

1. AL Johnson – Jonathan Dayton – Union (NJIIHL)
2. High Point – Kittatinny – Walkkill Valley (MCSSIHL)

The addition of a third school to the existing cooperative sports program has been approved by both leagues as well as all Boards of Education. The Cooperative Sports Committee has approved the addition of each school to form a “tri-op” program and is recommended them for Executive Committee approval. A motion was made by Frank Torcasio, seconded by Steve Shofhi to approve the AL Johnson – Jonathan Dayton – Union (NJIIHL) and High Point – Kittatinny – Walkkill Valley (MCSSIHL) ice hockey tri-op programs. Motion carried unanimously.

Football Update – Former Executive Committee President and longtime football assignor, Greg Bailey, is the association’s new Football Coordinator. Three weeks of season have been completed, though it’s been complicated by reschedules due to the hurricane and COVID-19 disruptions. Ms. Maguire commended the league and conference officers for replacing games and coaches for adapting to new opponents on short notice. Less than 5% of total scheduled games have been disrupted due to COVID-19 or Hurricane Ida. All sites for the championships have been confirmed. Matchups for sites will be assigned after all teams are seeded. A separate non-public seeding committee was created, made up of five representatives. The committee members are: Denis Nelson, Super Football Conference, Rich Shello, Big Central Conference, Jason Corley, Shore Conference, Joe McColgan, West Jersey Football League, and Pat Lanni, NJ Advance Media.

Wrestling Update – Ms. Maguire thanked Executive Committee member and Superintendent of the Phillipsburg School District, Greg Troxell. His school hosted the 2021 Girls and Boys Wrestling Championships last year, which was not an easy undertaking in the COVID-19 environment. Their level of support was beyond the association’s expectations, not to mention their facility is beautiful so this year’s individual girls wrestling tournament finals will be held at Phillipsburg HS once again on 2/20/22. Girls Wrestling started as a two-year pilot program under the supervision of Bill Bruno. Since its inception there’s been a big increase in participation therefore it was decided the girls needed their own date, venue, and platform. If participation continues to increase, more rounds can be added. Ms. Maguire is still soliciting host sites for the boys’ districts and regions.

NJSIAA Student Ambassador Sportsmanship Policy Statement – One Reading – 14 NJSIAA Student Ambassadors attended their first meeting of the school year on 8/22/21. In this meeting, it was proposed to amend the sportsmanship statement that is read to all participants prior to the start of any NJSIAA event to be simpler, easier to understand, and they believe the tag line “respect the game, respect your opponent” will resonate with all participants.

The current statement reads...The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and players. There will be no tolerance for negative statements or actions between opposing players and coaches. This includes taunting, baiting berating opponents, “trash-talking” or actions which ridicule or cause embarrassment to them. Any verbal, written or physical conduct related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion shall not be tolerated, could subject the violator to ejection, and may result in penalties being assessed against your team. If such comments are heard, a penalty will be assessed immediately. We have been instructed not to issue warnings. It is your responsibility to remind your team of this policy.”

It is recommended to amend the current statement to “The NJSIAA requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and players. There will be no tolerance for any negative behavior, such as taunting, trash talking and verbal, written, or physical conduct related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. Such behavior will result in being ejected from this event. All participants must respect the game and respect their opponents.”

Furthermore, it was proposed to be read this statement to the whole team, not just the captains, because by the time the captains return to sidelines, the games begin and there’s no time to pass on the

statement. A motion was made by Brendan Galligan, seconded by Mohammed Abdelaziz, to approve the NJSIAA Student Ambassador sportsmanship statement read by officials prior to each sporting contest. Motion carried unanimously. Officials will begin reading this new wording beginning with NJSIAA's fall state tournaments.

DEI Advisory Committee – Implicit Bias Proposal - One Reading – Executive Committee 2nd Vice President/DEI Advisory Committee chairperson, Jason Corley, spoke to the committee about actions taken by the newly formed DEI Advisory Committee. The group met several times this summer. First, the committee contracted with Dr. Tamika Pollins of Pollins and Associates – Educational Specialists. Dr. Pollins specializes in diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and currently works for the West Orange Public School District. Second, a survey was created and will be shared with the schools to gather input.

Lastly, as part of the agreement NJSIAA entered in to with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights as a result of the Buena wrestling incident, NJSIAA agreed to require that all member schools' athletic administrators, coaches and athletic trainers receive training on implicit bias. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee supports this training and believes it necessary to ensure that those involved with interscholastic athletics in New Jersey understand the automatic reactions we have toward other people based on our past learning and expectations. This will improve the experience for all student-athletes. The DEI Advisory Committee proposed the association utilize an implicit bias course created by the NFHS to deploy to athletic administrators, coaches, and athletic trainers for completion by the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Link to the course - <https://www.nfhslearn.com/courses/implicit-bias>. It's free, only 22 minutes, and has gotten good feedback from all who have tested it. Many shared it was interesting and they learned things they never knew, including NJSIAA's student ambassadors. A motion was made by Frank Torcasio, seconded by Al Dyer, to require all member schools' athletic administrators, coaches and athletic trainers to receive training on implicit bias through the NFHS implicit bias course by the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

NJSIAA Amateur Rules Update – NIL Proposal –

Effective July 1, 2021, the NCAA will allow its student-athletes to profit off the use of their own Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). In addition, the NCAA will allow those student-athletes that have not yet entered college to profit off the use of their own NIL if their state allows such activity. While individual states, conferences and colleges are implementing regulations to address this new policy, Ms. Maguire is proposing to amend NJSIAA's current amateurism rule to allow student-athletes to engage in certain commercial activities in their individual capacities. Since non-athletes are afforded opportunities that are not afforded to student-athletes under the current rule, it is Ms. Maguire's recommendation that NJSIAA should allow its student-athletes the same opportunities when not representing their school or team. By permitting NJSIAA's student-athletes to engage in these activities in their individual capacity only, and not allowing any school or team involvement, competitive balance and team dynamics will be protected.

At its October and November meeting, the committee will vote on the proposal to amend the NJSIAA Bylaws, Article V, Section 2, which is the definition of "amateur-athlete" and sets forth the constraints placed upon student-athletes in order for them to retain their amateur status, and, ultimately, their eligibility. There is time and since this is a monumental change, Ms. Maguire wanted the Executive Committee members to be introduced to it first so attendees can bring the proposal back to its constituents for more feedback. Ms. Maguire has consulted with NCAA attorneys, NJSIAA's attorneys, NJSIAA Executive Committee officers and staff, and solicited feedback from both the compliance department at Rutgers University as well as the Big East Conference to craft the proposal. Other state athletic associations are considering similar rule changes.

NJSIAA's legal counsel, Scott Miccio, Esq. presented the proposal that will be considered next month. If passed, it will go into effect January 1, 2022.:

- Currently, student-athletes are prohibited from earning compensation for coaching and providing athletic instruction. Under the proposed rule, this would be permitted, subject to certain restrictions.

- The existing rule prohibits student-athletes from being paid for “participation in athletics . . . or directly or indirectly us[ing] his/her athletic skill for pay in any form.” The proposed rule maintains the prohibition on being paid directly for participation on an athletic team, but incorporates regulations to allow student-athletes to benefit from their own NIL, subject to certain restrictions. The proposed rule makes clear that the student’s use of the student’s own NIL cannot in anyway involve the school, the team, the school uniform or any other similar reference. For example, the student cannot appear in a commercial while wearing his/her jersey.
- The existing rule prohibits student-athletes from appearing on radio or television programming if the appearance is “related in any way to his/her athletic ability or prestige.” This would be permitted under the proposed rule.
- The existing rule permits student-athletes participating in non-NJSIAA sponsored events to accept items with a monetary value not to exceed \$250, in connection with that event. The proposed rule increases the amount to \$500.
- It is important to note that student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in any NIL activities involving the following categories of products and services:
 - (1) Adult entertainment products and services;
 - (2) Alcohol products;
 - (3) Cannabis products;
 - (4) Controlled dangerous substances;
 - (5) Prescription pharmaceuticals;
 - (6) Casinos and gambling, including sports betting, the lottery, and betting in connection with video games, on-line games and mobile devices; and
 - (7) Weapons, firearms and ammunition.

The intent of the below proposal is to recognize that the definition of “amateurism” is changing. While the expansion of social media and its impact on today’s high school student-athletes continue to evolve, NJSIAA’s role is to ensure that these activities do not interfere with the physical, mental, social and educational benefits that are derived from interscholastic athletic participation.

Program Review

Boys Wrestling Weight Classes – One Reading – The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee has announced three different weight class options for state associations to adopt no later than the 2022 – 2023 season. The options provided were a framework for either 12, 13 or 14 weight classes with the flexibility to early adopt if the state association so chooses. NJSIAA currently has 14 weight classes but ours differ from the NFHS approved weight classes. The Boys Wrestling Committee proposed that NJSIAA early adopt the NFHS 14 weight class framework for the 2021 – 2022 season. (106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 157, 165, 175, 190, 215, 285). Rational is that the NFHS 14 weight class framework shifts the existing weight classes to areas that have more participation therefore, more opportunities are provided for the middleweight and upper middleweight classes, which tend to have the highest amount of participation. The committee was not in favor of reducing the number of weight classes primarily because the majority of forfeits occur at the lowest and highest weight classes, these weight classes are the same in all of the NFHS approved frameworks. Lastly, based on the data maintained by Trackwrestling, the director of the National Wrestling Coaches Association recommended that NJ move to the NFHS 14 weight class framework since it is best suited to serve NJSIAA’s student-athletes. A motion was made by Jeremy Braverman, seconded by Steven Jenkins, for NJSIAA to early adopt the NFHS Boys Wrestling 14 weight class framework for the 2021 – 2022 season and beyond. Motion carried unanimously.

Girls Wrestling Weight Classes – One Reading – The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee has announced three different weight class options for state associations to adopt for girls wrestling no later than the 2022 – 2023 season. The options provide a framework for either 12, 13 or 14 weight classes with the flexibility to early adopt if the state association so chooses. NJSIAA currently hosts 11 weight classes for the girls but since the sport is growing, the Girls Wrestling Committee proposed that NJSIAA early adopt the NFHS 12 weight class framework for the 2021 – 2022 season (100, 107, 114, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 165, 185, 235). The rationale is by adding one additional weight class there will be an increase in participation in the state tournament with minimal impact on the level of competition. Also, the NFHS 12 weight class framework is very close to the current 11 weight classes so there will be minimal impact on the girls that have competed in prior seasons. If the sport continues to expand, NJSIAA can switch to the 13 or 14 weight class structure. A motion was made by Jeremy Braverman, seconded by Jason Miller, for NJSIAA to early adopt the NFHS 12 Girls Wrestling weight class framework for the 2021 – 2022 season and beyond. Motion carried unanimously.

State Tournament COVID-Policy – One Reading – During the 2021-2022 school year, NJSIAA plans to host all state tournaments in their normal fashion. It is anticipated that throughout the school year, the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to impact schools, teams, and individual student-athletes and the ability to participate in an NJSIAA state tournament.

In anticipation of these potential disruptions, the following policy is recommended:

1. NJSIAA will not delay or modify any state tournament schedule for a team that cannot participate due to COVID-19 issues.
2. Once a state tournament officially starts, the tournament will progress as scheduled – this is regardless of a team’s first scheduled event in the tournament.
3. For any team that cannot participate on the date scheduled, or play by date, then the opponent will advance.
4. Prior to the official start of a state tournament, if a team cannot participate then NJSIAA will make every effort to replace the team with the next ranked team that did not qualify for the state tournament.
5. If a team is replaced, the bracket will not be re-seeded. The team will be inserted into the bracket.

Once the tournament starts, brackets are locked. It is too much chaos on both NJSIAA staff and schools to make the last-minute changes in securing buses, officials, etc. This policy is for team tournaments only. It is up to NJSIAA directors if they choose to reseed an individual tournament due to a dropout from COVID-19. Since most individual tournaments are all at one site, it’s not as difficult to make last-minute changes. A motion was made by Jason Corley, seconded by Todd Jorgenson, to adopt the proposed State Tournament COVID Policy (detailed above) for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Compliance Officer Update (Kim DeGraw-Cole)

Eligibility & Eligibility Appeals Committees – The Eligibility Committee convened virtually on 8/18/21 to review 26 cases based on age/credit/semester. The committee was very generous and kind-hearted to the students as the past year was very difficult for many students. Next meeting is 9/28/21. The Eligibility Appeal Committee will meet after today’s Executive Committee to hear an athletic advantage case and then meet again on 9/22/21 to hear four appeals of Age & Semester decisions. 121 COVID-19 Credit Waivers from 40 members schools were reviewed and granted for a Fall Sport. Many had connectivity issues during the pandemic. All waivers included a corrective action plan for academic recovery, transcripts, and a letter of approval from the principal of the school. The principal and Athletic Director will monitor the student’s academic progress. Five IEP Credit Waivers and one 8th Grade Waiver were also granted.

Status Report on Transfers – Details distributed to the committee are below:

- Covid-19 Amendment Part 2-Return to Former School enrolled in on March 16, 2020: 17
- Home Campus Transfers: June/July to September 9, 2021
 - Transfers: approximately 1,300 in the system
 - Pending Former School Response: 287
 - Under Review or Affidavit Issues: 14
 - Immediately Eligible with No Varsity Participation at the former school: 541
 - Immediately Eligible Bona Fide Change of Residence with Varsity Participation: 177
 - Immediately Eligible: 40
 - Ineligibility Period Applies with Varsity Participation and No Bona Fide Change of Address: 145
 - Hearing Pending: 2
 - Remaining other status
- Total Transfers Varsity and Non-Varsity (June 1-Sept. 9 Reports)
 - Transfers from Public to Non-Public: 338
 - Transfers from Public to Public: 608
 - Transfers from Non-Public to Non-Public: 153
 - Transfers from Non-Public to Public 253
- Sport breakdown (June 1 to Sept. 9 Reports)
 - Football: 171
 - Boys Soccer: 29, Girls Soccer: 29
 - Field Hockey: 18
 - Girls Volleyball: 14
 - Boys Cross Country: 8, Girls Cross Country 5
 - Gymnastics: 5
 - Boys Basketball: 42, Girls Basketball: 19
 - Wrestling: 30
 - Ice Hockey: 12
- NEW: A Student who transfers after the NJSIAA Competition Start Date for each sport, regardless of whether the transfer was the result of a bona fide change of residence, shall be ineligible to participate in any post-season championship competition at the new school. For football, the Week 1 Competition Start Date will be used. The athletic administrator in each school is responsible to monitor
 - Tennis: September 1, 2021
 - Football: September 2, 2021 (Week 1)
 - All other Fall Sports: September 7, 2021

Field Hockey Update – All sites are confirmed. The Group Finals will be played at Bordentown HS on 11/13 and the TOC finals will be at Kean University on 11/19.

Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)

State Tournament Entry Process – “Intent Period” – In the past, there was an opt-out procedure to participate in state tournaments. Schools would forget to opt out, and as a result, NJSIAA staff experienced a lot of last-minute adjustments to the seedings. Going forward, schools will have to opt in instead, by filling out a quick entry form. The Intent Form Period in the fall will be from 10/01/2021 - 10/15/2021. Schools must fill out the entry form within that two-week period for all fall sport tournaments (with exception of tennis, cross country, and football because those sports have a different entry procedure which is outlined in their respective tournament regulations.) All entry forms are posted at the top of each individual sports page. Steven Jenkins expressed concern that there’s a greater number of schools that opt into a tournament then opt out, so the number of issues may be larger using this system.

Also, if a school forgets to submit their entry form, they will be left out of the tournament. Mr. Maselli shared that seeding committees always look for anomalies so if a school has a good team and did not submit their entry form, the committee will reach out to make sure that was intentional. Mr. Maselli hopes each year, there are less anomalies as schools get used to the new processes.

State Tournament Assignments – Preliminary Rounds – Except for football, all fall state tournament rounds up to the Sectional Finals will be hosted at the higher seed. Schools will secure their own officials, set their own game times, and have much more flexibility. In the past, NJSIAA set the game times and secured officials in the earlier rounds, but then had a lot of last-minute rescheduling to accommodate multiple change requests. NJSIAA will begin assigning officials starting with the sectional final rounds. The association is looking to get away from hosting semi-final games at colleges. and move that round to pre-determined neutral high schools / sites rotated between the different sections of the state (North I, North II, Central and South).

Soccer Yellow Card Pilot Program – Mr. Maselli has received numerous complaints from soccer officials that coaches have been berating them. There's already a shortage of officials so the association can't afford to lose any more. A pilot program will be utilized this fall. Officials can give coaches a yellow card, which is really a warning and a way to collect data for the soccer committee. There is no penalty/consequence for receiving a yellow card. After the season, the soccer committee will review the program to see if there really is a problem with coach behavior and whether a penalty is warranted in the future. This pilot program is for coaches only, not athletes.

Officials Recruiting Efforts - Due to the national shortage of officials, Mr. Maselli has hired Mark Bitar – Mark is currently an assignor for several conferences in North Jersey. Our efforts will be to target kids coming out of college and the millennial generation. People don't read the physical newspaper anymore so instead of advertising for officials in print, the association is looking to market on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, etc.

Disqualification Report – Mr. Maselli changed the report to a more user-friendly format. Due to COVID-19, there was not a lot of disqualifications last year.

Medical Advisory Committee – Last year there was a task force to guide the association through the pandemic, but this year, the Medical Advisory Committee will resume its normal business and begin meeting again in October. If there's any concerns people want addressed, they should reach out to Mr. Maselli so he can put it on the October agenda.

Al Stumpf

Girls Volleyball Update – The regulations have been published. There is a new format this year. Sectional Championships will be played at the higher seed. Matchups for the State Semifinals will be North I vs North II and Central vs. South. North II and South will host this year then next year North I and Central will host. For the Tournament of Champions, preliminary rounds will be played at the higher seed, while the sites for the semi-finals and finals is TBD. Though the TOC finals are scheduled to be played at William Paterson University on 11/13, Mr. Stumpf may change the site to a high school, per the request of the volleyball coaches.

Cross Country Update – Deadlines have been distributed and the following four sectional sites have been secured: North 1 @ Garret Mountain, North 2 @ Oak Ridge Park, Central @ Thompson Park, South @ Dream Park. Both the Group Championships and Meet of Champions will be conducted at Holmdel Park.

Coaches must claim their teams and submit their rosters on MileSplit by 10/5. Also, in the past, non-public schools were classified as one gender prior to the season, then re-classified based on gender for

the tournament. This year is different. Schools will only be classified once. There will be no re-classifying for the tournament so wherever a non-public school is listed in the tournament regulations, is where they will run.

International Transfers – An international student is defined as a student that comes to the US through a CSI program without his/her parents. 12 international students are in the transfer portal right now. Nine have been granted eligibility, two are pending and one student was denied eligibility. If a student comes to the US with their parents from another country, they are processed as a regular transfer, not as an international student.

Derryk Sellers

Soccer Update – Like in volleyball, the sites for the State Semifinals will be rotated each year. This year the boys' State Semifinals games will be played at North I and Central sites while the girls will play theirs at North II and South sites. Next year it'll rotate. The Group Finals will be played at Kean University on 11/14.

Sanctions – Mr. Sellers is now in charge of all sanctions. He will work with Jennifer Fischer to process any requests to play out-of-state.

Finance Committee Update – Tom Mullahey

Approval of Monthly Checks – The June through September 2021 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. James Gaffney made a motion, seconded by Raymond Kiem, to approve the June 8 through September 13, 2021 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

Corporate Sponsor Update (Zack Rosenberg, TPG) – Zack Rosenberg, (General Manager at TPG) who oversees NJSIAA's sponsorship activity and relationships provided an update to the committee. There is a new approach to bring sponsors to the high school level, which is to focus more on meaningful engagements with schools and their student athletes.

He provided some quick highlights of some, but not all, new partnerships. Wawa has come on as a partner. They are rolling out a program to honor coaches throughout the year and honor a community athlete of the season. New Jersey City University plans to sponsor a "Counselors that Care" platform recognizing guidance counselors. Plymouth Rock Assurance will be providing an enter to win sweepstakes for unique prizes and provide an opportunity for one school to win lunch for its athletic department. Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, along with The Partnership For Drug Free NJ, will be executing opioid abuse prevention Town Hall Series, in schools, featuring NFL alum Ray Lucas. Jag One Physical Therapy plans to sponsor Officials Appreciation Week (along with sponsoring volleyball). This is a summary of some of the new corporate sponsorships. Many previous sponsors are still supporting the association. Mr. Rosenberg recommends that everyone share messaging from sponsors (e-mail and social posts) throughout their school communities. Success comes from engagement at the community level.

Report of Counsel (Steven P. Goodell) – Mr. Goodell and Mr. Miccio were busy this summer working for NJSIAA on eligibility issues and policy changes, working with insurance counsel, and defending the association in court and in front of the Commissioner of Education.

Old Business / New Business – none

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made by Frank Torcasio, seconded by Mohammed Abdelaziz at 12:09 pm, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire
Executive Director

CEM: ln