

NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

1161 Route 130 North

Robbinsville, NJ 08691

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 10, 2024

Roll Call - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Jason Corley, at 11:01 am.

The following members were present: Mohammed Abdelaziz, Jeff Baldino, Dr. Carol Birnbohm, Joseph Bollendorf, Jeremy Braverman, Ed Chmiel, Heather Crisci, Maria Crowley, Denise Crudup, Danielle Dayton, Jorge Diaz, Al Dyer, Daniel Finkle, Judy Finch-Johnson, John Fraraccio, Dr. Dave Heisey, Steven Jenkins, Kurt Karcich, Howard Krieger, Dr. Michael Kuchar, Brendan McGovern, Jason Miller, Leon Owen, Russell Petrocelli, Dave Ryden, Steve Shohfi, Sheryl Smith, Jeffrey Steele, Dr. Gregory Troxell, Joseph Ursino, Michael Vinella, Paul Vizzuso, Tammy Wagner, Barry Walker, and Cynthia Wilks. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director; Paul Popadiuk, Chief Compliance Officer; Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer; Al Stumpf and Derryk Sellers, Assistant Directors; Alexis Smith, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Jake Aferiat, *NJ Advance Media*; Steven Falk, *Asbury Park Press*; and Mike McGarry, *Press of Atlantic City*.

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Russell Petrocelli, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to accept the minutes of the February 14, 2024 Executive Committee meeting. Motion passed with three abstentions.

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – Mr. Anzano was unable to attend today’s meeting but did distribute a listing of bills being considered by the legislature.

Executive Director Update – Colleen Maguire

Winter Season Recap – Ms. Maguire distributed a three-page listing of all NJSIAA’s winter champions. It is the busiest season and she commended NJSIAA’s Directors for their respective tournaments. There were great crowds across many sports.

Annual Meeting Legislation – Final Approval – One Reading – Voice Vote – The annual meeting will take place on Monday, May 6 at the Pines Manor. The two proposals that will be on the ballot were presented at two sectional meetings (the first on 3/13 at the DAANJ Conference; the second was virtual, on 3/20). No changes were recommended or made to the original proposals passed by the Executive Committee in January. The ballots in final form and substance were shared with the committee.

Ballot #1 – Girls Ice Hockey Proposal - A motion was made by Daniel Finkle, seconded by Joseph Bollendorf, to approve and place Ballot #1, which formally recognizes girls ice hockey as a NJSIAA sport (and would be the 34th sport sponsored by NJSIAA), on the 2024 NJSIAA Annual Meeting ballot for vote by the membership. Motion carried unanimously.

Ballot #2 – Classifications – Charter Schools and Cooperative Sport Programs Proposal – NJSIAA staff has proposed amending the classification procedures for charter school and cooperative sports programs. The proposal will exclude charter schools and cooperative sports programs when initially classifying schools into groups and sections for each sport. Once the classifications are set, and the varsity status of their program is confirmed, then charter schools and cooperative sports programs will then be added to the appropriate group and section based on their enrollment and northing number. This proposal will provide flexibility to accommodate the changing status of charter schools

and cooperative sports programs without impacting those schools with consistent varsity status and stand-alone programs. The Advisory Committee and the Executive Committee have endorsed this proposal.

Questions were raised. Was there any consideration given to including technical schools. The answer is no because technical schools have been consistent in their sports offerings. Will this push schools around? The answer is this proposal should prevent schools from being bounced around between groups. The only negative is some groups may have two or three extra schools, so not all groups will be equal in numbers.

A motion was made by Dr. Troxell, seconded by Judy Finch-Johnson, to approve and place Ballot #2, which amends the classification procedures for charter school and cooperative sports programs, on the 2024 NJSIAA Annual Meeting ballot for vote by the membership. Motion carried unanimously.

NFHS Legal Meeting – Ms. Maguire and Mr. Goodell are attending and giving a presentation on the legal challenges surrounding the transition to a new transfer rule at the NFHS Legal Meeting on 4/11 & 4/12.

Scholar-Athlete Luncheon – May 19, 2024 – NJSIAA’s annual scholarship program will take place on Sunday, May 19 at The Pines Manor. 376 nominated senior student-athletes will be honored. For the first time ever, thanks to the approval by the Finance Committee, NJSIAA will cover the cost of the entire luncheon. Every student-athlete plus two guests will attend free of charge and receive a \$500 scholarship.

Spectator Code of Conduct Proposal – First Reading – Voice Vote – This past December, Athletic Directors from the Big North and NJIC conference presented to the Executive Committee why a statewide spectator policy for schools is needed. The association then solicited feedback from all leagues and conferences (all unanimously supported this) and other states to see their policies. With that input, Mr. Goodell and Ms. Smith crafted the following proposal for vote by the Executive Committee. If a school has a more restrictive policy with more penalties, they can continue to use what they’ve been using. The goal is to provide a framework, but schools can tailor to their district events/needs. The NJSBA has reviewed the policy.

Proposal

During the 2024-2025 school year, every NJSIAA member school must adopt a spectator code of conduct policy.

The policy must be provided to the parents/guardians of participating student-athletes and require a sign-off indicating understanding of the policy during the school’s sports registration process.

The policy must include expectations of appropriate behavior at interscholastic events and the disciplinary actions that will be taken when the policy is violated.

The disciplinary actions must include, at minimum, a suspension from attending future interscholastic event(s) and require an educational component. The policy must include increased disciplinary actions for multiple violations in a defined period of time.

The policy must be made available to NJSIAA staff upon request. NJSIAA staff reserves the right to share a member schools’ policy with another member school when appropriate.

The code of conduct itself should be posted at all venues hosting interscholastic competition to the extent reasonably possible.

Failure of a member school to enforce its policy may result in discipline by the NJSIAA. In addition to the penalties set forth in Article X of the Bylaws, a school that does not enforce its policy may be prohibited from hosting an NJSIAA state tournament event.

Spectator Code of Conduct - Recommendation

Under the Sportsmanship Rule/Policy, as it is currently written, unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to, actions of a fan or spectator who:

- strikes or physically abuses an official, opposing coach, player, or spectator;
- intentionally incites participants or spectators to violent or abusive action;
- uses obscene gestures or profane or unduly provocative language or action towards officials, opponents, or spectators; or
- engages in harassing verbal or physical conduct related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion at an interscholastic event.

This list of unsportsmanlike actions is a minimum. In addition, NJSIAA recommends a member school's policy also prohibit the following:

- Use of profanity or biased language before, during, or after an interscholastic event.
- Verbally harasses an official or opponent by using names or uniform numbers.
- Entering the field of play – before, during, or after an interscholastic event.
- Physical altercation with an official, coach, player, or spectator – before, during, or after an interscholastic event.
- Use of artificial noisemakers or other instruments intended to disrupt the interscholastic event or distract the participants during an interscholastic event.

Disciplinary Actions

The member school's policy should include the following disciplinary actions for violations of the code of conduct:

- Immediate removal from the event and school premises.
- Suspension from the next home interscholastic event for a first offense.
- Longer suspensions from interscholastic events for multiple violations in a defined period of time (season, school year, calendar year, etc.).
- Completion of required educational component(s) before attendance at future home interscholastic event.

NJSIAA recommends the following educational components, which can be accessed at the National Federation's "NFHS Learn" website (www.nfhslearn.com):

- Positive Parenting within School Programs
- Sportsmanship
- Teaching and Modeling Behavior
- The Parent Seat

Policy Adoption

Member schools may adopt a policy that includes disciplinary measures which are stricter or more severe than the minimum requirements included in this proposal. In addition, Leagues and Conferences may adopt a policy that includes disciplinary measures which are stricter or more severe than the minimum requirements included in this proposal, such as suspending certain fans or spectators from both home and away league or conference contests.

Member schools will be required to confirm that they have adopted, and communicated, a spectator code of conduct policy that is in accordance with this proposal with its annual membership certification.

Discussion took place and the following suggestions were made:

1. Should add “staff members” to “Physical altercation with an official, coach, player, or spectator – before, during, or after an interscholastic event.”
2. Should add “staff members” to the third bullet under spectator recommendations so reads “uses obscene gestures or profane or unduly provocative language or action towards officials, opponents, spectators or “staff members”
3. Discussion took place whether to include social media but that’s covered in NJSIAA’s sportsmanship rule, and this is a hard rule to enforce. The association does not want to require schools to monitor social media.
4. Should add “threatening” so reads “Use of “threatening” profanity or biased language before, during, or after an interscholastic event.
5. Should add “own team” or “player” to the following bullet “Verbally harasses an official or opponent by using names or uniform numbers.” Sometimes parents harass their own team so shouldn’t just include opponent, but rather any player participating.

Ms. Maguire appreciated the feedback and tabled the first reading so she can re-work the proposal with the committee’s recommendations. If any committee member has more changes they’d like to see incorporated, they should reach out to Ms. Maguire after the meeting. First reading will now take place in the May meeting.

Public Schools – Enrollment/Classifications Committee – Later this month, Ms. Maguire is convening a committee to review different enrollment policies currently in place among public schools – should our classifications reflect these different enrollment policies? There were concerns that during this past basketball season, a first-year charter school program was able to enroll transfer students from around the state – some coming from 40 – 50 miles away, and their basketball team was very successful. However, this review will extend beyond charter schools. It will look at all types of enrollment policies that allow public schools to enroll students beyond a defined geographic boundary as well as multi-school districts with open enrollment policies. In addition, the committee will be reviewing models that other states use to competitively balance classifications – models based on state tournament success and/or transfers.

Chief Compliance Officer Update (Paul Popadiuk)

International Student Policy Proposal – First Reading – Voice Vote – First Mr. Popadiuk thanked the following Executive Committee members: Carol Birnbohm, Judy Finch-Johnson, Michael Rossi, Russell Petrocelli, David Salvo and Steve Shohfi, for being on the International Student Committee to examine the Association’s policies and practices regarding international students and examining other states’ policies. The result is the below proposal, which clarifies eligibility rules surrounding international students to ensure consistent application, and to address concerns of member schools regarding displacement of current student-athletes, recruiting, and a lack of oversight and rules in the Association’s bylaws. In the past, international students were in the USA for a few months to a year, but this practice has changed, and more and more are staying for years. Furthermore, CSIET does a fantastic job in vetting and placing international students in safe environments but cannot be expected to police students for athletic advantage or recruitment. This proposal provides the Association’s philosophy, defines key terms, and identifies required conditions for eligibility, guardianship, and special exemptions.

PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

NJSIAA Bylaw Article V Section 4

M. International Students, Foreign Students, and Other Students from Foreign Countries

Purpose: *The NJSIAA is committed to fostering a positive environment for international students. Participation in athletics can enhance cultural understanding and personal growth for the entire team. It's important to recognize that the primary purpose of an international student's enrollment into an NJSIAA member school is not to exploit the student's athletic achievements for college recruiting or to showcase their talents in a way that could impact the competitive balance among member schools. The participation of international students in interscholastic athletic programs should not displace current student-athletes enrolled at member schools. Above all, the academic program should be prioritized over the athletic program.*

1: International Student Defined: An International Student is a student:

- a. who is in the United States on a U.S. Department of State-issued J-1 or F-1 visa; and
- b. who has moved to the United States without their parent or guardian; and
- c. whose parents/guardians are domiciled in a foreign country; and
- d. who is enrolled, as a full-time student, at an NJSIAA member school; and
- e. who has not graduated from the secondary school system in their home country (or that country's high school equivalent); and
- f. who is participating in a Council on Standards for International Students (CSIET) approved program.

2: International Student Eligibility Requirements:

- a. An International Student is eligible for one season of sub-varsity athletics and one season of varsity athletics, per sport, if all of the following conditions are met:
 - i. The student satisfies the requirements to be considered an International Student, as listed above; and
 - ii. The student has been assigned to a host family without any prior contact or influence from the student, the student's parents, the school, or any other interested parties before the placement.; and
 - iii. The student was not selected or placed on any basis relating to the student's athletic abilities/interests; and
 - iv. The student does not reside with district staff members, boosters, or coaching staff (paid or voluntary); and
 - v. The student and school have completed the NJSIAA International Student Eligibility Form, and it has been approved by the NJSIAA; and
 - vi. The student has not been previously enrolled in another U.S. school, or participated on a U.S. athletic team (club, school, or otherwise); and
 - vii. The student meets all eligibility requirements in Article V of NJSIAA Bylaws.
- b. Notwithstanding any provision of Article V, a student who receives eligibility under this section shall thereafter be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that or any other NJSIAA member school.
- c. Sections 1 and 2 are not applicable to students who move to the United States with their parent/guardian as defined in Section 8.
- d. Schools are limited to one international student per varsity team during a given season. There is no limit on the number of international students participating at the sub-varsity level.

3: Foreign Student Defined: A foreign student is a student who has moved to the United States from a foreign country, and whose parents/guardians are domiciled in a foreign country, but who does not qualify as an International Student pursuant to Section 1 above, and/ or does not meet the eligibility requirements for International Students outlined in Section 2 above. A foreign student is not eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at NJSIAA member schools.

4: American Dependencies: Students from American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and other dependencies of the United States, are neither Foreign Students nor International Students. Said students are eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

5: Refugees: Any student who is considered a refugee, or has been granted asylum, or whose parents are considered refugees or have been granted asylum, by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

6: Parolees: Any student who has enrolled in a NJSIAA member school and is approved as a parolee, or whose parents have gained parole status, through USCIS shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

7: Moving with Parent/Guardian: Any student who has moved to the United States from a foreign country with a parent/guardian, or who has moved to the United States from a foreign country to live with a person who has a biological relationship with the student, shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

8: Boarding Schools: Any student who boards at a NJSIAA member school that offers on-site boarding shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

9: Effective Date: The effective date of this Bylaw is July 1, 2024. This Bylaw shall apply to students enrolling at NJSIAA member schools after that date.

Questions were raised. Mr. Abdelaziz asked how many students are in the international portal. The trend seems to be doubling each year. Two years ago, there were approximately 39 students, last year there were 79, and this year there's more than 100. Mr. Shohfi shared that this proposal was presented at the DAANJ Conference and was well received. Ms. Crisci asked about age since students can be 21, but international students must still follow NJSIAA eligibility rules outlined in Article V.

A motion was made by Russell Petrocelli, seconded by Ed Chmiel, to approve the International Student Committee's recommendations for international students, which includes defining key terms and identifying required conditions for eligibility, guardianship, and special exemptions. Motion passed first reading unanimously.

Cooperative Sports Program Approvals – One Reading – Voice Vote – The Cooperative Sports Committee met on February 14, 2024, to review cooperative sports applications for fall sports. The committee unanimously approved the following twenty application (the participating league or conference is noted in parenthesis):

1. Gateway-Woodbury: Boys Cross Country (Colonial Conference endorsed)
2. Gateway-Woodbury: Girls Cross Country (Colonial Conference endorsed)
3. Glassboro-Pitman: Field Hockey (TCC endorsed)
4. Henry Hudson-Keyport: Boys Cross Country (Shore endorsed)
5. Henry Hudson-Keyport: Girls Cross Country (Shore endorsed)
6. Henry Hudson-Keyport: Girls Tennis (Shore endorsed)
7. Keyport-Henry Hudson: Football (Shore endorsed)
8. Keyport-Henry Hudson: Girls Soccer (Shore endorsed)
9. Keyport-Henry Hudson: Girls Volleyball (Shore endorsed)
10. Keyport-Keansburg: Boys Soccer (Shore endorsed)
11. Keyport-Keansburg: Field Hockey (Shore endorsed)
12. Leonia-Palisades Park: Girls Soccer (NJIC endorsed)

13. Manasquan-Pt. Pleasant Beach: Gymnastics (Shore endorsed)
14. North Hunterdon-Voorhees: Gymnastics (Skyland endorsed)
15. Palisades Park-Leonia: Football (NJIC endorsed)
16. Park Ridge-Emerson: Boys Cross Country (NJIC endorsed)
17. Park Ridge-Emerson: Girls Cross Country (NJIC endorsed)
18. Pascack Hills-Pascack Valley: Gymnastics (Big North endorsed)
19. Waldwick-Midland Park: Football (NJIC endorsed)
20. West Windsor-Plainsboro North-West Windsor-Plainsboro South: Football (CVC endorsed)

A motion was made by Barry Walker, seconded by Tammy Wagner, to approve the fall cooperative programs approved by the Cooperative Sports Committee on 2/14, for a four-year period starting with the 2024-2025 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Disqualification Report – The Winter 2023-2024 Disqualification Report was distributed. There were three times the amount of girls’ basketball altercations than last year, but boys’ basketball had twice as many disqualifications as girls’ basketball. Mr. Popadiuk plans to address these numbers and sportsmanship issues with leagues and conferences.

Eligibility Dates – Age, credit and semester eligibility waiver requests for fall are due 4/22. The Eligibility Committee’s last meeting of the year will be on 5/1. Anyone who knows of a fall athlete that will need a waiver request should try to submit it now, because that first meeting of the year in August is usually inundated with requests.

Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)

Power Point Proposal – First Reading – Voice Vote – On April 1, 2009, the Executive Committee approved the football powerpoint system. Within a couple of years, 12 other sports adopted the same system and it has not changed since. The NJSIAA decided to take a deep dive into the current powerpoint system and see if it can be improved. With the help of nj.com and a few athletic directors, the association was able to look into all the different aspects of the system. It was noticed that most were still viable with the exception of size of the school point values in determining the strength of a teams’ schedule. The size of the school is not as relevant now as it was back in 2009. In addition, it was determined that capturing the opponents’ record was a better determination of a team’s strength of schedule than the group size and averaging is a better way to calculate a team’s powerpoints. The final proposal was sent to all Athletic Directors and shared with the leagues and conferences to gain their feedback. The feedback received was positive. Full proposal details are below:

NJSIAA PowerPoint Calculation Procedure (Final)

Power points for each team will be calculated by summing the total of Quality Points and Residual Points earned for each game. That sum will then be divided by the number of games played to determine the a Per-Game Average. Then, the “PG-Avg” will be multiplied by a strength of schedule adjustment to determine your team’s Total Power Points.

Notes:

- All games played from opening day to the cutoff date will count, regardless of how many games are played.
- Each sport has a predetermined minimum number of games (see chart). All teams that fall below this minimum number are still eligible for the playoffs, however their points will be divided by the minimum number according to the chart.
- Games completed after the cutoff date will not count even if they were started before the cutoff date.
- Residual points will be awarded based on your opponents’ first “N” games – the variable of “N” is sport-specific (see chart).

Sport	Minimum number of Games	Residual Points (First N Games)
Baseball	16	16
Basketball	16	16
Field Hockey	12	12
Ice Hockey	14	14
Soccer	12	12
Softball	16	16
Tennis	8	8
Volleyball	16	16

The minimum number of games and first “N” games are determined by multiplying the maximum number of games permitted by 70%. The following are exceptions to this formula:

- a. Ice Hockey – These numbers need to be an even number, so we rounded down to the nearest even number (14).
- b. Tennis – Because of weather concerns, we adjusted the percentage to 34% to reflect a third of the season.

Formula

$[(\text{Quality Points} + \text{Residual Points}) / \text{Number of games played}] \times \text{Strength of Schedule Adjustment} = \text{Total Power Points}$.

1. Quality Points - Each school will receive the following quality points for a win or tie:
 - Win = 6 points
 - Tie = 3 points (If calculated)
2. Residual Points – Each school will receive residual points from one of the three categories below based on the results of their opponents’ games. Category C will only be used when a particular sport can end in a tie.
 - a. Each school will receive the following residual points from a team they defeated, based on that team’s record from the first “N” games.
 - Wins = 3 points
 - Ties = 1.5 points (If calculated)
 - b. Each school will receive the following residual points from a team they lost to, based on that team’s record from the first “N” games:
 - Wins = 1 point

Note: Your team doesn’t earn residuals based on your opponent’s win against your team. For equity’s sake, one point will be subtracted from the total, regardless of when the game occurred.

 - c. Each school will receive the following residual points from a team they tied, based on that team’s record from the first “N” games, not including the outcome of your game:
 - Wins = 1.5 points
 - Ties = .75 points
3. Strength of Schedule Adjustment (OOWP) – Each school will receive a strength of schedule adjustments based on their opponents’ opponents winning percentage (OOWP) average.

PowerPoint Tie Breaking Procedure

1. Head-to-Head Competition (any match up to and including the cutoff date)
2. The total number of power points

3. The total number of residual points.
4. Common Opponent(s) (any match up to and including the cutoff date)
 - a. CL: Team A is 3-0 vs. team C and team B is 2-0 vs. team C, go to #5
 - b. CL: Team A is 2-1 vs. team C and team B is 1-1 vs. team C, go to #5
 - c. CL: Team A is 1-1 vs. team C and team B is 2-0 vs. team C, the tie is broken
 - d. CL: Team A is 3-1 vs. team C and team B is 2-0 vs. team C, the tie is broken
5. Winning % (any match up to and including the cutoff date)
6. Coin Toss

Seed Jumping Procedure (if used)

1. Seed jumping will receive consideration only when a lower-ranked team has defeated the team ranked immediately above (higher).
2. This procedure if used, will follow a "Top-Down" method.
3. Any split of head-to-head matches will be dropped from the discussion.
4. Movement in the seed may occur one step at a time based on the Head-to-Head criterion (i.e., If 6th in rank has defeated 5th in rank/seed, then they switch positions; if 6th in rank defeats both #5 and #4 then a double jump.

The goal of power points is to place the right teams at the appropriate seeds for the state tournaments. From testing, it looks like the minor proposed changes to the current power points system made a difference in seeding placement. A motion was made by Joe Bollendorf, seconded by Jeremy Braverman, to move to the new powerpoint system starting with the 2024-25 school year, for all sports using the current powerpoint system. Motion passed first reading unanimously.

Baseball, Girls Lacrosse and Boys Tennis Update - So far, the season for all three sports is going well with no issues, despite the weather.

Al Stumpf

Golf Update – All tournament sites have been secured. The new qualifying system, IWanamaker, has been working out great.

Spring Track & Field Update – Mr. Stumpf has secured the tournament's one missing site. Livingston HS has stepped up to host the N1, Group 1&4 sectionals.

Unified Spring Track & Field - The Unified Spring Track Championship Meet will take place at Franklin HS on Thursday, June 6 at 5 pm.

Derryk Sellers

Boys Volleyball Update – Per the request of the boys volleyball coaches, the finals will now take place over two days instead of one day, at South Brunswick HS.

Softball Update – The non-public finals will take place at Kean University, while the public finals will take place at Ivy Hill Park.

Finance Committee Update – Jason Corley

Approval of Monthly Checks – The February 13, 2024 through April 8, 2024 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. Russell

Petrocelli made a motion, seconded by Barry Walker, to approve the February 13, 2024 through April 8, 2024 check registers. Motion carried with one abstention.

Old Business / New Business – none.

Report of Counsel (Alexis Smith) – Ms. Smith gave her report in closed session. A motion was made by Joseph Bollendorf, seconded by Ed Chmiel to enter closed session at 12:01 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

In closed session, a motion was made by Mo Abdelaziz, seconded by Daniel Finkle, to enter open session at 12:24pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made by Daniel Finkle, seconded by Ed Chmiel, at 12:24 pm, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire
Executive Director

CEM: In