

Executive Director's Update August 2012



Info from Mark Beckman

Greetings from the MHSAA office. We hope your fall activity seasons are off to a great start.

New Eligibility Requirement

Please note the following new eligibility requirement addition passed by the member schools during the 2012 MHSAA Annual Meeting:

Music Attendance Eligibility - A student must be enrolled ***in twenty hours per week*** and in regular attendance ***ten*** hours per week at the school where the student participates. ***Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar).*** A home school student is not eligible to participate for an MHSAA member school.

Cultural Diversity Training

As reported to you in previous correspondence and MHSAA publications, effective in 2011-12, the MHSAA Executive Board approved requiring Cultural Diversity Training for the following MHSAA/MOA personnel:

- An onsite administrator and/or athletic/activities director from each member school
- All MHSAA sanctioned sports head coaches
- All MOA officials

It is important to note that every MHSAA sanctioned sport head coach and one administrator from each school was required to attend a workshop. There were 27 workshops scheduled throughout the state providing options for officials to attend an alternate site if they did experience a conflict at their local site, as well as a waiver option to view the online version of this workshop for those unable to attend the in person clinic.

If you have not yet received credit for attending or viewing the clinic as an administrator or if any of your head coaches didn't attend the clinic please email jpaustin@mhsaa.org for a link to the clinic. Standard penalties for non-compliance with other MOA clinics will apply.

The purpose of the training is to help administrators, coaches and officials enhance their knowledge and self-awareness of diversity issues in MHSAA-sanctioned athletics and activities to prevent cultural miscommunications, disconnects or conflicts.

Student Eligibility

It is extremely important that the eligibility of all student activity participants is checked thoroughly before the students participate in any Association Contest. Some of the areas that must be reviewed include academics, age, semesters, physical examination before practice, foreign exchange approved program, etc. Attached is the new "Fundamentals of MHSAA Athletic Regulations" which combines many of our handouts pertaining to rules and regulations (athletic eligibility "Quick Check", open gym/field, fundraising, out-of-season contests, etc.) into one document. Also attached is an activity eligibility (speech, music and cheerleading) "Quick Check" and more detailed information on each area to assist a school activities administrator in ensuring all students are eligible for competition. Please contact me with any questions you may have in regard to students' eligibility.

Foreign Exchange Students – [Click here to view the 2012-13 approved list of Foreign Exchange Programs from CSIET on their website.](#) As per Article II, Section (10), these are the only approved programs that waive the MHSAA Transfer Rule for participation. However, please keep in mind that while students under these programs are varsity eligible under the transfer rule for two semesters, they still must meet all other eligibility requirements, i.e., live in the school's attendance area, age, academics, number of semesters, etc., and they cannot have graduated from their high school.

MHSAA/MOA Required Rules Clinics

The MHSAA/MOA rules clinics once again will be provided in an online format for coaches and officials. **All coaches including the head coach and all assistant coaches and all school-approved volunteer coaches** are required to view the clinic. The MHSAA still encourages all activity administrators to view the clinics. [Click here to view the clinic instructions for the current season](#), or navigate to the clinic page via www.mhsaa.org. Please share this information with your coaches of fall sports and with your cheerleading coach.

NFHS/MHSAA Concussion/Serious Injury Rule

As you are aware, The National Federation approved a new concussion rule for all sports two years ago. The MHSAA has expanded the scope of the rule to also include other serious injuries. MHSAA Rules and Regulations item (4) states: *A participant in any MHSAA sanctioned sport who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion*

(such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) or other serious injury shall be immediately removed from the game, evaluated by the coaching staff in regard to the nature of the injury, and if it is determined to be a possible concussion or other serious injury, the player shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional (MD, DO, PAC or NP).

The implementation and enforcement of this rule during last year's sports seasons seemed to go extremely well. It is an important rule with specific procedures for officials, coaches and administrators to ensure the safety of athletes who participate in MHSAs activities.

I hope you find this informative and helpful. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please send any questions regarding this rule or the procedures etc. to Brian Michelotti at bmichelotti@mhsa.org.

Additional resources are available on the MHSAs website. Visit www.mhsa.org and proceed to the Sports Medicine page by using the link on the home page.

Coaches' Education

Check on your coaches' status concerning completion of the Coaches' Education Program.

All coaches (9-12), whether paid or volunteer, and coaching at any level must complete this program. The coaches' education certification is good for three years and the MHSAs **strongly recommends** that coaches complete the program before their season actually begins. Spirit (cheerleading) coaches are no longer required to complete the program. Each coach must sign in each time she/he enters the curriculum. The coach will either select or be assigned his/her own password that must be remembered. The testing curriculum will also change with each login. See the coaches' education website for more details. All schools must submit the certification report listing whether coaches have completed the program or not. Schools will be subject to penalties for failure to submit this report.

OPI renewal units are available if approved locally and if your district is an approved renewal unit provider. MHSAs does not certify renewal units.

MOA Items

All regular season invitational tournament fees and post season fees are listed in the MOA Handbook. You can access regular season MOA fees at [LINK??](#) Also the mileage fee has **increased** from .51 to .555 (this is the IRS mileage rate). The per diem allowance for each official, including the driver remains at \$0.08 per mile.

Reminder - Payment of Officials – there are only two ways that officials can be paid for contests:

- 1) All assigned officials must be paid before the contest with a check issued by the member school or;
- 2) If a member school and the local official's pool agree to other methods of payment (still payment to the individual official – not to the pool) and the method of payment is approved by the regional director, the official must be paid within seven (7) working days of the contest. Pools cannot receive payments from the schools to distribute to individual members as this practice would make the officials pool the employer, nullifying the independent contractor status and subjecting the pool to unemployment and workers' compensation obligations. Any changes in the payment process must be approved by the MOA Commissioner.

Exception for soccer pools only: because the fee structure for soccer officials differs from all other MHSAs sanctioned sports, an alternative payment method for soccer officials may be approved by the MOA Commissioner, provided that the local soccer pool, the local school(s), and the Regional Director are in agreement. The alternative payment method must be submitted in writing for approval by the MOA Commissioner on an annual basis prior to implementation.

MHSAs Handbooks and Directories

The 2012-2013 MHSAs Handbooks and Directories will be mailed to schools after Labor Day. The Directories will not be published until every member school has submitted the appropriate information. The MHSAs Handbooks are in the process of being printed, but in the interim, the individual chapters of the Handbook are available in PDF format at www.mhsa.org under HANDBOOK.

Other Items of Interest ...

I have included information on the following pages regarding changes that were made last year by the Executive Board and by the membership, including information regarding changes to the By-Laws, Rule and Regulations and sport and activity specific rule changes.

The MHSAs office staff is here to serve you!

Please contact the office with any questions, concerns, comments or suggestions.

Have a great fall season!

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Checklist for School Activities Administrators:

✓ Submit a Record of Transfer Form

The pink form that must be submitted to our office for any student who transfers to your school (except first time ninth graders) and desires to participate in athletics at any level. **These forms must be filed before the student is eligible to participate in an Association Contest on any high school athletic team at any level of competition (freshman, sophomore, junior varsity or varsity).**

✓ Check Foreign Exchange Programs

Make sure your foreign exchange student's program is approved by CSIET. An approved list is linked with this [Executive Director's Update](#), or contact the office for information. The list is also on the web at www.csiet.org. Keep in mind that students in these programs must also meet all other eligibility requirements, i.e., age, number of semesters, academic grades, and they cannot have graduated from their high school (some foreign high schools graduate students after three years of school). Also the foreign exchange student must live in the attendance area of the school requesting eligibility for that student.

✓ Waiver of Transfer Rule Petition "Hardship Petition"

Waivers must be filed by the school after the student is enrolled at your school. A waiver of the transfer rule is considered if the circumstances are beyond the control of the student applying for the waiver. If the behaviors that caused the extenuating circumstances are "self inflicted" by the student, the petition is usually not considered. The information provided for the waiver is confidential, but please include as much information as possible so a well-informed decision can be made. The student can participate only at the sub varsity level until the petition is approved if they are eligible in every other way. If the petition is approved the student is eligible for varsity competition, but if the petition is not approved he/she can play sub varsity but is ineligible for varsity competition for 90 PI days (or its equivalent in districts with extended school days/four day weeks). All other eligibility requirements must be met such as age, number of semesters, academic grades etc. Any student who is transfer ineligible becomes eligible on the 90th P.I. day (or its equivalent in districts with extended school days/four day weeks) the end of the day.

✓ Age Rule

A student who turns 19 after midnight August 31st is age eligible. Any 19 year old (who turns 19 on or before midnight August 31st) can file a waiver of the age rule if the following is proved by the student – 1) student does not create a safety risk, 2) student does not skew the overall competitiveness of the activity, 3) participation will not exclude others, and 4) the student meets all necessary criteria to participate in MHSAA activities.

✓ Graduate Students

Any student who meets any of the following criteria shall be ineligible to participate in any Association Activity:

- a. The student is a graduate of a regular four-year high school.
- b. The student is a graduate of a secondary school which has the same requirements for graduation as a regular four-year high school.
- c. The student has earned enough credits to entitle him/her to be graduated from the high school and has completed eight semesters of high school.
- d. The student has received a GED.

Interpretations

1. A student who graduates the first semester is ineligible the second semester.
2. A student who has earned enough credits to graduate the first semester but remains enrolled and graduates on the regular date remains eligible to participate.
3. Senior students who are currently eligible in their eighth semester (4th spring) will continue to be eligible for all interscholastic activities even though graduation exercises precede the completion of interscholastic activities for that specific year. If a student has earned a GED he/she is considered a high school graduate and is not eligible to compete in any MHSAA sanctioned activity.

✓ Academically Ineligible Students

Students who are ineligible because of grades cannot participate in any Association contest (varsity or sub varsity) for a period of one semester. They can practice if the school allows but they cannot suit up or participate in any

games at any level of competition. They become eligible to compete on the Monday morning following the week in which the semester ends. A student who becomes academically ineligible also becomes ineligible on the Monday morning following the week in which the semester ends. A student must have received a passing grade in at least twenty periods of prepared class work in the last previous semester at the school where the student participates or during the last preceding semester in which he/she was in attendance to be eligible. If a student was enrolled 20 days or more or played in an Association contest he/she has attended a semester and must have received credit and passed 20 periods. If he/she withdrew and didn't receive credit (or even W's) he/she did not receive credit and is ineligible. If a student had not been enrolled in school at all for the semester (less than 20 days and did not participate in a contest) then the grades from the last previous semester enrolled are used.

✓ **Physical Exams**

Physical exams are required for students participating in MHSAA sanctioned sports. The exam is valid for one school year and the MHSAA form must be used. This examination must be certified by ***a licensed medical professional acting within the scope and limitations of his/her practice.*** Physicals performed before May 1st are not valid for the next school year.

✓ **Semester Rule**

Students are eligible for eight consecutive semesters and the semesters start to accrue after entering the ninth grade.

Below are a Listing of Changes to the By-Laws and Rules and Regulations Effective This Year:

The following proposals were adopted at the 2012 Annual Meeting:

1. The membership approved the following changes to the By-Laws governing student music eligibility:

All major performing group members must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in attendance for ten hours per week in order to be eligible to participate in district music festivals.

MHSAA Executive Board Actions

Realignment

- Approved the realignment of one school to a different district for a specific sport.
- Approved one school for competition in six-player football.

Other General Rules and Regulations Items

- The Board clarified that open gyms/fields are for high school students only (grades 9-12)

Basketball

- Approved a listing of acceptable formats for shortened sub varsity basketball games. [These formats are available by contacting the MHSAA office.]

Football

- The Board approved changing the due date for six-player football cooperative sponsorship applications from February 1st of a given year to November 15th.

Golf

- The Board approved allowing coaching during MHSAA golf meets from green to tee, effective for the 2012-2013 school year.
- The Board approved reducing the number of teams that qualify for the Class A State Golf Tournament from three (3) teams to two (2) teams in each division, effective for the 2012-2013 state tournament.
- The Board approved changing the Class B divisional golf tournaments from the allowable dates of May 6-11 (Monday to Saturday) to ***May 11-18 (Saturday to Saturday, excluding Sunday)***. [There is no divisional golf competition in Class C.]

- The Board approved changing Classes B and C state golf tournaments from allowable dates of May 13-18 (Monday to Saturday) to **May 20-25 (Monday to Saturday, with typical competition dates on Tuesday and Wednesday)**.

Music Items

- Several amendments were made to the music rules and regulations, including a clarification about recorded accompaniments and other editorial changes.

Speech and Drama Items

- As recommended by the MFEA, various amendments to speech, debate and drama rules were approved. To receive a complete copy of the changes, please email jpaustin@mhsa.org. The MFEA spring meeting minutes are also posted on the MHSA website at www.mhsa.org.

Tennis Items

- The Board approved a scoring change for the State Class A Tennis Tournament from the current scoring of 10-7-5-4-1 to 10-7-5-3-1.

Track and Field and Cross Country

- The Board approved the request from the Southern C Division to reduce the number of qualifiers that advance from the district track and field meets to the divisional meet from six in each event to five in each event.

Wrestling

- The Board approved modifying language governing the completion of WR#1 and WR#2 forms as follows:

WR#1 – Individual wrestler's certification must now be completed within 34 calendar days (previously 30 calendar days) of the wrestler's first practice).

WR#2 – Summary of each school's wrestlers, which must be submitted to the MHSA office, must now be completed within 34 calendar days (previously 35 calendar days) of the first allowable practice.

- Approved the following - For an athlete to be eligible to compete in post season competition he/she must weigh-in and wrestle in at least one contested event during the regular wrestling season.