Sam Davis
Andy Frushour
Dan Hutcheson
Cody Inglis
Karen Jackson
Geoff Kimmerly
Cole Malatinsky
Will McKoy
Andi Osters
Brent Rice
Adam Ryder
Mark Uyl (Recorder)
Kathy Westdorp
Paige Winne

President Scott Grimes welcomed newly appointed Council members Meg Seng and Jason Malloy to their first meeting and he also welcomed Jon Beckman of the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee whose members are invited to attend this meeting on an annual basis.

Motion by Jason Mensing, supported by John Thompson, to place the basketball schedule proposal of 22 games and a reduction of the basketball season by one calendar week to this meeting's agenda under new business. Adopted.

Accounts of Meetings – Motion by Jason Mensing, supported by John Thompson, to approve the minutes of the Representative Council meeting of Dec. 3, 2021; the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings of Dec. 2, 2021, Jan. 12, 2022 and Feb. 23, 2022; and the minutes of the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting of Feb. 21, 2022. Adopted.

REPORTS

Legislation – The Council reviewed a report from Governmental Consultant Services, Inc. regarding activities of the Michigan Legislature that could directly or indirectly affect member schools' administration of interscholastic athletics.

Litigation – The Council received a report on legal issues in which the MHSAA has been engaged.

Administration – The executive director provided a brief review on winter tournaments and recognized Council members Nicole Carter and Meg Seng for being recognized as statewide winners of the Principal and Athletic Director of the Year awards, respectively.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Harper Woods-Chandler Park Academy (Regulation I, Section 9) – An appeal was made of the staff penalties, which were affirmed by the Executive Committee on Jan. 12, for violations stemming from issues within the football program during the fall of 2021 with a personal appearance by Chandler Park’s CEO, high school principal, board of education president and legal counsel. The school played an ineligible athlete for multiple football games during the fall who happened to be the coach’s son. The football coach and athletic director actively concealed this fact by switching the player’s uniform number from game to game, and even denied that this student was playing when confronted by video evidence. The school administration also initially denied this activity but amended the explanation of events once further evidence was provided. The original penalty was that all athletic programs were suspended from MHSAA tournaments for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years but was amended after a meeting between MHSAA staff and the superintendent and principal of Chandler Park Academy where it was shared that the head football coach and athletic director were no longer employed by the school. The current penalty includes the football program being ineligible for the MHSAA tournament in 2021 and will again be ineligible for the playoffs in 2022, along with required transfer student reporting to the MHSAA until the issue could be revisited with the school’s new, permanent athletic director.

While it was noted that the school has taken corrective action by no longer employing the coach or athletic director, there was an absence of institutional control and oversight by the school’s administration of the athletic director and head football coach at multiple times during the fall of 2021.

Motion by John Thompson, supported by Chris Miller, to affirm in part and modify in part the following penalties:

1. The Chandler Park athletic program is on probation through the 2022-23 school year.
2. The football program is ineligible for the MHSAA football tournament in the fall of 2022.
3. All athletic transfer students must be reported to the MHSAA office through the 2022-23 school year.

Adopted.

Sports Medicine Advisory Committee – Discussion took place on a variety of options and approaches for pre-participation physical examinations. While a good deal of conversation and study has taken place to date, the consensus of the Council was to make no change to current regulations for the 2022-23 school year. An alternative option to the April 15 date will be presented and discussed at constituent meetings and events during the fall of 2022, and this issue will return to the Council in December of 2022.

Baseball Committee and Softball Committee – Motion by Jay Alexander, supported by Eric Albright, to approve the Baseball Committee and Softball Committee recommendation to allow, by default, all District first round games to continue to be played on the Tuesday following Memorial Day. If all participating teams agree before the draw is held (and the host school, if applicable), teams may play District first round games on the Thursday, Friday or Saturday (baseball only) before Memorial Day. Adopted.

Summer Transportation: Regulation II, Section 11(H) and Interpretation 233 – The Council has discussed this issue at length, starting during the 2019-20 school year. Motion by Chris Miller, supported by Jason Mensing, to approve the following changes to Regulation II, Section 11(H) and Interpretation 233, effective June 1, 2022:

1. School transportation may not be used for any out-of-season during the school year activity. School transportation may be used during the summer using funds from school-approved activities of booster clubs, school teams, student groups and community, civic or service groups (no general school operating funds). There may be no use of school owned and issued competition warm-ups and/or uniforms (non-competition practice jerseys may be worn whether or not school owned or issued). Neither the school nor its coaches shall allow the out-of-season activity to be mandatory or to be any part of the basis for selection of the school team.

Int. 233 – School buses, vans or other school vehicles shall not be used to transport a school's students to out-of-season during the school year athletic practices, camps, clinics or competitions outside the MHSAA defined season; however, school buses, vans or other school vehicles may be used during the summer with school district approval using funds from school-approved activities of booster clubs, school teams, student groups and community, civic or service groups with no general school operating funds being used. "School transportation" for the purpose of this Section includes those vehicles owned or leased by the school district or those operated by any entity with which the district contracts to provide transportation services.

Adopted.

Classification Issues – The Council has discussed the issue of classification and schools not participating in MHSAA tournaments in previous meetings. The Classification Committee and Council have identified the problem of schools indicating sponsorship of a sport which includes them in the classification process, only to opt out or not participate in the MHSAA tournament year after year. Staff provided a recommendation to address this ongoing problem.

Motion by Adam Stefanski, supported by Kris Isom, to approve the classification of tournament schools each March and April by eliminating those schools that have indicated sport sponsorship but have failed to have either a team and/or individuals actually participate in the MHSAA tournament in that sport during the previous two MHSAA tournaments. Schools not included in the classification process would be notified by MHSAA staff, and could be added to the tournament planning process at a later time based on current enrollment and actual tournament participation. Adopted.

Issues surrounding football classification were discussed, specifically the current prohibition of allowing schools to opt up in football with the strength-of-schedule qualification method to the MHSAA Football playoffs. The Classification Committee and Council reached consensus that opt-ups in football should be considered with cause by the Executive Committee.

Motion by Jay Alexander, supported by John Thompson, to allow football schools to opt up after football classification lists are published in early April. Football schools must include the reason and rationale with the opt-up request indicating why they wish to opt up for a minimum of two years, which would be considered by the Executive Committee during the April and May meetings only. Adopted.

Ice hockey continues to be a challenging environment as most schools involved with ice hockey are in a cooperative agreement. To better manage this sport and student limits for cooperative programs, MHSAA staff provided ideas and a recommendation to increase the cooperative program enrollment cap for ice hockey from 3,500 students to 5,500 students. Motion by John Thompson, supported by Chris Miller, to approve the staff recommendation which includes a rewrite of Regulation I, Section 1(F):

SECTION 1(F)—

1. Two or more member high schools whose combined enrollment does not exceed 3,500 students may conduct, with the approval of the Executive Committee a cooperative program in the following specific sports (sponsored by 250 or fewer schools) for which application has been made and approval has been granted: girls gymnastics, ~~ice hockey~~, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, boys alpine skiing, girls alpine skiing, boys swimming & diving, and girls swimming & diving.
2. Two or more member high schools whose combined enrollment does not exceed 5,500 students may conduct, with the approval of the Executive Committee, a cooperative program in ice hockey.
3. For the eight sports listed in No. 1 and 2, if none of the schools involved in a proposed cooperative program sponsored the sport at any level on an interscholastic basis during the previous school year, then the 3,500 or 5,500 (ice hockey only) maximum enrollment may be waived by the Executive Committee. However, the cooperative program may not exist beyond four school years.
4. The Executive Committee may approve a cooperative program in excess of the 3,500 or 5,500 (ice hockey only) student enrollment maximums for up to four years in sports sponsored by 250 or fewer schools if, during the previous year, the school or the cooperative program in which a school was a part dropped the sport because of a demonstrated lack of participation. The cooperative program in excess of 3,500 or 5,500 (ice hockey only) students may not exist beyond four school years.

Adopted.

Track & Field – Over the past three years, MHSAA sport committees have discussed ways that sports can be more inclusive to students with disabilities. The process used for Paralympic swimming events at MHSAA Swim Finals since 2020 has been effective in this pursuit. The Cross Country/Track Committee has discussed this issue extensively and made a recommendation to the Representative Council.

Motion by Sean Jacques, supported by Alex Tiseo, to establish a wheelchair Track & Field category for participants at Regional and Final meets beginning with the 2022 season. These additional events would be established using existing MHSAA track & field events and be open to wheelchair track & field athletes at MHSAA member schools with requirements in place for regular season, Regional and Final meets. Individual medals for these events would be awarded. This initial commitment is for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. Adopted.

Motion by Kris Isom, supported by Mark Mattson, to extend the Paralympic Swimming heats in the 50 and 100 freestyle heats at the MHSAA Finals based on regular season requirements. Individual medals for the Paralympic events will continue to be awarded. This renewed commitment is for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. Adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

Basketball Committee Proposal – Once added to the agenda, discussion took place on the Basketball Committee proposal to increase regular season games from 20 to 22 while delaying the start of practice by one week, reducing the basketball season calendar length by one week. Comments were made regarding an adjustment to the minimum number of calendar days required before the first contest, along with concerns regarding availability of officials, gym space and the holiday break period.

Motion by Jay Alexander, supported by Brad Bush, to increase the allowed number of regular season basketball games from 20 to 22 for the 2022-23 season. The first day of practice would be delayed by one week with the minimum number of calendar days before the first contest to be reduced from 21 to 14. All tournament dates would remain unchanged from currently published calendars.

Girls Basketball 22-23: First practice Nov. 14 (was Nov. 7); first contest Nov. 28 (no change); MHSAA Semifinals and Finals March 16-18 (no change).

Boys Basketball 22-23: First practice Nov. 21 (was Nov. 14); first contest Dec. 5 (no change); MHSAA Semifinals and Finals March 23-25 (no change).

Adopted.

Vern L. Norris Award – The Representative Council was presented with the three finalists for the Vern L. Norris Award who had been screened by the MHSAA Awards Committee from five nominees. The Council selected the recipient of the award, which will be announced at the Officials Banquet to be held virtually in May.

Meetings – The Representative Council reviewed expenses for this meeting and the schedule for the May 2022 Council meeting. Motion by Jason Mensing, supported by Eric Albright, to approve expenses for the March Council meeting. Adopted.

Audit and Finance Committee Report – This committee is responsible for reviewing past financial performance and future projections, reviewing and making revenue and expense recommendations for MHSAA programs, and finalizing the annual budget for the Council's approval in May. The Council reviewed the minutes of the committee's Feb. 23 meeting, giving attention to large financial obligations that the MHSAA has assumed for its member schools on an annual basis and challenges the MHSAA is facing to maintain tournament and sponsorship revenues at levels necessary to support increasing services to schools and venue expenses for MHSAA tournaments.

Motion by Jason Malloy, supported by Nicole Carter, to approve the Audit and Finance Committee recommendations for officials registration fees, NASO membership, officials tournament compensation increases, and website redesign. Adopted.

Motion by Eric Albright, supported by Jay Alexander, to approve the Audit and Finance Committee recommendation for National Federation Annual Meeting attendance by Council members, and to approve the specific reimbursement limits for the 2022 meeting in San Antonio, Texas. Reimbursement will be after the meeting and based on actual length of stay and require receipts. Adopted.

Motion by Kris Isom, supported by Chris Miller, to approve the Audit and Finance Committee recommendations regarding staff compensation for 2022-23. Adopted.

The meeting was adjourned.