EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 12, 2020

Flag Salute

Roll Call / Introduction of Press
The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Mary Liz Ivins, at 11:10 am.

The following members were present: Mohammed Abdelaziz, Greg Bailey, Tom Berrios, Maureen Bilda, Dr. Brian Brotschul, Jason Corley, Joanne Dzama, Judy Finch Johnson, Edward Grande, Oscar Guerrero, Robert Haraka, Kurt Karcich, Monsignor Michael Kelly, Raymond Kiem, Dominick Miletta, Tony Mitchell, Leon Owen, Michael Pellegrino, Christopher Penna, Scott Ridley, Senator Paul Sarlo, Steve Shohfi, Daniel Sinclair, Vincent Smith, Frank Torcasio, Beverly Torok, Bill Vacca, Paul Vizzuso, Denis Williams, Dr. Robert Zega and Dr. Brian Zychowski. Also present: Larry White, Executive Director; Kim Cole, Jack DuBois, and Al Stumpf, Assistant Directors; Colleen Maguire, Director of Finance; Michael Zapicchi, Project Manager; Steven Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Mike McGarry, AC Press; Mike Pavlichko, WCTC, and Brandon Gould and Brian Deakyne, nj.com. Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle, Quinn, Anzano, P.C.; Casey Langel, Esq., NJSIAA Special Counsel; Brenda Liss, Esq., & Teresa Moore, Esq., University HS counsel; Murphy Durkin, Essex County Vocational & Technical School Board Counsel; and Charlie Voorhees, Secaucus HS Athletic Director.

Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Frank Torcasio, to accept the minutes of the January 8, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Out-of-State Competition/All-Star Games
A listing of Bordering State Sanctions and National Federation Sanctions was given for informational purposes.

Executive Director Update – Larry L. White

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – The new legislature has begun, and committee assignments are being made. Two bills are being closely watched. The first one is the New Jersey Fair Play Act, which allows collegiate student-athletes to earn compensation for use of their name, image, or likeness. Mr. Anzano doesn’t expect it to pass, but the concern is if this trickles down to the high school sports level. The second bill of interest to the association is the bill that ends religious exemption for vaccinations. This bill didn’t pass in the last legislative session, but it is expected that the sponsors will reintroduce it this session, after making slight changes.

University HS and Newark Tech Girls Basketball Waiver Requests – University HS and Newark Tech submitted waiver requests to the NJSIAA rule that if a school receives 3 disqualifications in a sport in one season, they are ineligible for the state tournament in that sport. Both schools received more than three disqualifications in a girls basketball game.
Both schools and NJSIAA submitted materials for the Executive Committee to review. That is the factual record. Attorneys for both schools and NJSIAA counsel presented oral arguments (10-minute maximum). Following the presentations, the Executive Committee was able to ask questions, then entered into closed session to discuss/debate the facts presented to them. Once consensus was reached, the committee returned to open session for a roll call vote. If an Executive Committee member was associated with a school that was the same girls’ basketball bracket as University HS or Newark Tech (North 2 – Group 1 or 2), they were asked to recuse themselves.

The full appeal was transcribed by a court reporter. Motion to enter closed session was made by Greg Bailey, seconded by Bill Vacca, at 12:03pm. When the committee returned to open session, a motion to deny the girls basketball waiver request by University HS and Newark Tech was made by Greg Bailey, seconded by Kurt Karcich. A role call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-28; No-0; Abstain-1. Motion carried.

Secaucus HS Girls Basketball Waiver Request – Secaucus HS Athletic Director, Charlie Voorhees, explained to the committee his school’s girls’ basketball waiver request. Secaucus HS also received three disqualifications in one girls’ basketball game, therefore was also not eligible for the 2020 girls’ state basketball tournament. The same process used for University HS and Newark Tech was applied to Secaucus’s waiver request (Secaucus HS and NJSIAA submit the factual record, oral arguments, Exec Committee question and answer session, then closed session to debate/discuss the facts, roll call vote in open session).

The full appeal was transcribed by a court reporter. A motion to deny the girls basketball waiver request made by Secaucus HS was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Frank Torcasio. A role call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-27; No-0; Abstain-1. Motion carried.

2020/2021 List of Banned Substances/Categories & Steroids Consent Form & Steroids Protocols – A motion was made by Frank Torcasio, seconded by Maureen Bilda, to approve the 2020/2021 List of Banned Substances/Categories, Steroids Consent Form and the Steroids Protocols. Motion carried unanimously so all three documents are approved.

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**Assistant Director Reports**

**Kim Cole**

**Girls Basketball** – The tournament seeds on 2/13.

**Wrestling Update** – The team tournament seeded last week and is progressing along. The deadline to enter wrestlers into Track Wrestling for the girls’ regional tournament was extended to Friday, 2/14. Seeding for the girls’ regionals will take place on Monday, 2/17.

**Field Hockey Committee Minutes** – Minutes from the field hockey post-season committee meeting are posted. The tournament dates posted in the minutes are based on the current field hockey classification system. They are subject to change, should field hockey change to a North & South classification in 2020, per the recommendation of the Classification Review Committee.

**Eligibility/Transfer Review** – Ms. Cole distributed statistics related to eligibility and transfers for the current school year.
Jack DuBois

Football Committee Report – Mr. DuBois shared the following football updates for the 2020 season.

1. NJSIAA Mercy Rule Change - during the second half 35 points to 33; if the score drops below 33 points - the clock does not revert back to regular timing unless the score differential drops below 25 points.

2. Non-Public Multiplier Adjustments for 2020 Season – Donovan Catholic and Notre Dame added to category C; St. Augustine Prep moved from C to B category.

3. Non-Public Groups 2 and 3 will be surveyed by NJSIAA regarding potential combining of the two groups.

4. Regular Season Replay Experiment for Year 3 the 2020 season has been granted by the NFHS.

5. NJSIAA Football Leagues and Conferences reduced from 6 to 5 with the establishment of the BIG CENTRAL CONFERENCE – GMC, Skylands, Union County Conference.

6. Most Impactful NFHS Rule Change for 2020 – will allow for the spiking of the ball from the SHOTGUN FORMATION.

Mr. DuBois also shared that the OSI (opponents strength index) will continue to count toward 60% of a school’s United Power Ranking (UPR). Mr. Haraka asked who changed the Mercy Rule. Answer-it was a recommendation from the football committee.

Fencing – Districts have concluded. Mr. DuBois thanked the following hosts: Livingston HS, PCTI, North Hunterdon HS, Montgomery HS and Ramapo HS. The team tournament is currently in the quarterfinal round, concluding on 2/26 at Morris Hills HS. The Squads Championships take place on 2/22 & 2/23 at North Hunterdon HS. The individual finals will be 3/1 at Livingston HS.

Ice Hockey – Cutoff is 2/10. Seeding will be 2/18. Joanne Dzama asked how NJSIAA is handling eligibility issues for the girls showcase ice hockey tournament being arranged by Bill Librera. Mr. DuBois explained that NJSIAA’s only involvement is providing the ice time at Codey Arena, NJSIAA is not sponsoring it. Ms. Dzama asked if a girl who usually plays on a boys team can participate on a girls team for this tournament. Mr. DuBois said it is up to the school, and that Mr. Librera and his committee will determine the regulations to participate in this tournament.

Workshops – There is a Legal One Workshop – Dealing with Difficult Parents on 2/28. The workshop is filling up but there’s still room to register.

Kearny Bank Courage Award – Kearny Bank will again give out a $2,500 scholarship to an athlete who has endured significant injury and recovered from it. The award will be given out at the Scholar Athlete program. Mr. DuBois is working with Kearny Bank to finalize the details. One change from last year is that all applications must be submitted to the applicant’s Athletic Director to validate the information before being given to NJSIAA.

Corporate Update – Some new corporates have signed on with NJSIAA. PGA Super Store will be the new boys and girls tennis sponsor, in addition to a co-sponsor of boys and girls golf. The
US Army has signed on to be the official military partner of the NJSIAA. Also, Professional Occupational Physical Therapy has signed on to be the official sponsor of NJSIAA regional football championship video replay.

**Al Stumpf**

**Boys Basketball Update** – Seeding takes place on 2/13.

**Boys Bowling** – The individual boys’ championships will take place at Bowlero on Friday, 2/14. The 2020 team champions are as follows:

- **Group 1** - Warren County Tech (only had bowling program for past 2 years)
- **Group 2** - Jackson Liberty HS
- **Group 3** - Linden HS
- **Group 4** - Washington Township (which advanced from the wild card spot).

In the TOC semifinals, 2-seed Washington Township defeated 3-seed Warren Tech and 4-seed Jackson Liberty defeated 1-seed Linden. In the finals, Washington Township defeated Jackson Liberty. Senior Jason Bilawsky of Woodbridge HS bowled his first perfect 300 game.

**Unified Sports Update** –

- **Unified Bowling** – In the Group A State Championships, Ewing defeated Matawan. Union City defeated Somerville for the Group B State Championships.

- **Basketball** – Division rounds take place this weekend of February 15th and February 29th. Those who advance will play on 3/7 at Hunterdon Central HS. There teams will play for the B group championships and the A semifinals. Then the two A semifinalist teams will play for the championship title on 3/22 at Rutgers.

**NAGWS Program** – 186 female high school seniors were honored. It was a great day.

**Winter Track Update** – The following schools won the relay championships, held in January.

- **Group 1** – Willingboro (boys and girls)
- **Group 2** – Delsea (boys) and Haddonfield (girls)
- **Group 3** - West Windsor-Plainsboro (boys) and Winslow (girls)
- **Group 4** – Kingsway (boys) and Ridge (girls)
- **Non-Public A** – Christian Brothers Academy (boys) and Union Catholic (girls)
- **Non-Public B** – Hudson Catholic (boys) and Mater Dei and St. Dominic tied (girls)

Sectionals, beginning on 2/14, will be held over two weekends, ending on 2/23. The Meet of Champions will be on 3/8 at Ocean Breeze in Staten Island.

**Tony Maselli**

Mr. Maselli was not in attendance because he was at the girls bowling individual championships at Bowlero.
Michael Zapicchi, Project Manager

School Start Times Committee – Mr. Zapicchi and Mr. Maselli will represent the NJSIAA on this committee, formed by the American Association of Pediatrics. Mr. Zapicchi asked that if any high school currently starts their school day after 8am or if anyone knows of a school that does, please email that information to him.

Finance Update – Colleen Maguire

Final Fall Season Results – Though it’s not final yet, a schedule of net profit/revenue per fall sport was distributed. The total net profit was down from last year, primarily due to a decrease in girls soccer gate receipts and an increase in football security cost, specifically at the Sectional Finals. Due to weather, all girls soccer public state semi-final games were moved to a designated home team site and hosted as a home game. Also, all non-public sectional finals were hosted as a home game by the higher seed and no longer played at neutral sites. Therefore, total gate receipts for 2019 reflected the Group finals only. There was a significant increase in security costs for the football sectional finals, which was understandable as this was the weekend immediately following the Pleasantville/Camden game. We also had an increase in cross country security costs, specifically at Thompson Park, a fee that had been waived in prior years. There was also an increase in the timing system staffing. Lastly, Colleen noted that overall facility ranger and security fees are slightly increasing across all parks each year.

Broadcast Rights RFP Update – Ms. Maguire was happy to announce that 1-NJ Advance Media will again be the primary broadcast rights holder and 2-Next year, broadcast rights will be a non-subscription-based model, so all state games on the NJ HS Sports Live platform will be free.

ZebraWeb – There were two ZebraWeb workshops held, one at NJSIAA; the other at PCTI. Over 100 people attended the two workshops.

Student Athlete Advisory Council Update – Over 50 schools had student representation on NJSIAA’s Student Athlete Advisory Council, which met on 2/4. Mr. Goodell gave a well-received presentation to the students about the evolution of the sportsmanship policy. The council’s task now is to 1-revise the current sportsmanship policy (read to captains prior the game) so it’s not as verbose/is more teen-friendly and 2-make the sportsmanship statement more visible. The council suggested adding it to signage in locker rooms, etc. Mr. Zapicchi also talked to the students and educated them on the transfer rule. The student council members expressed a wide range of feelings about the rule (just like the adult population does).

23 Student Ambassadors are seniors so Ms. Maguire will post the application to become a Student Ambassador in late March / early April.

Cooperative Sports Review Committee Update – The committee met to review Fall 2020 application requests. Of the 12 applications, 8 were approved, 2 were denied because both schools did not illustrate the need for a cooperative sports program, and 2 were tabled pending more information. A motion to approve the following fall cooperative sports programs was made by Mohammed Abdelaziz, seconded by Monsignor Michael Kelly.

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Finance Committee Update – Mary Liz Ivins

December 2019 and January 2020 Check Approval - A motion was made by Greg Bailey, seconded by Vincent Smith, to accept the December 2019 and January 2020 check registers, as approved by the finance committee, as well as our monthly approvals, according to policy. Motion carried unanimously.

Program Review

Football Opening Recruiting Period – 2nd Reading – A motion was made by Leon Owen, seconded by Mohammed Abdelaziz, to approve the new Football Opening Recruiting Period Guidelines, as outlined below. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

Guidelines for all member schools to adhere to during the NCAA Open Recruiting Period:

1. When a college coach is onsite at a NJSIAA-member high school, the high school coach shall be permitted to administer a football specific evaluation session at the request of a college coach.

2. High school coaches shall be permitted to attend and assist with any workout observed by the college coach.

3. The workouts to be observed by a college coach may include:
   a. Strength training
   b. Agility, speed and endurance training
   c. Position specific skills workouts (see details below)

4. Position specific skills workouts include, but is not limited to, throwing, blocking, running routes, kicking/punting, or defensive positioning.

5. The workouts SHALL NOT resemble any form of organized practice. Therefore, no diagramed plays may be executed, no individual skills training may occur, and no scrimmaging of any kind regardless of the number of players participating in the workout.

6. Each onsite visit/workout may not exceed one hour in length.

7. No player protective gear may be used. Protective gear includes, but is not limited to, helmets, shoulder pads, rib pads or thigh/knee pads.

8. THUD or live contact with another student-athlete is not allowed at any time. The only football-specific equipment that may be in use are blocking/tackling dummies, blocking/tackling sleds or hand-shields.
A high school coach that violates any part of these guidelines will receive an automatic two-game suspension, such suspension to be served during the first two regular season games during the immediate next season.

Spring Opening Dates – 2nd Reading – A motion was made by Mohammed Abdelaziz, seconded by Bill Vacca, to change the regular season opening date to April 8th for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond, for baseball, softball, boys' tennis and boys' volleyball.

The committee received a letter asking why boys' volleyball was included in the date change because boys volleyball is not affected by weather. Boys volleyball was included in the proposal due to the availability of gym space. Committee members questioned this logic because they felt there would be less players needing gym time if softball and baseball players are not practicing yet. The concern is basketball. If a school keeps advancing in the state tournament then there may be a gym availability conflict.

Mr. Abdelaziz reminded everyone that since pre-season will now begin later, coaches will have less time to prepare their athletes unless the regular season opening date is pushed back. In anticipation of this proposal and the later pre-season start date, Tony Maselli pushed the baseball state tournament back one week, so the season is not cut short. The hope is that the other three sports would do the same. Mr. Mitchell feels there is no need to push back the opening date because that gives less time to get in the 25 season games and makeup games when it rains/there's bad weather. If cutting the amount of games in a season was part of the proposal, Mr. Mitchell could better see himself voting in favor of this date change. Ms. Cole expressed that the softball community is not in favor of this proposal without having changed the structure of the tournament or reducing the amount of games in a season. Ms. Cole is not in favor of this as well without the full membership’s vote. Mr. DuBois expressed that this compresses the baseball season. What if there’s a week of rain, it limits the scheduling of games, especially with pitch count regulations. According to Mr. DuBois, committees are not necessarily moving the tournaments back one week. Mr. Abdelaziz asked about the calendar committee and where they are in reviewing the seasons from a wholistic approach. Ms. Maguire reported that the committee has met, it will take a while to propose new dates, but the one clear intention of the committee is to have the same consistent starting date for each season (instead of each sport having its own start date.) Ms. Maguire thinks by the fall, there will be a proposal for the Executive Committee to consider/vote on, so whatever is decided today, it'll be good until the recommendations of the Calendar Committee are passed, which is probably two years away. Mr. Haraka reiterated that when the membership voted to move practice a week back, everyone was aware the intent was to move opening day a week back later too. This vote should be a formality because that part of the proposal was never put in print for a formal vote, but should have been, and everyone was aware of it. It was left off accidentally when the proposal went to vote. Mr. Karcich asked if there’s a way to change the state tournament end date now? Mr. Goodell answered that there wasn’t. Mr. Bailey felt this should be a topic at the DAANJ Conference and then can be addressed in the April meeting, after a big portion of the membership discussed it. Mr. Vacca said the agenda is already full. Mr. Vacca suggested defeating the proposal now, then asking the sponsors to come back and re-introduce it, which Mr. Goodell discouraged because usually if something is defeated, there needs to be ample time before the proposal is considered again, however, he did suggest that the proposal can be tabled. Mr. Abdelaziz called the question.

Final Vote: Yes-7; No-19; Abstain-1. Motion did not pass second reading.

Girls Lacrosse Classifications – 1st and Only Reading (there will be no second reading) – It was proposed to mirror the boys’ lacrosse classification and separate the non-publics and public schools when classifying girls lacrosse. A motion was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Frank Torcasio, to separate the Public schools and Non-Public schools in the 2020 Girls Lacrosse
Classification. The Public Schools will be classified North-South, by Groups: North Group 1, 2, 3, 4 and South Group 1, 2, 3, 4. The Non-Public schools will be classified Non-Public A and Non-Public B. This classification would be effective beginning Spring 2020 season. Motion carried unanimously.

Girls Volleyball Classifications – 1st Reading – Girls volleyball is the fastest growing sport. The following changes are proposed:

Go to a N1, N2, Central, South model with groups 1-4 in each group. The non-publics would be broken down in to a north and south section (Non-Public North and Non-Public South). There would be approximately 15-17 schools per public section (N1, Group 1; N1 Group 2, etc), the Non-Public North section would have approximately 27 schools and the Non-Public South would have approximately 23 schools, all determined by Northing Numbers. For now, the public bracket would be 12 teams, which can expand to 16 teams in time, while the two non-public brackets can be 6-team brackets, which gives room for expansion if it builds to a A&B group, for each North/South group. This proposal cuts down travel time and allows 74-78% of schools to qualify, compared to 58% of schools now that currently qualify. The seeding procedure will also change and move to a power points model. The multipliers will change, which will encourage teams to play tougher competition.

Ms. Dzama questioned why the structure doesn't just have non-public A&B now. Mr. Stumpf answered that there is not enough number of schools for this yet. Ms. Torok respectfully disagreed. According to Ms. Torok, there are enough for A and B divisions now, and this allows for a non-public B school to win a title. Ms. Torok shared that many volleyball coaches were not happy with this proposal. Non-Public classifications are by geography. 27 in A, which would be the North, 23 in B which would be the South. Some feel that the non-publics want two groups based on school size, not geographic location. Also, there are six schools that have less than 200 total students grouped in the same non-public division as the powerhouse, Immaculate Heart Academy. Baby schools are combined with larger schools. Maria Nolan, IHA volleyball coach, wrote a letter opposed to this practice. Also, the current seeding procedure uses RPI system, Top 20 rankings, winning percentage, and regular season matchups. The coaches in the seeding committee seed based on these factors, then challenge each other on placements. This procedure is not transparent throughout the season. Ms. Torok wants to ensure that when schools go to sections, the top 2 seeds make it out of sectionals. The NJSIAA proposal recommends reseeding the tournament after the top 4 teams are left, instead of the top 8, which is the current practice. The coach’s goal is for the final two best teams to get to the finals so if the tournament is reseeded after Top 4 instead of Top 8, this may not happen. This is what the volleyball coaches want. In 2010 the tournament utilized a power point system for seeding and in the finals, one team got smashed by the other. It was not an even match-up nor the two best teams competing for the title. Also, playing on a SAT Saturday or during NJEA Convention has ceased, so now the championships are on a Saturday, followed by the TOC the very next day. A team could play three full matches on that Sunday, which is not fair to the athletes.

A motion to approve the classification and tournament changes, recommended by the Girls Volleyball Committee was made by Bill Vacca, seconded by Rob Haraka. A motion was then made by Tony Mitchell, seconded by Maureen Bilda, to table this proposal, so it can be reworked by the committee who created it. Final Vote: Yes-16; No-4; Abstain-0. Motion to table this proposal passed.

Girls Golf 2-Year Pilot – 1st Reading – A motion to use an adjusted score formula for qualifying the 50 top individual girls in the state for the Tournament of Champions competition for a two-year pilot program, beginning with the 2019-2020 season, was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Greg Bailey. Proposal is as follows:
Over the past three years, the NJSIAA has been using an adjusted score formula for qualifying the 50 top individual girls in the state for the Tournament of Champions competition. We have found that there is a very strong correlation in how the young ladies are ranked going into the tournament and how they finish.

It is recommended to use a 2-year pilot program be approved beginning with the 2019-2020 season using this system.

The system of course and slope ratings, which every course has, takes in to account the varying difficulty of each course as well as which tee box is used and allows us to compare apples to apples so to speak.

Based on the success of using adjusted scores to identify our individual golfers, we would like to implement the same system to identify the 12 most qualified teams from each of the three sections.

In the past, a winning percentage of 60 percent was the minimum criteria for a team to qualify. The 60 percent winning percentage will no longer be used as a team qualifier for the Girls Sectional Championship. The 12 teams with the best adjusted team scoring average in each of the three sections, North, Central and South, will qualify for that Sectional Championship Tournament.

Schools must play in at least 6 matches prior to the cut-off date. The NJSIAA Girls Golf Committee will use the best average adjusted 4 team scores prior to the cut-off date to determine which teams advance to the sectional. The reason for using only 4 scores is so coaches can feel free to change their line-up based on who they are playing on a particular day.

Prior to the golf season, we encourage all coaches to become familiar with this reporting and statewide ranking system. You can do so by simply emailing Shawn Bennett at sirbennett68@gmail.com.

Shawn has prepared an easy to follow tutorial that provides a very thorough step-by-step score posting process. By investing just a few minutes to learn the system, coaches will be able to get a feel for the full advantages of this system and why the NJSIAA has adopted it as the fair way to qualify teams for the girl’s state tournament.

Please find below a brief summary of the benefits of this adjusted score reporting and ranking system:

- fair consideration of scores posted from different courses and tees of varying difficulty throughout the state.
- reporting of all scores for the complete season
- ease of score reporting from any online device
- convenient access to online results
- ability of coaches to view and verify posted scores for all teams and players in the state and section.
- ability of players to view rankings throughout the season

** most importantly, since won/lost record is not part of the equation, teams will not be afraid to seek out better competition because a loss will not jeopardize their ability to make the state tournament
The girls golf committee feels using this system to qualify is more equitable. For the last few years, for the individual tournament, a computer-generated program has been used, and coaches always knew where they stood, and no complaints were received. The Program Review Committee approved this unanimously.

A vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Report of Counsel – Steven P. Goodell, Esq.** - Mr. Goodell has been busy with multiple cases of litigation for the association.

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**Old Business / New Business** - none.

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**Closed Session/Adjournment** - At 1:42 pm, a motion was made by Christopher Penna, seconded by Frank Torcasio, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry L. White  
Executive Director

LLW: In