

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association
(MPSSAA)
Baltimore, MD

Minutes of the MPSSAA Executive Council Meeting
August 31, 2023

Refer Questions: R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, 410-767-0376

Districts Represented: (District 1) Kevin Kendro, (District 2) Kathy Green, (District 3), George McClure for Shirley Diggs, (District 5) John Davis, (District 6) Jeff Markle, (District 7) Debbie Basler, (District 8) Bryan Ashby, (District 9) Tiffany Byrd

Also Present: Michael Sye, President, MPSSAA
Jeffrey Sullivan, President Elect, MPSSAA
Michael Duffy, Past President, MPSSAA
Patrick Saunderson, Principal Representative (arrived at 10:42am)
Alan Dunlow, MSDE Deputy Counsel
R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, MPSSAA
Jason Bursick, Assistant Director, MPSSAA
Melissa Jones, Specialist, MPSSAA
Lynette Mitzel, Secretary

1. President Sye called the meeting to order on August 31, 2023, at 10:02am. Eleven voting members were present to start the meeting.
2. Mr. Sye requested a motion to approve the minutes from the April meeting. Mr. Duffy made a motion to accept, followed by a second from Ms. Basler. The minutes were approved 11-0.
3. Ms. Warner provided an MPSSAA update on handbooks, bulletins, and fall rule books. He also informed the group the nominating committee will be making a recommendation to the Board of Control for the next president. Mr. Bursick informed everyone that the information for coach of the year will be sent out soon and he will forward the information to the committee prior to their meeting in October. Mr. Kazmarek relayed information on official registration. Ms. Jones reminded the group to update the district directories, so they are current and accurate on the website.
4. Mr. Warner informed the group the field hockey state championships will be moved from Saturday, November 11th to a day the following week due to a scheduling conflict at Stevenson University. He also stated the start of the indoor track regular season may be slightly impacted due to resurfacing at PGSLC.
5. Mr. Sye asked each district to provide an update for the council. District 1: girls flag football started in Frederick; Carroll has 12-month ADs now. Mr. Warner mentioned the Ravens are willing to discuss girls flag football at the middle school level. District 2: the new sports

medicine program is in full swing; pickleball is being piloted as the new corollary sport. District 3: athletic trainer shortage continues to be the biggest problem. District 4: not present. District 5: both counties are seeing transportation and athletic trainer issues; Howard will put the athletic trainer position back in the budget for next year; new high school in Howard. District 6: new superintendent; 12 full time athletic trainers, also hired a supervisor for athletic trainers; four new athletic directors; two new turf fields. District 7: two new athletic directors in Harford; fully staffed with athletic trainers, but not full time; all schools in Cecil now have turf. District 8: very successful summer engagement; have full time athletic trainers. District 9: two new athletic directors; working on athletic trainers but do have a manager for them; working on middle school sports. Principal association (provided at 10:52 after Mr. Saunderson arrived): the association is attempting to get the MPSSAA on the agenda at the annual conference in November.

6. Mr. Warner reviewed financial matters with the council. Ms. Basler made a motion to accept the financial report, followed by a second from Mr. Davis. The motion passed 11-0 (Mr. Duffy stepped out).
7. Mr. Warner initiated conversation about the expenses and award for state championships. The current company providing awards came in with the highest bid for the 2023-2024 year. He will be reviewing all bids and will continue to provide quality awards for the schools and student athletes. At the April Executive Council meeting information was shared by the MPSSAA office about a 70-30 split between the hosting districts and the MPSSAA for state playoff contests. There was concern from Ms. Green about schools being reluctant to host due to getting nothing in return for their hard work. Discussion ensued and it was decided to revisit at the April 2024 Executive Council meeting.
8. Mr. Warner provided guidance on Senate Bill 610 which indicates students in virtual schools are permitted to return to their home school to participate in athletics. Mr. Warner shared information about potential proposals to change COMAR that would affect other educational delivery methods such as art and tech schools that have their own school code but no athletic teams. Ms. Byrd inquired about districts that do not have home schools, such as the city where it is open enrollment. Several members of the committee had questions as it pertains to which schools this may include, how the enrollment numbers will be used, how classifications would be done to name a few.
9. Mr. Warner updated the group on the PlayOn Sports contract the MPSSAA has. Mr. Warner informed the council a new contract has been signed and includes all negotiated terms that were requested. Mr. Duffy inquired about state semifinal sites having cameras to stream games and Mr. Warner indicated that is the goal but can only happen if schools with cameras agree to host.
10. Mr. Warner informed the group of the updated statewide sportsmanship action plan for the 2023-2024 academic year. A data collection system will be used for coaches and athletic directors to rate the school they visit to play. Data will then be shared with supervisors, not as a punitive measure, but information on how their schools are being perceived by others. He also asked the group to review the egregious behavior information distributed. After discussion

- and edits, a motion was made by Mr. Markle and seconded by Ms. Basler. Egregious behavior is defined as fighting; physical or verbal personal attacks directed towards an official, coach, student athlete, spectator, or school personnel; use of racial, ethnic, homophobic, or other derogatory or discriminatory language, slurs, or practices. The committee also added language to encourage local educational agency restorative practices. The action plan language passed by a vote of 12-0.
11. Mr. Warner asked Ms. Mitzel to provide information on the cheerleading taskforce. She provided an update, and everyone agreed the issue is how the sport would be conducted in the winter. Mr. Warner shared recommended COMAR language from the cheerleading taskforce for cheer. Dr. Sullivan made a motion to approve the language as written. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. 11-0-1 was the outcome of the vote. Ms. Mitzel will continue to work with the group on solidifying everything for the Board of Control meeting in December.
 12. Mr. Warner spoke on a few MPSSAA initiatives for the 2023-2024 academic year. One such initiative is to have a recommendation form for coaches and athletic directors to use to nominate officials for state tournaments. (Mr. McClure left at 2:25pm) Another initiative is to change the way scores are being reported. In an effort to make things easier at the end of each season, the MPSSAA is using a data-based system within Smartsheets that will be used to capture scores from every team. The scores will be live on the website, as will region standings. He also informed the group there is a new form for violation reporting and one to report an appeal. Dr. Sullivan asked for guidance on what defines a hearing from a local school system vantage. Mr. Dunlow said because each school system does things differently, what needs to take place is after a violation, meet with the school and collect information. That can constitute your hearing. Mr. Warner informed the council a NIL education program was being developed by Bill Carter, which will be free to students and parents. The last item was concerning Neptune Gametime, which is a platform that allows users to create music for contests.
 13. President Sye asked if there was any other business for the good of the order. Mr. Duffy asked if the first meeting for the 2024-2025 academic year could be moved a week earlier to accommodate the busy time with the start of the school year. Mr. Kendro informed the group that Maryland swimming replied to his email about the club championships being held at the same time as the MPSSAA championship series. The email indicated they are not going to alter their dates.
 14. Mr. Sye asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Basler made a motion, followed by a second from Ms. Byrd. The motion passed 11-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 3:12pm.