

# NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

1161 Route 130 North

Robbinsville, NJ 08691

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 16, 2024

**Roll Call** - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Russell Petrocelli, at 11:00 am.

The following members were present: Michael Baldwin, Anthony Browning, Carl Buffalino, Kevin Carroll, Tony Cattani, Heather Crisci, Jorge Diaz, Maureen Dzwil, Judy Finch-Johnson, John Fraraccio, Michael Gallo, Natalie Gorman, Steven Jenkins, Kurt Karcich, Howard Krieger, Dr. Michael Kuchar, Greg Lasher, Brendan McGovern, Dr. Anne Mucci, Dr. Michael Rossi, Senator Paul Sarlo, Steve Shohfi, Sheryl Smith, Jeffrey Steele, Joseph Ursino, Dennis Vinson, Paul Vizzuso, Tammy Wagner, Barry Walker, Dr. Clifford Williams, Assemblyman Wimberly, and Sjoquelyn Winstead. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director; Paul Popadiuk, Chief Compliance Officer; Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer; Al Stumpf, and Derryk Sellers, Assistant Directors; Steven P. Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following members of the press were in attendance: Jake Aferiat, *NJ Advance Media* and Darren Cooper, *NorthJersey.com*.

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**Legislative Update (Steven Goodell for Paul Anzano)** – Since Mr. Anzano was unable to attend today's meeting, Mr. Goodell gave a brief report on his behalf. Over 30 bills have been introduced that impact high school sports and NJSIAA. Mr. Anzano will continue to monitor them and should any gain momentum, the association will formulate a position and address with the sponsors of the bill or the appropriate legislative committee.

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**Approval of Minutes** - A motion was made by Jorge Diaz, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2024 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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### **Executive Director Update – Colleen Maguire**

**Annual Report 2023-2024** – Ms. Maguire was proud to distribute the 2023-2024 NJSIAA Annual Report, highlighting another successful year for the association. Kudos were given to staff member, Dena Maggio, for putting it together.

**Form 990 Draft** – This form is part of the audited financial statements presented in the September 2024 meeting and will be filed next month. Every 2023-2024 Executive Committee member is listed in the report. The form was approved by the Finance Committee who met earlier in the day.

**Football Update** – Seeding for the public tournament takes place on 10/27, followed by seeding for the non-public schools on 11/3. Ms. Maguire expressed gratitude to MetLife and Rutgers for hosting the state finals. She also commended member schools for handling several interruptions and postponements due to threats. Four different games were impacted by threats, but schools worked together, along with local law enforcements, to postpone games until Mondays, without any issues.

**Name, Image, and Likeness Policy Update – Second Reading – Roll Call Vote** – In September 2024, NJSIAA introduced a proposal to update its amateur rules and clearly articulate that NIL clubs are not permissible. This proposal passed first reading in September and the specific details for it can be found in the September 18, 2024 Executive Committee minutes. After reviewing the proposal in today's meeting, a motion was made by Jorge Diaz, seconded by Judy Finch-Johnson, to amend Bylaws, Article V [Eligibility of Athletes] Section 2 [Amateur-Athlete], D. Name, Image and Likeness, to clearly articulate

that participating in NIL clubs based on affiliations with member schools is not permissible. A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-32; No-0; Abstain-0. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

**Video Taping and Equipment/Disqualification Update – Second Reading – Roll Call Vote** – In September 2024, NJSIAA introduced a proposal to clearly articulate NJSIAA staff’s use of video. The proposal details are outlined in the September 18, 2024 Executive Committee minutes and the proposal passed first reading in that meeting. After reviewing the proposal in today’s meeting, a motion was made by Tammy Wagner, seconded by Jorge Diaz to amend both the Rules and Regulations – Program Regulations, Section 14 Video Taping and Equipment rule AND the Rules and Regulations – Specific Sport Regulations, 4. Disqualification rule to clearly articulate NJSIAA staff’s use of video which is to 1- Address violations of the Association’s sportsmanship policy; 2-Identify players leaving the bench area; and 3-Ensure disqualifications are correctly identified. Sometimes it is hard for officials to identify players in real time, so this proposal helps the association make sure the right people are disqualified. A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-32; No-0; Abstain-0. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

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### **Chief Compliance Officer Update (Paul Popadiuk)**

**Eligibility Updates** – Mr. Popadiuk reviewed the eligibility waiver process. Waivers are granted in three areas: Age, Credits and Semesters. There are no waivers for the transfer rule. Students are deemed ineligible when they turn 19 prior to Sept. 1 of their senior year, when they fail to attain the required number of credits each semester and when they exceed eight consecutive semesters from the time they enroll as a 9th grader. Waivers may be granted when a student has circumstances beyond his or her, or their family’s control. The initial waiver application can only be filed by the school. The school fills out the paperwork and it is reviewed by the Eligibility Committee, which is made up of educators who are not members of the Executive Committee. They do an outstanding job reviewing the paperwork, weighing the student’s circumstances, and making a decision. If the school, parent or student wishes to appeal the decision, it goes to a more formal hearing in front of the Eligibility Appeals Committee (EAC), which is comprised of members from this Executive Committee. This hearing is run by NJSIAA counsel and is hosted virtually. The school, parents and students present their case, and the EAC asks questions to ascertain the issues and background to each case. The EAC makes its decision, which is the final decision of NJSIAA.

Mr. Popadiuk shared the following statistics for eligibility waivers over the past 3+ years:

- 1 - There have been 245 waivers requested since the 21-22 school year.
- 2 - That is an average of roughly 70 waiver requests per year.
- 3 - Between two levels of review, approximately 65% of total waivers are approved.

Students are given every opportunity to become eligible. Mr. Popadiuk then thanked all committee members who have served on these important committees.

**Controversies Committee Update** – There is a Controversies Committee hearing scheduled on 10/28 for two member schools. One school is accusing the other of recruiting one of their players.

**Bylaws – Transfer Rule update – Second Reading – Roll Call Vote** – In September’s Executive Committee meeting, Mr. Popadiuk recommended changes to the NJSIAA Bylaws, Article V Eligibility of Athletes/Requirements, Section 4K, Transfers, to define the word “Participation” and clarify when competition ends in relationship to the number of games and/or games a student must sit after transferring after the competition start date. These changes were not necessarily changes, but updated language so the rule is more easily defensible in court. This proposal passed first reading in September and proposal details are outlined in the September 18, 2024 Executive Committee minutes.

A motion was made by Carl Buffalino, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to amend NJSIAA Bylaws, Article V Eligibility of Athletes/Requirements, Section 4K, Transfers, to - define the word “Participation” as

“attending practice or playing in contests or scrimmages in a particular sport” and 2-clarify when competition ends in relationship to the number of games and/or games a student must sit after transferring after the competition start date so a student who transfers after the Competition Start Date, the period of ineligibility will begin on the date of enrollment and will not include any days or games occurring after a school’s last regular season game prior to the start of the playoffs. A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-32; No-0; Abstain-0. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

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### **Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)**

**NJSIAA Virtual Meetings Update – Microsoft Teams** – The first virtual Executive Committee meeting will take place in November. The association has moved from the Webex platform to Microsoft Teams as its virtual platform service.

**Sports Medical Advisory Committee (SMAC) Update** – The following topics were discussed at the most recent SMAC meeting.

1. There is confusion among trainers about the five-quarter rule in football, so it was clarified.
2. There was discussion and continued complaints about the new physical forms (but it’s a Department of Education procedure so it is out of NJSIAA control.)
3. A new six-year steroid testing plan, which includes which sports and how many teams per sport will be tested each season, was approved. The new plan will begin this fall tournament season. Steroid testing is only done for teams participating in the state tournament – not in regular season - and not every team or sport is tested.
4. There’s been an increase in football color visor requests. The committee’s procedure states that a student-athlete must submit a doctor’s note, explaining why it’s medically necessary (usually an eye issue), which is then reviewed and approved or denied by the Chief Medical Officer. Most students stop the process once they learn they must provide a doctor’s note, but some have submitted doctor notes and been approved.
5. There was a long discussion over medical coverage, especially at football games. Schools want to know if it’s mandatory to have a doctor, ambulance and trainer. It is not mandatory, but it is best practice. What is mandatory is emergency action plans. Every school must have one.
6. In ice hockey, NJ has required neck guards for years, but the NFHS just made it an official mandated rule for all states.

**State Officials Fees Committee Update** – On 9/26, Mr. Maselli held a meeting with representatives from every conference, to determine regular season officials’ fees for the next cycle. The representatives did not discuss pay for tournament officials. That is a different fee.

**Drug Free Sports Testing Plan** – As explained in the SMAC update, the matrix for tournament testing has been created and will be utilized for the state tournament, not for regular season.

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### **Al Stumpf, Assistant Director Update**

**Cross Country Update** – Sectionals will take place on 11/2, followed by the Group Meets at Holmdel Park on 11/9, culminating with the Meet of Champions on 11/16, also at Holmdel Park. Schools can still register their athletes up until 10/26.

**Soccer Update** – The form to enter the tournament closed on 10/15. Cutoff is 10/26, seeding will take place on 10/30, and the tournament begins on 11/4. The non-public state finals will be played at Franklin HS on 11/20 or 11/21, since Kean may be hosting NCAA games. Mr. Stumpf is waiting on the matchups before games are assigned because if a school has both a boys and girls team participating, they will be

scheduled on the same day. Franklin HS is also hosting the public finals on 11/23 and 11/24. Mr. Stumpf thanked Franklin HS for hosting so many state final events for the association this fall season.

**Unified Sports Update** – There will be a change to the format of the Unified basketball championships. Instead of using the current different divisions format, schools will qualify based on powerpoints and brackets, like the boys and girls basketball tournament. The championships will be played at Rutgers. There will also be Unified relays at the swim finals.

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### **Derryk Sellers, Assistant Director Update**

**Gymnastics Update** – The four sectionals will take place on 11/2, followed by the team championships on 11/7 and the individual championships on 11/9.

**Girls Volleyball Update** – This year's state finals at Franklin HS have been broken up into two days of competition rather than one. Groups 1, 3 & Non-Public B will compete on 11/16, while Groups 2, 4 & Non-Public A will play on 11/17.

**NJSCA October Coaches Clinics** – The Bowling Coaches Clinic took place on 10/1. Upcoming October clinics include the Golf Coaches Clinic on 10/18 and the Fencing Coaches Clinic on 10/19.

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### **Sandy Mamary, Assistant Director Update (report given by Tony Maselli)**

**Tennis Update** – The team tournament will culminate this week at Mercer County Park, followed by the individual tournament state semifinals and finals on Saturday, 10/19.

**Field Hockey Update** – The tournament cutoff and seeding dates are fast approaching. Once teams reach the sectional finals, all games must be played on a turf field so if the higher seed does not have one, they must secure one.

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### **Finance Committee Update – Russell Petrocelli**

**Approval of Monthly Checks** – The September 13, 2024 through October 11, 2024 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. Barry Walker made a motion, seconded by Paul Vizzuso, to approve the September 13, 2024 through October 11, 2024 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Report of Counsel (Steven P. Goodell)** – There is one case in front of the Commissioner of Education right now. Mr. Goodell expects a decision any day. It involves a private Christian school student who wishes to play sports at their public school. The student asked for a waiver, which was denied by NJSIAA, so this student took their appeal to the Commissioner.

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**Old Business / New Business** – none

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**Adjournment** - There being no further business, a motion was made by Jorge Diaz, seconded by Michael Baldwin at 11:35 am, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire  
Executive Director

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