

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

Minutes of the MPSSAA Executive Council Meeting
September 2, 2021

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

Districts Represented: (District 1) Kevin Kendro, (District 2) Jeff Sullivan, (District 4) Mike Watson for Steve Lee, (District 5) John Davis, (District 6) Jeff Markle, (District 7) Debbie Basler, (District 9) Tiffany Byrd, (District 3), Shirley Diggs via Zoom, (District 8) Bryan Ashby via Zoom

Also Present: Michael Duffy, President, MPSSAA
Michael Sye, President Elect, MPSSAA
Michael Watson, District 4 Representative for Steve Lee
Patrick Saunderson, Principal's Representative
R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, MPSSAA
Jason Bursick, Assistant Director, MPSSAA
Ken Kazmarek, Coordinator of Officials, MPSSAA
Lynette Mitzel, Supervisor of Athletics, Secretary

Excused: Dana Johnson, Past President, MPSSAA

1. The meeting was called to order on September 2, 2021, at 10:08am.
2. Mr. Duffy asked the committee to review the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Kendro made a motion to accept the minutes, followed by a second from Mr. Davis. The minutes were approved 11-0-1.
3. Mr. Duffy asked Mr. Warner to provide MPSSAA updates. Mr. Warner reminded the group September 3rd is the opening day for fall contests. He informed the council over half the coaches' cards have been delayed and asked if the council would like to wait on the other half or have BSN reprint and send new ones. The group decided it would be best to wait and have all distributed at the same time. Mr. Warner reminded the council all publications are online, which will make any necessary changes easy to make. He notified the group all sport committee for fall 2021 will be held virtually. Mr. Warner informed the council this academic year is a nomination committee year. All nominations for coaches of the year will go through this committee as will the President Elect nomination. The MDH and MSDE continues to update guidance for the safe return of students in school buildings. Mr. Warner informed the council he will be filling the final year of a four-year term on the NFHS medical advisory committee. A vacancy occurred with the passing of the District of Columbia Executive Director in the representation of sections two and six.

4. Matt Little from the Baltimore Ravens gave a small presentation on girls' flag football. Presently other states are running high school leagues and the Ravens have grant money to offer Maryland schools to assist in getting the sport up and running. District 2 and 6 would like to see the sport start in middle schools, but at the moment, the offering is for high schools. Following Mr. Little's departure, Mr. Warner informed the council it will take 8-10 months for Under Armour to produce free uniforms, therefore if school systems want to get in on the ground level a decision will need to be made by November 2021.
5. Mr. Duffy requested an update from the districts on masking requirements as everyone returns to school.
 - a. District 1: Allegany and Frederick require masks inside for spectators and athletes not actively participating and no masks outdoors. Washington is the same inside, but athletes must wear masks on sidelines. Carroll has no restrictions.
 - b. District 2: Outside there are no restrictions; inside masks for all.
 - c. District 3: Everyone must wear a mask inside.
 - d. District 4: All three counties must wear mask inside, except for those actively participating.
 - e. District 5: Both counties are no masks outside; inside for those who aren't actively participating.
 - f. District 6: No masks outside; masks inside for all who aren't actively participating.
 - g. District 7: Both counties require masks inside except for athletes who are actively participating.
 - h. District 8: All counties except one are requiring masks inside for all except athletes actively participating. That county is requiring masks only during the school day.
 - i. District 9: Indoor participants must wear masks and currently there are no spectators allowed inside. Athletes on the sideline outside do not have to wear a mask.
6. Currently Charles County is testing student athletes; Harford is in the midst of setting up testing; Baltimore City is starting to test on September 18th; Baltimore County will begin testing volleyball and cheer teams very soon.
7. Mr. Warner provided an update for fall state championships.
 - a. Football will be held at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium on Friday, December 3rd, and Saturday, December 4th.
 - b. Volleyball will be moved from the University of Maryland to Harford Community College. Semifinal dates are November 15th and 16th; finals will be held on November 17th and 18th.
 - c. Golf, soccer, cross country, and field hockey are all secured at their usual sites.
 - d. There will need to be flexibility surrounding championship sites if COVID cases increase and facilities reduce capacity or shut down spectator admission.
 - e. Discussion was held about what happens if football games aren't played due to COVID cases. Is it a no-game/forfeit as indicated in bulletin; is the waiver utilized; is

the game rescheduled. At the end of the discussion, it was decided the protocol will remain what is printed in the bulletin. Mr. Warner will issue a memo to local school systems.

8. Mr. Duffy inquired as to whether two teams in a four-team field hockey tournament could still play if two teams cannot play due to COVID. Yes, that is permissible.
9. Mr. Warner provided updates for winter state championships. Currently there is concern about indoor facilities, especially the Fifth Regiment Armory. The boys' and girls' basketball state finals will both be played at Xfinity Center on March 10th, 11th, and 12th. High school sites will be used for semifinal games on March 8th, with the hope of securing Harford Community College's arena in the future.
10. Mr. Warner also provided an update for spring state championships. A search has begun for a new baseball state finals facility due to the Aberdeen Ironbirds season extension. Track and field had great success at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex and may stay there for future state championship meets. Lacrosse is looking for a site and tennis may move to Goucher's brand new 20 court facility.
11. Mr. Warner addressed the group concerning a recent meeting the MPSSAA had with Scorebook Live. There is potential to submit scores for football and have the company keep the points standings. The company can potentially provide better brackets for the MPSSAA website as well. DragonFly does not seem to be a viable option.
12. Mr. Warner provided a sponsorship update to the council. Wendy's did not renew their contract and Allstate went in a different direction with their scholarship funds. A relationship is currently being built with BSN and a contract is very close with GoFan. Wilson is going to remain the sponsor for baseball, soccer, football, and tennis balls. Nightmare Graphics will fulfill their agreement with the MPSSAA this year by allowing the association to purchase items through credit.
13. Mr. Kazmarek spoke to everyone about the status of officials. Currently numbers look good and he continues to monitor the registration and minimal state requirements each week. Mr. Kazmarek informed the group he would send an update for the officials groups each jurisdiction uses if that is something people would be interested in having.
14. Mr. Warner informed the council the discussion around a single officials background check has been restarted. The main issue is still where the ownership falls for getting the background check processed. Mr. Warner is in the process of creating a survey to send to all jurisdictions to find out what type of information needs to be collected to move forward. All members agree this is a good starting point.
15. Dr. Sullivan requested discussion about the Implicit Bias course the NFHS developed and is currently available on the NFHS Learn site. He would like to see it as something recommended for at least officials to take. Discussion was held surrounding when it would

- be required and after Mr. Kazmarek suggested it be held off until the COS and NFHS Learn are aligned, the topic will be tabled until the winter retreat being held in January 2022. Representatives are asked to take the course and gather feedback from officials.
16. Dr. Sullivan requested discussion about gender guidance for the non-binary student athletes. There is guidance for student athletes who identify as their non birth sex, but what about those who don't identify as either? He would like to see guidance include these individuals as well.
 17. Dr. Sullivan asked about vaccination requirements across the state. Ms. Mitzel informed the group Mr. Lee recently sent a spreadsheet with that information included.
 18. Mr. Duffy and Mr. Sye recently met to review out of season language and possible directions the association can go. Both agree it is time to revisit the restrictions and expand what the high school coaches are permitted to do with their student athletes during the summer. Mr. Sye reminded the group creative measures were taken during COVID by obtaining waivers, but most of those things are already being done in a normal year in most states. He and Mr. Duffy want to explore options to give student athletes more opportunities during the summer. One option is to extend the calendar to June 30 and permit coaches to work with their teams. Another option is from the end of spring state championships until the end of July giving each season a three-week period to work with their teams. Both options would require COMAR change. People would like to see it explored therefore Mr. Duffy is creating a task force to bring a recommendation back to the Executive Council by October 8th. Dr. Sullivan made a motion to form a workgroup to come up with out of season guidelines and report back by October 8th so the information can be released to the membership prior to the October 24th deadline. Mr. Watson second the motion and it passed 11-0.
 19. Mr. Duffy asked if council members had any goals and objectives they would like to see worked on for the next year. He would like to see the association review out of season regulations – loosening or opening up engagement for student athletes and coaches; discuss whether the sport offerings are meeting the needs of our students; and do activities meet the needs of the constituents. Mr. Kendro mentioned the discussion about adding cheer that was started in 2019 at the winter retreat. Ms. Mitzel inquired about the process for adding cheer and offered to follow up with the other section two states that currently govern the sport. Mr. Warner would like to plan for emerging sports. Mr. Duffy stated he would like to see a corollary sport committee formed, similar to the MPSSAA sports committees, which would meet once or twice a year to at least have communication across the districts. Mr. Sye made a motion to add a corollary sport committee with representatives from each of the districts. Dr. Sullivan second the motion, which passed 11-0. Mr. Kendro said he would like to reconvene the sportsmanship committee.
 20. Mr. Warner reviewed the financial report from the past academic year. The spring state championships did well; insurance increased; NFHS publications couldn't be returned despite not having state championship seasons. Mr. Sye made a motion to approve the financial report and Mr. Davis second the motion. It was approved 11-0.

21. Mr. Duffy asked the council if there was anything for the good of the order. Mr. Kendro inquired about holding the winter meeting at a more central location. Mr. Duffy and Mr. Warner will research locations and inform the group later.
22. Mr. Duffy asked for a motion to adjourn, which was provided by Mr. Saunderson. Ms. Basler second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am by a vote of 11-0.