

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

Minutes of the MPSSAA Executive Council Meeting  
September 9, 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 (joined at 12:12), (District 8) Bryan Ashby, (District 9) Tiffany Byrd

Also Present: Michael Duffy, President, MPSSAA  
Michael Sye, President Elect, MPSSAA  
Dana Johnson, Past President, MPSSAA  
Patrick Saunderson, Principal's Representative (left meeting at 12:30, rejoined at 1:30)  
R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, MPSSAA  
Jason Bursick, Assistant Director, MPSSAA  
Ken Kazmarek, Coordinator of Officials, MPSSAA  
Lynette Mitzel, Supervisor of Athletics, Secretary

1. The meeting was called to order on September 9, 2020 at 12:05pm by President Duffy.
2. Mr. Duffy asked the committee to review the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Davis made a motion to accept the minutes, followed by a second from Mr. Saunderson. The minutes were approved 12-0.
3. Mr. Duffy asked for representatives to share any new information on first semester athletic plans. Mr. Lee shared 2 counties in district 4 will begin in person practices this month with the other county's school board voting no hybrid learning before quarter 2, therefore no in person athletics. Mr. Ashby shared district 8 is virtual until the end of January.
4. Mr. Duffy requested Mr. Warner inform the council of any updates to the 80% rule information to be added to the FAQ. He stated there is progress on the 80 percent rule and there is some language in the document that alludes to information in the unreleased two-semester plan. He hopes to have more information from the state superintendent this week on the two-semester plan. He also reminded the council PSSAM backs the two semester plan and has shared that information with MSDE.

5. Mr. Duffy inquired as to what is required of the council at this moment for the two semester plan to move forward? The website indicates something would be posted by the start of school, which was yesterday for most jurisdictions, and there is nothing to report yet. Mr. Warner told the group to have their respective first semester plans ready for send for approval so when the plan gets approved by the state superintendent, each local school system is ready to move forward. Mr. Duffy rephrased his question to ask what does the council need to do in order to get the second semester part of the plan ready for approval. (Ms. Basler joined the meeting at 12:12pm) Mr. Warner said there is a starting draft that was shared with the council last week in anticipation of this meeting. The consistent MPSSAA process for a competition season will be used, having the Executive Council and sport committees recommend procedures to the Board of Control for approval.
6. Mr. Duffy inquired as to whether everyone had an opportunity to review the draft document and if so, what are the initial thoughts of the group? Mr. Lee inquired about JV programs stopping at the start of the state tournament segment. Mr. Markle said the two week overlap is quite difficult not only for student athletes, but for facilities as well. There are several schools across the state who will struggle with having the overlap in that regard. Mr. Byrd asked how the document was moving forward – would there be a vote on it? Ms. Basler mentioned she believes this will ultimately come down to the local superintendents and what they are going to allow in regard to travel between counties. Dr. Sullivan said the messaging behind any communication is vital. It may be difficult for people to understand how state tournament competition will take place if the metrics aren't supportive of it. He believes the membership and sport committees should be asked their thoughts. Mr. Ashby said as data trends up on the shore, he doesn't think the administrators will be in support of state tournaments.
7. Mr. Duffy mentioned at the last meeting it was suggested the council members talk to their respective superintendent about the two semester plan. At this point, with school just starting, nobody had the opportunity to speak to theirs yet.
8. The dialogue continued concerning the two semester plan, specifically around the state tournament piece. Mr. Duffy inquired as to whether having a no elimination tournament will open up the desire for school stakeholders to request it the state tournament be run the same way in the future, when we go back to a “normal” academic year. Mr. Lee has concerns about the travel across the state during the middle of the school week. Mr. Davis asked if the two semester plan has been shared with any superintendents besides the three working in conjunction with Mr. Warner. Mr. Warner stated the MPSSAA, per the Master Agreement, is authorized to run state tournaments and the competition season should go through the same consistent process with the Board of Control. This plan gives the MPSSAA the opportunity to run state tournaments if the metrics permit it. (Mr. Saunderson left for another meeting at 12:30)
9. Mr. Markle made a comment there should be a plan A and a plan B. Plan A includes the state tournament and plan B stays in county for the last two weeks. Dr. Sullivan agreed and reiterated the importance of the messaging that surrounds any communication. There needs to be rationale as to how we got where we are and where we are headed. That would help

- people understand what is being presented. Mr. Warner reminded the council much of this is already in the MPSSAA Roadmap for the Return of Athletics and could be used in the front section of all sport bulletins.
10. Mr. Duffy asked if the time for a team to withdraw from the state tournament is still before the seeding meeting. Mr. Warner confirmed that is the time. Mr. Duffy asked what would happen if we get to the state tournament and jurisdictions were not permitted to participate? Mr. Warner stated there didn't need to be a set answer now, but the tournament can be played with 40% of the member schools participating or continue as scheduled as we currently do when schools withdraw.
  11. Mr. Warner informed the council football would need 6 weeks to run a state tournament. He asked if the council thought there would be push back if the football teams only got 60% of the regular season while most other sports had more than that. Football would also run until the start of games for the next season.
  12. Mr. Duffy asked which members of the council would be interested in serving on a small "communication" committee to gather information on history, rationale, and action plan as it relates to the second semester plan. Mr. Ashby, Ms. Basler, Ms. Byrd, and Dr. Sullivan will comprise the committee and report back to the council.
  13. Mr. Sye asked the council where everyone stands with the two semester plan. He is not in favor of the two week overlap or football getting an extra week, but other than that the plan looks good to him. He also stated if the council as a whole is not going to stand behind no state tournaments when the pressure is on, then it needs to be decided that they are definitely happening. Mr. Warner stated that the plan, provided the metrics allow it, offer a state tournament, which he feels the membership and stakeholders want. Mr. Warner also stated the two-week overlap has been in the schedule of the two-semester plan for four weeks now and is on the verge of release. The time to have the overlap discussion was four-weeks ago. Mr. Duffy requested feedback from each district. Several members think state tournament is a good idea, but not in the short amount of time and with the logistics of how it will be run. A few are in support of having them. A few are on the fence. (Mr. Saunderson back on the meeting at 1:30)
  14. Mr. Duffy suggested now is the time to review the second semester piece of the two semester plan and come to the next meeting with potential changes. It was recommended each district get feedback from the athletic directors in the counties they represent to be able to provide feedback that better represents the entire state.
  15. Mr. Duffy asked if supervisors will be receiving invitations to sport committee meetings as they have in the past. It was confirmed that is the case.
  16. Ms. Basler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:40pm. Mr. Ashby second the motion and all were in favor.