

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

Minutes of the MPSSAA Executive Council Meeting  
October 19, 2020

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

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

Also Present: Michael Duffy, President, MPSSAA  
Michael Sye, President Elect, MPSSAA  
R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, MPSSAA  
Jason Bursick, Assistant Director, MPSSAA  
Ken Kazmarek, Coordinator of Officials, MPSSAA  
Dana Johnson, Past President, MPSSAA (joined at 10:50, left at 11:21)  
Lynette Mitzel, Supervisor of Athletics, Secretary

Excused: Patrick Saunderson, Principal's Representative

1. The meeting was called to order on October 19, 2020 at 10:02am by President Duffy.
2. Mr. Duffy asked the committee to review the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Lee made a motion to accept the minutes, followed by a second from Mr. Davis. The minutes were approved 11-0.
3. Mr. Duffy opened the meeting asking for updates from the MPSSAA office. Mr. Warner had none other than to state just prior to the meeting he sent an email with updates from the Maryland Department of Health in regard to amendments in gathering sizes. The health order speaks directly to high school sports. Mr. Duffy inquired if Mr. Warner has heard anything about the December 7<sup>th</sup> proposal, and at this time there are no other updates from the MPSSAA.
4. Mr. Duffy asked Mr. Davis if he could provide an update to the council in regard to the conversation he had with his superintendent on Friday. As Mr. Davis explained to the supervisors on Friday, according to his superintendent, PSSAM talked about the December 7<sup>th</sup> proposed start date and it was indicated Dr. Salmon informed the group the proposal will go to the State Board of Education at their next meeting, which is slated for Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.
5. Mr. Duffy requested the district representatives provide updates or adjustments in regard to athletics in their school systems. At this time everyone is staying the course with what was

- discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Kendro shared a bit of information on West Virginia and a few of their counties who typically compete against western Maryland schools. Mr. Warner expounded on Mr. Kendro's comments and shared information on the health guidance chart West Virginia is using when allowing schools to participate in athletics. Mr. Davis mentioned Howard County is also using the West Virginia model. Mr. Warner informed the group the medical advisory committee's doctors have reviewed this model as well as the model the Big 10 is using.
6. Mr. Duffy inquired if there is anything the Executive Council can do ahead of next Monday's State Board of Education meeting? This question started discussion about several other topics prior to deciding the council would like Mr. Duffy, as president of the council, to speak at the board meeting as an advocate for the Executive Council.
  7. Ms. Byrd inquired as to when the winter sports modifications will be ready for distribution since there is a possibility of winter sports starting on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Warner informed the group the basketball committee meets next Monday and following that meeting the modifications will be forthcoming. Mr. Sye also had questions around winter sports, more specifically about whether there was a drop-dead date to decide if indoor track was going to be contested. At this time there is no plan for the use of the Fifth Regiment Armory, which is the main venue Baltimore City and County use for the regular season, and where the MPSSAA holds several region meets. If that facility cannot be used, those two school systems will not be able to participate in indoor track this year. Dr. Sullivan echoed those sentiments about facilities since the venue used by Montgomery County is in Prince George's County. He highly doubts their athletes will be permitted to travel across the county line. Mr. Warner indicated there is no set date yet and that we need to continue engaging these facilities so that we can build modifications into our winter sport accommodations. Mr. Duffy shared concerns with the viability of wrestling; Ms. Diggs shared concerns about swimming; Mr. Lee shared concerns about swimming as well.
  8. Mr. Sye expressed concern over whether what we are trying to do in bringing athletics back is in the best interest of student athletes. With numbers trending up, should we be focusing on the return of athletics? Mr. Warner indicated each county is following their health department's guidelines and can proceed how they see fit for their population. Dr. Sullivan reminded the group that when the motion was passed on September 21<sup>st</sup> to move forward with December 7<sup>th</sup> as a modification to the February 1<sup>st</sup> start date, the health metrics were much different than they are just a month later.
  9. Mr. Duffy mentioned a question Mr. Sye posed at a previous Executive Council meeting asking if each county could do their own thing in terms of sport competitions, provided the competitions still fell within the season. Dr. Sullivan reminded the council the superintendents wanted a consistent calendar across the state, and if counties start doing their own thing, the consistency isn't present. Mr. Warner also mentioned there are three competitive seasons, your local school system will determine if your schools are permitted to participate. Dr. Sullivan stated if December 7<sup>th</sup> is approved by the State Board of Education, and then that date comes and some school systems are not permitted to start, that is okay since that start date eliminates the overlap of the second semester plan. Mr. Duffy again

asked if there was anything else the council could do in support of the December 7<sup>th</sup> start date. The consensus is the letter from the supervisors, the letter from PSSAM, and the support of the Executive Council is enough at this time.

10. Dr. Sullivan inquired as to when guidance would be received for indoor facilities and high risk sports. The goal is to be able to provide information as soon as possible to the school systems in order to prepare them to successfully restart athletics. Mr. Warner asked if there was something else the council felt was needed from the medical advisory committee. Mr. Duffy voiced concern over indoor track and wrestling and is looking for recommendations beyond the sport modifications. (Ms. Johnson joined the meeting at 10:50)
11. Mr. Sye asked Mr. Warner if the December 7<sup>th</sup> restart date is approved by the State Board of Education, are school systems permitted to continue in person conditioning with the fall and spring sports. Mr. Warner asked if his question was if the winter sports season starts, are the other two seasons permitted to continue practicing by using the approved waivers. Mr. Sye indicated yes that was his question. Mr. Warner reminded the council all school systems are required to be in compliance with COMAR, therefore it would be like normal out of season practice where a coach is permitted to work with two students at one time, but all other rules would need to be followed. His thought is once in winter season, no waivers except for scheduling. Mr. Sye feels this is a unique situation and considering spring sports will not have participated in almost a year, they should still be able to continue meeting with their coaches in more than a conditioning format. Several other committee members agree that this would be in the best interest of the student athletes. (Ms. Basler left the meeting at 10:58)
12. Mr. Warner asked for clarification as to what the group was looking for in terms of continuing to allow out of season practice when winter sports resume in December or February. Mr. Sye agreed to head a subcommittee on this particular waiver and how it can be altered to permit student athletes to engage in fall and spring practice while the winter season is occurring. He will send an email out for those who would like to take part on the committee and report back to the council with recommendations.
13. Dr. Sullivan asked for a timeline when winter sport modifications will be ready to share with the membership. Mr. Warner shared the goal of the MPSSAA office has been to get feedback from Supervisors of Athletics, sport committees, and return to play committees as soon as possible. This feedback is important based on the expertise of these groups to provide appropriate mitigation. Mr. Ashby and Mr. Kendro shared information related to their local school system and potential local decisions related to indoor track, wrestling, and swimming and diving. (Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 11:21)
14. Mr. Duffy inquired as to whether there was any other business for the good of the order. Mr. Sye asked if the council should wait until after the State Board of Education meeting to conduct the next Executive Council meeting. All agreed that would be most beneficial. President Duffy announced the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm.

15. Mr. Sye made a motion to adjourn the meeting, followed by a second from Mr. Markle. The meeting was adjourned at 11:34am with a 10-0 vote.