



FOOTBALL SPORTS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
2022 – 2023 SEASON
January 24, 2023 – 10:00am

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Greg Bailey, Football Coordinator
Mike Bartram, State Rules Interpreter
Jason Corley, Long Branch HS Athletic Director, NJSIAA Executive Committee 1st Vice-President
Gregory Troxell, Phillipsburg HS Superintendent, NJSIAA Executive Committee Representative
Jason Morrell, West Deptford HS Athletic Director
John McKenna, DePaul Catholic Athletic Director
Tarig Holman, St. Thomas Aquinas Coach
Tim Gushue, Shawnee HS Coach
Mike Alberque, St. John Vianney Athletic Director/Assistant Coach
Bill Fitzgerald, Seton Hall Prep Coach

1. Season in Review

Colleen presented a proposal to allow for a 2-day early start for heat acclimatization. The early start will be subject to school district approval but will not count towards the 6-day practice/1-day of rest rule. Jason Corley made a motion to approve the proposal and Mike Alberque seconded the motion, all were in favor. Colleen told the committee that the next step is to present the proposal to the Executive Committee for their final approval at its February meeting.

2. Tournament in Review

Regional Invitational Tournament:

Colleen surveyed schools that participated in the Regional Invitational Tournament this past season. The survey results were as follows: 73% responded that they will participate in the tournament during the 2023 season, 65% responded that 3-games were too many and 73% responded that NJSIAA should not award a trophy. The consensus from the comments that were submitted was that 2-games are preferred. Therefore, the Regional Invitational Tournament next year will be structured with pairings of 4 teams – the winners will advance while the losers may mutually agree to play but is not required. Colleen commented that the tournament regulations will indicate that crossover between Sections or Groups may be necessary to fill as many 4-team pairings as possible. The committee was in favor of these updates to the Regional Invitational Tournament.

Public State Semifinals:

The committee discussed feedback on the public state semifinal games. The NJ Football Coaches Association has inquired as to the possibility of playing these games at the higher seed. Colleen expressed concerns on behalf of her staff and the football tournament staff with logistics that could cause an issue – weather issues, field conditions and administrative oversight. Both Colleen and Greg relayed issues they both dealt with among schools when weather was potentially impacting the sectional finals. Overall, majority of the committee were in support of playing the games at the higher seed but understood the concerns expressed. Colleen told the committee that she will discuss the status of these games with both NJSIAA and tournament staff to determine how best to proceed.

State Championship Venues:

Colleen solicited feedback from the committee on the venues used for the state championship games – MetLife Stadium and Rutgers University. Overall, feedback was positive, but the committee did express interest in hosting more games at Met Life stadium for those matchups that are geographically friendly. Colleen and Greg will solicit availability at both venues to have options available.

3. Season Dates

Colleen provided a handout to the committee of proposed dates for the 2023 season. All dates are corresponding dates to the 2022 season except for the possible early-start for heat acclimatization and the dates of the public state championships. The committee was in support of having all state championship games played over Thanksgiving weekend except for those games that have a school that regularly participates in a Thanksgiving Day football game. Games involving Thanksgiving Day schools will be played the following Wednesday or Thursday. NJSIAA will make every effort to host this game at either MetLife Stadium or Rutgers University but will be dependent on facility availability. This will allow football teams to end their season one week earlier, which is supported by many coaches and administrators.

4. Tournament Staff Updates

Greg Bailey provided general commentary on the success of the 2022 high school football season. Mike Bartram updated the committee on concerns regarding schools wearing illegal uniforms – some teams are wearing light colors, such as grey, which are not allowed by NFHS rules. Mike will be crafting a memo for all member schools and coaches reminding them of the rules. In addition, the memo will include reminders of changes to the uniform rules that will take effect with the 2024 season. Lastly, Mike provided a brief update on behalf of Mark Bitar, State Assignor, who was unable to attend. The use of 7-man crews during the State Championship games went very well and will continue for the 2023 season. There were more crews represented in the state tournament this year and all four football officials' chapters were represented in the 7 state championship games.

5. New Business – Old Business

There were no items noted.

6. Correspondence

Summit High School submitted a request to add St. Thomas Aquinas high school to the multiplier C category. Colleen provided feedback on behalf of the Football Leagues & Conferences Committee which did not support this proposal. Colleen also expressed her concern that the use of the multiplier is moving away from its original intent – the original intent being to complete the schedules of certain non-public schools whose public-school opponents were refusing the game. There are schools in the multiplier categories that do not have any non-public schools on their schedule, which is of concern. Certain committee members understood the concern but felt that St. Thomas Aquinas should be treated in the same fashion as other non-public schools in the C category and that their opponents should be allowed multiplier points. Tim Gushue made a motion to support the proposal submitted by Summit High School, and Jason Morrell seconded the motion. The proposal was approved by a vote of 4 – 2 with one abstention. Colleen will also present this proposal to the Executive Committee for their final approval at its February meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Maguire, Executive Director