

**NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**  
1161 Route 130 Robbinsville, NJ 08691

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
November 11, 2020

**In compliance with Executive Order 107, the Executive Committee meeting was held remotely via Cisco's WebEx Meetings platform.**

**Roll Call** - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, November 11, 2020, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Steve Shohfi, at 11:04 am.

The following members were present: Mohammed Abdelaziz, Jeff Baldino, Tom Berrios, Maureen Bilda, Joseph Bollendorf, Dr. Brian Brotschul, Kevin Carty, Jr., Ed Chmiel, Jason Corley, Joanne Dzama, Derek England, Judy Finch-Johnson, James Gaffney, Edward Grande, Robert Grauso, Dr. G. Kennedy Greene, Dr. Kimberly Gruccio, Geoff Haines, Robert Haraka, Mary Liz Ivins, Kurt Karcich, Monsignor Michael Kelly, Raymond Kiem, Howard Krieger, Timothy McElhinney, Tony Mitchell, Thomas Mullahey, Sean Olson, Leon Owen, Christopher Penna, Scott Ridley, Danny Robertozzi, Senator Paul Sarlo, Frank Torcasio, Beverly Torok, Bill Vacca, Paul Vizzuso, Kathy Whalen, Denis Williams, and Assemblyman Benjie. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Chief Operating Officer; Kim DeGraw-Cole, Jack DuBois, Bill Bruno, Al Stumpf and Tony Maselli, Assistant Directors; and Steven P. Goodell, Esq. and Scott Miccio, NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Brian Deakyne, *nj.com*; Darren Cooper, *NorthJersey.com*, and Tom McGurk, *Courier Post*. Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle, Quinn, Anzano, P.C.

In honor of Veteran's Day, President Steve Shohfi took a moment to honor veterans and thank them for their service.

**Approval of Minutes** - A motion was made by Tom Mullahey, seconded by Mary Liz Ivins, to accept the minutes of the October 14, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Chief Operating Officer Update – Colleen Maguire**

**Season 2 Update** – In late October, Ms. Maguire posted a memo to member schools discussing the status of NJSIAA's plans for Season 2. She asked for everyone's patience as the association continues to solicit feedback and monitor the decision-making coming from both the NJ Department of Health and Governor's office while committing to a deadline of Friday, November 20th, to announce final plans. Ms. Maguire expects to meet this deadline with a final plan that will not be subject to change, regardless of decisions that may come from the DOH or Governor's office on the status of indoor sports.

This past Monday, the Governor announced a ban on out of state competition for all indoor sports activities below the professional and college level, which goes into effect on November 12th. NJSIAA has already proactively prohibited out of state travel and competition for the fall season with the exception for exceptional circumstances and plans to continue to do such during the upcoming seasons.

Last week, Ms. Maguire had a lengthy call with the DOH and followed with a detailed email regarding NJSIAA’s preliminary plans. They are reviewing the plans internally and will be providing feedback. Paul Anzano is also coordinating a meeting with the Governor and his staff for early next week to review our plans, the goal being to assess if any potential updates to Executive Order 187 may have an impact.

Mr. Maselli and Ms. Maguire have met with the three doctors from the Medical Advisory Task Force to review the NFHS recommended sports-specific modifications and identify additional protocols that can be put in place during the upcoming seasons. There is another meeting next week to continue these efforts.

Lastly, Ms. Maguire thanked the members of our sports advisory task force that have been meeting regularly during the entire fall season and are continuing to solicit feedback on many topics. She also thanked Steve Shohfi for continuing to participate in these meetings to provide valuable feedback from a school board/ administrator perspective. Mr. Shohfi expressed that he’s impressed with the level of collaboration and creative thinking coming out of this group. They truly have the best interest at heart for New Jersey’s student athletes and coaches.

Cooperative Sports Program Approvals – The following six cooperative sports program applications were endorsed by the Cooperative Sports Committee earlier this month.

<b>LEA</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Sport</b>
Henry Hudson	Keyport	B Tennis
Keyport	Henry Hudson	B Volleyball
North Warren	Belvidere	G Lacrosse
North Warren	Belvidere	B Lacrosse
High Point	Walkkill Valley	B Lacrosse
Hamilton North	Hamilton West/Hamilton East	Ice Hockey

These are the last cooperative sports programs that were under the old process. If approved, these programs will be new programs, approved for the next four years. A motion was made by Bob Grauso, seconded by Tom Mullahey to approve the six cooperative sports programs that were endorsed by the Cooperative Sports Committee earlier this month. There were no questions or concerns. Motion carried unanimously.

Student Ambassador Update – A complete list of NJSIAA’s Student Ambassadors was sent via email on Monday. The association hosted a meeting of the Student Ambassadors in both October and November. Ms. Maguire also hosted a meeting with the football sub-committee to solicit their feedback on many topics surrounding high school football – specifically regarding the potential for a public group champion, as well as their thoughts on summer recess workouts.

Ms. Maguire thanked Steve Goodell who met with the Ambassadors in the November meeting to give them a presentation on the evolution of NJSIAA’s Sportsmanship Policy and how it has been applied in recent years. The ambassadors also provided feedback on the length of our seasons, the amount of games played and any concerns with the lack of consistency among sports/seasons that Ms. Maguire will share with the Calendar Committee at their next meeting later this week. Also, at the November meeting, professor of sports psychology from Duke University, Greg Dale, gave a great presentation on the importance of team culture, effective leadership and the role upperclassmen often play in the emotional well-being of the underclassmen. Mr. Dale is the Director of sports psychology and student-athlete leadership, and he also works with all team captains at Duke University – his message resonates with the kids as he provides examples of different teams at Duke, his overall message is that “a team’s

culture will always be superior to a team's strategy" – meaning the game plan does not matter unless every member of the team buys into the team's culture. He credits Coach K with bringing awareness to the importance of team culture over team strategy.

Program Review – 2019-2020 Annual Meeting Modifications - 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – On behalf of the Program Review Committee, a motion was made by Jason Corley, seconded by Todd Jorgenson, to approve NJSIAA's proposed modifications to the 2019-2020 NJSIAA Annual Meeting. This includes hosting a virtual annual meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2021, hosting two virtual sectional meetings on December 1 and 2, 2020, recommending the final legislation for approval to the Executive Committee on December 9, 2020, and if endorsed by the Executive Committee, the final ballots will be mailed to all principals and posted to the AD Forum at least ten (10) days before the Annual Meeting. Only those that attend the Annual Meeting will be allowed to cast ballots. In order to have its ballot count, the school must be a member in good standing (that means that the school's annual dues have been paid, or submitted under an approved purchase order, and the Board Resolution card has been submitted.) Signed ballots can be submitted via email, fax or mail. Ballots must be post-marked by Friday, January 8, 2021. The final vote totals, and a schedule of the votes, by school, will be shared with the Executive Committee and posted to the AD Forum no later than Wednesday, January 13, 2021. A voice vote was taken. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

Program Review – 2020-2021 Annual Meeting Modifications - 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – On behalf of the Program Review Committee, a motion was made by Rob Haraka, seconded by Mohammed Abdelaziz, to approve NJSIAA's proposed modifications to the 2020-2021 NJSIAA Annual Meeting. Modifications include:

1. Proposals by member schools must be submitted in writing prior to January 15.
2. All such proposals shall be considered by the Advisory Committee before February 5, and those proposals which have been endorsed shall be forwarded immediately to the Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee shall endorse or reject each proposal submitted by the membership, Advisory or Executive Committee prior to March 1.
4. All such proposals endorsed by the Executive Committee shall be distributed to the membership prior to May 15.
5. When a proposal by a member school has been rejected by the Advisory or Executive Committee, the school which submitted the proposal shall be notified on or before March 1.
6. If the proposal is resubmitted with the endorsement of twenty (20) member schools prior to April 1, it shall be included among those proposals sent to the membership prior to May 15.
7. Prior to May 1, at least two (2) sectional meetings of the Association shall be held for the purpose of explaining the legislation pending before the membership. After thorough discussion, the Executive Committee shall recommend the form and substance of the legislation to be placed on the ballot at the Annual Meeting. Proposals which have been resubmitted with the endorsement of twenty (20) member schools shall be presented as written by the proposing school to the membership for a vote.
8. The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held on the first Monday in June.

A voice vote was taken. Motion passed second reading unanimously.

Ms. Maguire then commended and thanked the efforts of the athletic and school administrators for their hard work and effort over the past two months. While this season was not easy to pull off, and some schools have experienced more disappointment and disruption than others, this organization provided the framework for our member schools to engage approximately 80,000 student-athletes across the state in five sports – engaged them emotionally, socially and physically for their mental health and most importantly, provided them with a little sense of normalcy in what continues to be very difficult circumstances. Ms. Maguire is confident that everyone will look back at this season with a sense of pride and satisfaction that is far beyond what follows in a normal sports season.

Father Kelly asked if NY and PA facilities can be used in the winter season. Ms. Maguire answered that final guidance will be provided next week so it's too premature to answer that question. Dr. Brotschul asked for details about the creativity that came out of the Sports Advisory Task Force and that information be provided to schools/the Executive Committee before being released to the press. With regards to the Sports Advisory Task force, the committee questioned who will have access to rinks, pools, then solicited feedback about facilities on school campuses – questioned what's a natural fit. The committee did not want to burden the smaller schools who cannot host many sports due to lack of facilities. As for the media reporting information before schools/the Executive Committee is informed, Ms. Maguire explained that the association does its best to fight the information pandemic in the public because it causes confusion but will do its best to be mindful of Dr. Brotschul's request.

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### **Legislative Update – Paul Anzano**

No legislation pertaining to high school athletics is being engaged right now in the legislature. Mr. Anzano continues to work with Senator Sarlo, Assemblyman Wimberly, Governor Murphy, and the Department of Health to make sure the NJSIAA is consistent with the issued Executive Orders. Mr. Anzano will also continue to provide guidance to the DOH and Governor Murphy of the high sport perspective to help shape policies/decisions. All involved recognize winter sports will be more difficult but there's been great collaborative efforts between all the parties and organizations.

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### **Assistant Director Reports**

#### **Kim DeGraw-Cole**

Eligibility Committee & Eligibility Appeals Committee Updates – The Eligibility Committee will meet on 12/3 to review eligibility waiver requests. All EWR forms are due 11/20. The Eligibility Appeals Committee conducted five hearings on 10/21 via the Cisco Webex format. The athletic directors were notified via a phone call that afternoon with the decisions. Letters were sent out to all the principals with copies to the athletic directors. There are no EAC meetings in November; the next meeting is 12/16.

Status Report on Eligibility and Transfers – As of 11/06, there were 1,540 transfers in the system. Of the 1,540 transfers, 233 are pending former school response; 127 were immediately eligible due to a true bona fide change of residence, and 695 were immediately eligible because they didn't play varsity at their former school. For 60, the ineligibility period applies and 306 were immediately eligible because they were COVID-19 compliance transfers. 34 had affidavit issues and 20 were denied due to affidavit and no participation. 5 other requests are under review because more information is needed. The biggest transfer trend from the Immediately

Eligible category, is moving from a public school to a non-public school. Breakdown of sport specific transfers:

- Football 206 Total; 106 Eligible Immediately
- Basketball Boys 49; Girls 28
- Ice Hockey 15
- Wrestling 22
- Winter Track 15

Field Hockey Update – The Field Hockey Seeding Committee met on November 5, 2020, some remotely and others in attendance. The NJSIAA provided the seeding committee with the frameworks sometimes combining groups to complete a bracket. Each seeding committee member received the records reports in advance. The committee seeded 191 teams out of a potential 228 in 17 brackets. Teams that have bye's will be permitted to add a game if officials are available. A list of seeding committee members was distributed. The NJSIAA Post Season Field Hockey Tournament will begin Nov. 13 & 14 and ends Nov. 21 & 22. Tournament assignors are Janet Schillig, Maureen Dzwil and Linda Alimi.

Wrestling Update – The Wrestling Region Coaches conducted two meetings to review Weight Certification and the change to the Weight Descent Plan. Ms. Cole attended the Region 1-4 meeting. Howie O'Neil, Wrestling Tournament Director, attended the Region 5-8 meeting. The Wrestling Rules Interpretation Meeting with all chapter rules interpreters and one other officer of the chapter was held on October 20, 2020. NJSIAA Points of Emphasis and NFHS 2020-2021 Wrestling Rules were reviewed. The 2020 Wrestling Assessor Certification Instructions were posted on the NJSIAA website and sent directly to each athletic director with a request to share with ATC's and Coaches. Certification may begin on Nov. 5 and extend until Dec. 21. Girls Wrestling Committee and Boys Wrestling Committee Meetings will be scheduled prior to Nov. 20.

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### **Bill Bruno**

Cross Country Update – Sectionals are 72 hours away. 21 schools out of 370 had to opt out. 3,801 athletes are ready to go to the starting lines on 11/14 and 11/15.

The four public championships start at 9:00am on 11/14 at the following sites:

- o North I - Garret Mt.
- o North II Championships- Oak Ridge Park
- o Central Jersey Championships - Thompson Park
- o South Jersey Championships- Dream Park

The start time for the two non-public championships is 12 noon on 11/15. Sites are as follow:

- o Non-Public A and B North Championships - Garret Mt.
- o Non-Public A and B South Championships - Oak Ridge

Winter Track Update – The Committee has met three times and have offered some interesting insight into the winter season. Although no final decision has been, the general feeling is to keep meets local (both indoor – Polar Bear Meets and reduced indoor competition). This will continue to be flushed out over the next week weeks.

Bowling - The committee has met four times and like winter track, plan to keep it local and if possible, have some regional type of championships. Sectional Directors are checking with

their house lanes on the availability for separate boys' and girls' dates. The committee will continue to develop the bowling season structure.

Gymnastics – Session 3 - Mr. Bruno has been in touch with NJSIAA's rules interpreter, keeping her abreast on session three and any impacts on gymnastics. Mr. Bruno is looking forward to a competitive season.

Steve Shofhi then told the committee about an outstanding article that was written about Mr. Bruno two weeks ago and suggested that everyone look it up.

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### **Jack DuBois**

Boys Soccer – 337 member schools requested to participate in the 2020 post season tournament though 22 schools had to opt out, so now it's down to approximately 315 schools. The numbers change daily. Due to the large number of schools participating, the Northeast and Central East regional groups had to be divided into two separate group brackets. The Southeast and West regions were combined in all public and non-public groups to make complete brackets of 16. A list of seeding committee members was distributed. The tournament begins the weekend of November 13/14 with 30 regional champions to be honored.

Football – 330 schools submitted intent forms to participate in at least one round of post season play but numbers continue to fluctuate due to the closing and reopening of schools. Post-season competition begins the weekend of November 12,13,14. The NJSIAA Football Post Season Groupings were developed by the five football leagues with oversight by the NJSIAA and open to any member school wishing to participate.

NJSIAA has submitted to the NFHS for a second year a rule change that would permit video replay during the regular season as an individual state adoption. The NFHS football rules committee will review and vote on this proposal at the January rules committee meeting.

Mr. DuBois reiterated that leadership of the five conferences did a wonderful job of providing games for member schools.

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### **Al Stumpf**

Girls Soccer Update – The 2020 Postseason Regional Tournament was seeded on November 5, 2020. Game dates are November 16, 18, 20 with the finals on Sunday, November 22. Rain date for all game is the next day. The Seeding Committee used a combination of won/loss record, winning percentage, strength of schedule, head to head competition, common opponents and geography in relationship to this season to develop an overall picture to seed the teams. 300 teams are entered and there are 29 brackets in this year's tournament. All teams were kept within their six geographic regions except for the Non-Public schools from Union and Northern Middlesex counties- they were combined with the Non- Public Schools from Hunterdon, Somerset and Mercer Counties to help fill the bracket and for travel considerations. Four brackets combined schools from different group sizes to make a bracket. Three brackets needed to be split into 2 separate brackets within the bracket because of the large number of teams entered. Teams that need to pull out of the brackets after the brackets are official will be dropped from the bracket and their opponent will advance to the next round. Any team that has a bye in a bracket will be permitted to add a game if officials are available and it does not interfere with the playing of the bracket.

International Student Eligibility Update – All requests have been processed and approved.

NJ Basketball Coaches Association (NJBCA) – This group was formed to improve high school basketball in New Jersey and to offer education to our student athletes to help them with the college recruitment process by providing showcases and allowing high school coaches to be involved in the recruitment process. The Executive Committee includes: Directors of Athletics- Bob Grauso, Pat Brunner, Nick Mariniello and Mary Klinger and Head Coaches-Dave Boff, Alex Mirabella, Andrew Bilodeau, Kris Grundy, and Joe Kessler. They are currently hosting a virtual coach's clinic and using that as a tool to increase their membership of boys' and girls' coaches throughout New Jersey. They are hoping to conduct a NCAA June Showcase Recruiting event for our student athletes in June 2021. Mr. Stumpf and Ms. Cole are serving as the liaison to the NJSIAA for this group and Assignor, Jack Baum will represent the officials. Mr. Grauso shared some information about the newly formed NJBCA and the upcoming weekend's virtual clinic which will host 31 speakers including Geno Auriemma and Jay Wright. There will be representation from each county. Mr. Grauso also added that by becoming a member of this association, you automatically become a member of the NJSCA.

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### **Tony Maselli**

Girls Tennis Update – The tournament concluded, and a listing of regional champions was distributed. Some schools had to drop out due to COVID concerns, but the tournament kept moving forward and ran smoothly.

Final 2019-2020 Disqualification Report – This report was distributed.

Officials Update – Registration for officials with the new system has been open. There have been glitches, but they have been getting fixed.

Website Update – The new website is live. It is 95% ready, just needs a little tidying and reorganizing. If you cannot find something, please contact Mr. Maselli with that feedback, but to date, Mr. Maselli has received only positive responses about the new site.

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### **Finance Committee Update – Steve Shohfi**

Approval of Monthly Checks – The checkbook from October 13, 2020 through November 9, 2020 was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. Denis Williams made a motion, seconded by Mary Liz Ivins, to approve the October 13, 2020 through November 9, 2020 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

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### **Report of Counsel (Steven Goodell, Esq.)**

Currently there is no new litigation. Mr. Goodell and Mr. Miccio have been very busy with the Eligibility Appeals Committee and the Controversies Committee.

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**Old Business / New Business**

Mr. Shohfi shared that everyone has been very impressed with how the fall season has been handled. There have been numerous instances in football where a school picked up a game on Thursday for the upcoming weekend. That's never happened before. In the past, teams would have been preparing the whole week prior for their weekend game. Kudos to the administrators and coaches for just giving the kids the opportunity to play. The fall season is wrapping up, but everyone should be proud that NJ made fall sports happen.

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**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Tom Mullahey, seconded by Mary Liz Ivins, to adjourn the meeting at 11:41 am. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Maguire, Chief Operating Officer

CM: In