

Executive Director's Update August 2015



Info from Mark Beckman

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

Important Requirements

I want to remind you of the two requirements which have been in place for a couple of years regarding mandates for coaches, parents, student athletes, officials and schools in general. The requirements are the concussion law enacted in the 2013-14 school year and the switch from the MHSAA Coaches Education Program to the NFHS Coaches Education Program.

Concussion Legislation

I have attached, once again, the information I sent out multiple times last year. It is important to note the requirements for all participants including coaches, officials, trainers, parents and student athletes.

If you have any questions regarding MHSAA's requirements to continue to implement this state law please contact the MHSAA office.

Concussion Insurance

The MHSAA is excited member schools overwhelming supported the mandate to provide concussion insurance for every high school student-athlete and cheerleader while participating in practice or competition in sports sanctioned by the MHSAA during the 2015-2016 school year. **If a high school athlete or cheerleader is treated for a concussion that occurred during practice or a game please contact me or Brian Michelotti and representatives of the HeadStrong program will make the appropriate contacts to initiate the claim on behalf of the student.**

Initial Required Number of Practices Rule (new this year)

The initial required amount of practices (twelve (12) for football, ten (10) for basketball, tennis, soccer, cross country, track and field, softball, wrestling, and swimming and three (3) for golf) for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff present.

NFHS Coaches Educations

All MHSAA coaches (paid and volunteer, head and assistants) are required to complete the NFHS Coaches Education Program. The grandfather period for the former MHSAA program has expired and all

coaches must now have completed the NFHS program. OPI renewal units are available if approved locally and if your district is an approved renewal unit provider. MHSAA does not certify renewal units.

If you have any questions regarding the Coaches Education Program please contact Joanne Austin at the MHSAA office.

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 ["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 – The [2015-2016 approved list of Foreign Exchange Programs from CSIET is linked here](#). Also, the membership approved adding F-1 Visa's with J-1 Visa's for foreign students; however, those students must be on an approved CSIET program whether the student possesses a J-1 or F-1 Visa. 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., age, academics, number of semesters, live in the school's attendance area, 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. [Attached is an information sheet](#)

[explaining the procedure on accessing these clinics.](#) Please share this information with your coaches of fall sports and with your cheerleading coach.

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 using this link.](#) Also the mileage fee has **increased** from .560 to .575 (this is the IRS mileage rate).

Reminder - Payment of Officials – there are only three 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. A member school has seven (7) business days from the date of the contest to reissue appropriate checks to the official(s) who actually worked the contest 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) business 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.
- 3) Officials can be paid with RefPay via Arbiter assignment software.

Exception for soccer pools only: because the fee structure for soccer officials differs from all other MHSAsanctioned 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.

Cultural Diversity Training

Effective in 2011-12, the MHSAs Executive Board approved Cultural Diversity Training for an onsite administrator and/or athletic activities director from each member school, all MHSAsanctioned sports head coaches and all MOA officials.

Even though this was a onetime requirement, the MHSAs/MOA encourages administrators, coaches (head and assistant) and officials to view the clinic. [Use this link to access the clinic.](#)

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

MHSAs Handbooks and Directories

The 2015-2016 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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