

# NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

1161 Route 130 North

Robbinsville, NJ 08691

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 10, 2021

**Roll Call** - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Tom Mullahey, at 11:02 am.

The following members were present: Mohammed Abdelaziz, Jeff Baldino, Joseph Bollendorf, Jeremy Braverman, Dr. Patricia Camp, Dennis Carey, Ed Chmiel, Jason Corley, Heather Crisci, Maria Crowley, Denise Crudup, Jorge Diaz, John Downey, Al Dyer, Daniel Finkle, Judy Finch-Johnson, John Fraraccio, James Gaffney, Brendan Galligan, Dr. G. Kennedy Greene, Dr. Kimberly Gruccio, Dr. David Heisey, Mary Liz Ivins, Steven Jenkins, Todd Jorgenson, Kurt Karcich, Monsignor Kelly, Raymond Kiem, Howard Krieger, John Maggio, Sean Olson, Russell Petrocelli, Jeff Pierro, Danny Robertozzi, Senator Paul Sarlo, Steve Shohfi, Frank Torcasio, Beverly Torok, Gregory Troxell, Joseph Ursino, Bill Vacca, Paul Vizzuso, Kathy Whalen and Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director; Kim DeGraw-Cole, Chief Compliance Officer; Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer; Al Stumpf and Derryk Sellers, Assistant Directors; Steven Goodell, Esq. and Scott Miccio, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Brian Deakyne, *NJ Advance Media* and Darren Cooper, *The Record*.

**Approval of Minutes** - A motion was made by Jason Corley, seconded by Jeremy Braverman, to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2021 Executive Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

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**Legislative Update (Paul Anzano)** - Mr. Anzano was unable to attend today's meeting but he distributed a report of legislative bills related to high school athletics being considered by the legislature and is available for any questions.

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### **Executive Director Update – Colleen Maguire**

First, Ms. Maguire commended Sean Reilly again for his weekly NJSIAA Trailblazer series. Ms. Maguire encouraged all administrators to share these stories with their students. This week's trailblazer is Ms. Maguire's former college coach and current WNBA Minnesota Lynx coach, Cheryl Reeve, who guided the Lynx to four championships while being named league Coach of the Year three times.

**NJSIAA Amateur Rules Update – NIL Proposal – Second Reading – Roll Call Vote** – After discussion last month, it was agreed to add banning students from engaging in any NIL activities that involve tobacco and nicotine products to the new NJSIAA Amateur Rules Update. A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Mary Liz Ivins, to amend NJSIAA Bylaws, Article V, Section 2, with the new NJSIAA Amateur Rules Update (detailed in last month's minutes), including banning students from engaging in any NIL activities that involve tobacco and nicotine products. A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-39; No-1; Abstain-1. Motion passed second and final reading with one opposition and one abstention.

**Out of State Competition Clarification – Second Reading – Roll Call Vote** – A motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Frank Torcasio, to amend the Rules and Regulations, Specific Sport Regulations, Note 3, by adding the bolded wording underlined below.

3. Member schools may schedule games or scrimmages with any school **that is academically** accredited by its regional accrediting agency and having athletic eligibility standards similar to the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association. Member schools may schedule regular season

games or scrimmages with non-member schools, or with member schools of the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools; however, in such case, any waiver of the NJSIAA eligibility rules must be agreed upon and set forth in the contract. Under this section, competition is limited to teams (or individuals) whose participants are in the first year of post-high school matriculation. Waiver of NJSIAA eligibility rules will not be granted for sanctioned tournaments.

**CL 4: No member school may engage in athletic competition, scrimmage and/or practice with an out-of-state school which is not a member in good standing of its respective state high school athletic association or has not been approved by the respective association as an affiliate.**

A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-40; No-1; Abstain-1. Motion passed second and final reading with one opposition and one abstention.

**Football Update**– Seeding took place on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. It went very well. Ms. Maguire thanked the non-public seeding committee of Tom Mullahey (President), Jason Corley (2nd VP – Long Branch), Rich Shello (Ridge), Joe McColgan (Pemberton) and Pat Lanni (NJ Advance Media). It took approximately 90 minutes to seed the NP A and NP B bracket after thorough discussion and vetting of every school. The first-round games went well with several early upsets and several overtime games. The second-round games will be played this coming weekend. 54 Regional Crossover games were also played this past weekend. The Non-Public Finals and Public Regional Championships will be held the weekends of Nov. 26th/27th and Dec. 4th/5th at Met Life and Rutgers. There is a growing enthusiasm for next season when NJSIAA will finally award public Group Champions.

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### **Program Review**

**Tournament of Champions Proposal – First Reading – Voice Vote** – The status of the NJSIAA Tournament of Champions has been discussed in and around our office for the last several years – many have been questioning if time has passed by these tournaments. Last month, NJSIAA staff polled the leadership of the 15 leagues and conferences at its monthly meeting – 14 of which unanimously supported eliminating these events after the current school year, while one was OK with keeping them but understood why some feel their time should come to an end. There are several factors to this proposal, which was not taken lightly but NJSIAA staff firmly believes it is in the best interest of all student-athletes. As NJSIAA looks ahead to emerging from the pandemic, staff is especially mindful of the need to provide a positive experience and a positive outcome for as many student-athletes as positive – unfortunately, the TOCs rarely lead to positive outcomes for all teams competing. The following are reasons for eliminating the Team Tournament of Champions in all sports:

- More and more sports are seeing the same teams competing, especially in the finals – many are becoming less competitive.
- In order to accommodate some TOCs, the regular season has been cut short in order to host this additional tournament. The association is better served by all teams having a longer regular season as opposed to just serving 5 or 6 teams during the last week of the season
- Scheduling has evolved since the early days of many TOCs – schools have more flexibility to seek opponents outside of their league or conference. Many successful programs are scheduling other successful programs during the regular season with much more frequency.
- While some sports have been questioning their TOC for a few years, others will be disappointed to no longer have it. That is understandable, but it is the job of the association to look at the big picture of what is offered to all its student-athletes, and the impact the association has on all student-athletes
- Lastly, Ms. Maguire is not aware of any other state that hosts an additional tournament after their state championships. In her conversations, many are surprised that NJ hosts such a tournament.

However, NJ is also one of only four states to wrestle down to a single, statewide champion for each weight class too.

A motion was made by Kurt Karcich, seconded by Daniel Finkle, to eliminate the Tournament of Champions for G Tennis, B/G Basketball, B Tennis, G Volleyball, B Lacrosse, Field Hockey, G Lacrosse, B/G Bowling, and Softball after the 2021 – 2022 school year. Discussion took place. Kurt Karcich shared that after research and discussions with students, he found that they feel stressed out with seasons overlapping. Eliminating the TOC gives a break. Ms. Cole shared that it's usually the same teams every year that make it to the TOC in field hockey, but only one team emerges feeling good while all others end the season with a loss. Jeremy Braverman echoed the same sentiments. Teams feel good and excited after a sectional win, only to be crying at the TOC. Instead of feeling good about winning two big titles, many play their last game against an impossible team to beat to end their season. Al Stumpf shared that the NJ Basketball Coaches Association is in favor of eliminating the TOC and would prefer the extra week during the regular season. Beverly Torok asked if by eliminating the TOC, will the state championships still be that usual week of the TOC or the seasons will stay as is and just end a week earlier. Ms. Maguire and Mr. Maselli answered that it depends on the sport and the calendar committee proposal that was approved last year to answer that question. In the past, opening day was counted back from the TOC but with the new calendar committee proposal, opening day dates were determined by counting back from the state tournament, not the TOC. Father Kelly shared that the more students that feel good, the better.

This proposal, if approved next meeting, will go into effect beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, so this will be the last year of Tournament of Champions in NJ. Motion passed first reading with one opposition and 3 abstentions.

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### **Chief Compliance Officer Update (Kim DeGraw-Cole)**

**Eligibility & Eligibility Appeals Committees** – The next Eligibility Committee meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2021. The Eligibility Appeals Committee met on October 21 and 27 to hear appeals and will meet again on December 15, 2021. Ms. Cole anticipates COVID-19 Credit Waivers for a Winter Sport will be submitted in November and December. Schools should provide first marking period grades as well as an Action Plan to keep the students on track in all classes. There will be no COVID-19 Credit Waivers Granted for Spring Sports as per the COVID-19 Compliance Package- Part 2 passed by the NJSIAA Executive Committee. 12 IEP Credit Waivers were granted along with one 8<sup>th</sup> grade waiver for high school participation due to age.

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

- Two new status entries were added. They designate that the transfer date for post season championship eligibility must be checked by the school athletic director.
- Immediate Eligibility: Post Season Participation Verification Required
- Ineligibility Period Applies: Post Season Participation Verification Required
- Home Campus Transfers: June/July to November 3, 2021
  - Transfers: over 1900 in the system
  - Pending Former School Response: 316
  - Under Review or Affidavit Issues: 4
  - Immediately Eligible with No Varsity Participation at the former school: 925
  - Immediately Eligible Bona Fide Change of Residence with Varsity Participation: 248
  - Immediately Eligible: 69 including International Students (26)
  - Ineligibility Period Applies with Varsity Participation and No Bona Fide Change of Address: 232
  - Immediate Eligibility: Post Season Verification Required: 41
  - Ineligibility Period Applies: Post Season Verification Required: 4
  - Hearing Pending: 0

- Denied: 1 International
- Remaining other status
- Total Transfers Varsity and Non-Varsity (June 15-Nov. 3 Reports)
  - Transfers from Public to Non-Public: 442
  - Transfers from Public to Public: 1028
  - Transfers from Non-Public to Non-Public: 205
  - Transfers from Non-Public to Public: 357
- Sport breakdown (June 15 to Nov. 3 Reports)-Varsity at the Former School
  - Boys Basketball: 68
    - Public to Non-Public: 20
    - Public to Public: 26
    - Non-Public to Public: 13
    - Non-Public to Non-Public: 9
  - Girls Basketball: 36
    - Public to Public: 13
    - Public to Non-Public: 9
    - Non-Public to Public: 6
    - Non-Public to Non-Public 8
  - Wrestling: 43
    - Public to Public: 13
    - Public to Non-Public: 20
    - Non-Public to Public: 9
    - Non-Public to Non-Public 1
  - Ice Hockey: 17
    - Public to Public: 3
    - Public to Non-Public: 8
    - Non-Public to Non-Public: 6
  - Indoor Track & Field: Boys 12 and Girls 7
  - Swimming: Boys 10 and Girls 4
- 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. **Please Note this applies to students with or without previous varsity participation.**
  - Winter Sports Transfer Date (on or before)
    - Bowling: November 20, 2021
    - Ice Hockey: November 26, 2021
    - Swimming: December 1, 2021
    - Basketball, Fencing, Indoor T & F, Wrestling: December 17, 2021
    - Skiing: January 3, 2022

**Field Hockey Update** – Tournament seeding took place on October 20 and brackets were final on October 21 at noon with no changes. For the public brackets, 128 Schools were seeded in the North and South (Groups 1, 2, 3, 4) in 16 full team brackets. The total number of public schools that participated in field hockey regular season was 196. In the non-public brackets, 10 Schools in the North NP Section and 12 Schools in the South NP Section were seeded. The total number of non-public schools that participated in field hockey regular season was 30. Ms. Cole thanked all the local assignors for assigning officials in the first three rounds of play. 150 Schools participated in the 2021 Field Hockey Tournament. Sectional Trophies were sent to the #1 Seeded Team for presentation at the Sectional Final Games. Public November 9 and Non-Public November 10. The NJSIAA assigns officials from the sectional finals to the end of the tournament. Linda Alimi will assign games in the North and Maureen Dzwil will assign

games in the South, while Janet Schillig will assign the officials for the Group Finals and Tournament of Champions games. The NJSIAA will pay all officials beginning with the Sectional Finals. All Sectional Finals to the completion of the tournament must be played on turf fields.

Congratulations to the following 2021-2022 Field Hockey Sectional Champions:

North, Group 1 - Shore Regional  
North, Group 2 - West Essex  
North, Group 3 - North Hunterdon  
North, Group 4 – Phillipsburg (was the number 9 seed!)

South, Group 1 - Woodstown  
South, Group 2 - Seneca (was the number 8 seed!)  
South, Group 3 - Moorestown  
South, Group 4 – Eastern

The Non-public North and South Tournament championship games will be played later in the day. Oak Knoll will play Kent Place for the North title, while Camden Catholic will play Bishop Eustace for the South title.

The Group Finals will be conducted at Bordentown High School on November 13, 2021, beginning at 10 am. Seeding for the Tournament of Champions will be based on Power Points in the first 16 games with Residuals capped at 13 games. NJSIAA is using HomeTown Ticketing for tickets to attend and Northwest Designs for championship apparel. The championship program will be posted on the NJSIAA website. The Tournament of Champions Play-In and Semi-Finals will be at the higher seeded team. Tournament of Champions Final Game will be at Kean University on November 19th at 7:00 pm.

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### **Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)**

**Virtual Swim Meets** – The swim season has already begun. Since COVID-19 is still around and the association is not sure how schools will handle being indoors this winter, NJSIAA will continue to allow virtual swim meets as an option if both schools and the conference agree, but it cannot be counted as power points for the state tournament.

**Tournament Personnel Postings** – Schools will receive these forms. Make sure if you are going to a state tournament, you are on this list.

**Tournament Regulations** – Mr. Maselli is halfway through reviewing all winter regulations. Normally by now they would've been posted, but there's a lot of extraneous information in them, so Mr. Maselli is working to pare them down.

**Bench DQ Update** – The idea of issuing just one disqualification to a coach when athletes leave the bench for a fight (instead of issuing individual player DQs), was discussed by the state's league and conference officers. It was unanimously voted to keep the current procedure as is. Steven Jenkins commended the officers for keeping this policy, but he questioned the penalty. If there are three or more coach/player disqualifications, then the penalty is the team is not allowed to participate in the state tournament but that's not an equitable punishment for a 20-2 team and a 2-20 team. The 2-20 team will not make the state tournament regardless so keeping them from it is not a consequence. Al Dyer wanted to be assured that officials get the proper information before issuing penalties. Mr. Maselli responded that officials have a tremendous responsibility to get the numbers right when there is a fight, which is why there's a 48-hour rule, so if it's not right when it's first done, they can always go back and fix it. Al Dyer also questioned allowing teams to play in a crossover game, but not in the state tournament. He felt it didn't make sense to allow one but not the other. Next year there will be no crossover games.

**Online Ticketing** – NJSIAA tested its new online ticketing service at the gymnastics sectionals, which worked out fantastic. Going forward, the association will not have to worry about cash sales. All tickets will be sold in advance.

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### **Al Stumpf**

**Girls Volleyball Update** – The new tournament seeding procedure went well. With the new process, the number of teams entering the tournament went up 20 percent. This can be attributed to the Sectional set up, teams are traveling less and have a better opportunity to be successful in the opening rounds. The Public Sectional Finals took place yesterday. The winners play in the State Semifinals on Nov. 11. North 1 will play North II and Central will play South. Host teams are North II and South. The Non-Public Round 3 is Nov. 11 too and winners move on to the State Non-Public Finals. The state finals will be on Nov. 13 at William Paterson University. Winners of these games will be re-seeded for the TOC and play at the higher seed - #1 and # 2 seeds have byes. 3vs6 and 4vs5 play. The TOC semis and finals will be at Franklin HS on 11/20 and 11/21 respectively. For the semis, the #2 seed plays the winner of 4vs5 game and the #1 seed plays the winner of 3vs6 game.

**Cross Country Update** – Mr. Stumpf was able to attend three of the four sectional championships that took place on November 6. Colleen Maguire attended the fourth sectional at Dream Park. The top 5 teams and top 10 runners in each section and group moved on to the group championships, which will be this weekend on November 13<sup>th</sup>, at Holmdel Park. There will be no parking allowed at Holmdel Park. All parking will be at Bell Works and shuttle buses will be available for \$3 per person (if over HS age). The top two teams from each group and the next eight fastest wildcard teams and the individuals that placed in the top 10 in their group will advance to the MOC on Saturday November 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Charity Basketball Showcase** – Mr. Stumpf distributed a flyer for a North- South Girls Basketball Showcase at Spotswood HS on January 2, 2022, benefitting The Valerie Fund to fight Pediatric Cancer. Fourteen girls' teams from NJ will take part.

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### **Derryk Sellers**

**Soccer Update** – The tournament is going great with lots of exciting stories. One game played was between the #10 and #11 seed, another game went into double overtime, and one game - the #16 seed defeated the #1 seed! The four non-public championships will take place this weekend at Kean University on 11/14, while the boys and girls public championships will take place the following weekend on 11/20 and 11/21, also at Kean.

**Gymnastics Update** – Mr. Sellers attended the five sectionals on November 6<sup>th</sup> at the following schools: Ridgewood HS, Saint Thomas Aquinas HS, Manalapan HS, Hillsborough HS, and Seneca HS.

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### **Finance Committee Update – Tom Mullahey**

**Approval of Monthly Checks** – The October 12, 2021 through November 8, 2021 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. Paul Vissuzo made a motion, seconded by Gregory Troxell, to approve the October 12, 2021 through November 8, 2021 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Report of Counsel (Steve Goodell)** – Mr. Goodell and Mr. Miccio have been in out and out of court for the past few weeks. Mr. Goodell discussed the adoption of Rules and Regulations, Specific Sport Regulation, Note 4, Disqualification, CL4, F and the incident that took place at the Camden -Pleasantville

football game. Though the rule over the years has served as a great deterrent for on the field fighting, fighting still does take place. This year, there were four football teams excluded from the state tournament due to fighting and multiple disqualifications in one game, including Camden HS. In their game v Pleasantville, four Camden players and two Pleasantville players were disqualified. Players off the bench were not disqualified. Camden had concerns about the way the officials handled the situation. The officials mixed up players from the two teams, but that was ultimately fixed. Camden asked for a waiver to Rules and Regulations, Specific Sport Regulation, Note 4, Disqualification, CL4, F, so that they could participate in the NJSIAA state football tournament. The Protest Committee, made up of Executive Director-Colleen Maguire, Executive Committee President-Tom Mullahey, and Executive Committee member-Jason Corley, met last week to hear Camden HS present their case as to why a waiver should be granted. After hearing all arguments, the Protest Committee determined that granting a waiver of Rules and Regulations, Specific Sport Regulation, Note 4, Disqualification, CL4, F would undermine the goals of the association. Camden appealed the Protest Committee decision in Camden Superior Court and requested emergent relief from the Commissioner of Education. On 11/3 and 11/5 respectively, the Camden Courts and the Commissioner of Education denied Camden HS's request for emergent relief. Disqualifying all players who leave the bench for a fight has been a recent topic of discussion prior to this incident. The membership has not been in support of changing this specific sport regulation because it is the best tool right now against bench clearing brawls, but Mr. Maselli will work with officials to make sure the rules are applied correctly.

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**Old Business / New Business** – none

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**Adjournment** - There being no further business, a motion was made by Mary Liz Ivins, seconded by Jason Corley at 11:55 am, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire  
Executive Director

CEM: ln