



**BOYS WRESTLING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**2023 – 2024 SEASON**  
April 24, 2024

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Colleen Maguire, Executive Director  
Howie O'Neil, Tournament Director  
Ken Rossi, Wrestling Coordinator  
Vinnie Russo, State Assignor  
Gary Kessel, State Rules Interpreter  
Scott Agnew, Cherokee HS Athletic Director  
Joe Benvenuti, Passaic Valley HS Athletic Director  
John Gagliano, Howell HS Coach  
Bryan Stoll, Delbarton HS Coach  
Greg Bauer, Seneca HS Coach  
Taylor Pevny, West Milford HS Coach  
Billy Ashnault, Christian Brothers Academy Coach  
Steve Johnston, President, NJ Wrestling Coaches Association

1. Regular Season Review

Colleen reviewed the new scheduling model that will be in place for the 2024-2025 season. Teams will now have the flexibility to determine the start of regular season competition once the 6-days of practice/1-day of rest rule has been satisfied.

Greg discussed the possibility of eliminating the rule requiring a reset of the weight decent plan after each weigh-in. This topic has been discussed in previous years and has not been supported by the NJSIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee.

Colleen updated the committee that the girls wrestling committee will meet in May and on the agenda will be a plan to move towards the separation of the girls and the boys during both the regular season and post-season.

2. Post-Season Review

Colleen proposed a decrease to the number of matches necessary to qualify for the state tournament – a decrease from 10 matches to 9 matches. This will avoid power point ties when determining qualification for the state tournament and while seeding the state tournament. Bryan made a motion, and Taylor seconded the motion, to decrease the number of matches from 10 to 9. All present were in favor.

There was discussion as to whether all matches should be averaged as of the cut-off date, as opposed to just the best 9 matches. Colleen will work with NJ.com to run this data next season so that an informed recommendation can be reached. In the meantime, Steve will solicit feedback from the coaches association...Colleen commented that during the 2024-2025 school year, all other “power point” sports are moving to an average of all games played as of the cut-off date.

Greg requested that the first round of the public-school state tournament be hosted on the prior Friday, instead of hosting rounds 1 and 2 on the Monday. Committee members expressed concern with facility conflicts, primarily for small schools, and increased transportation costs. The committee agreed to leave the current schedule in place.

The committee discussed the public-school state semi-finals, which are currently seeded. The alternative is to move to predetermined state semi-finals, which will reduce travel distances. Colleen commented that just one school has expressed concern with travel distances over the past two years, so she does not believe it is of big concern to the schools that are participating. The committee agreed to leave the current framework in place.

Colleen requested feedback on continuing with a 5-group classification for the public-school tournament, it is her recommendation to move to a 4-group classification. Steve will solicit feedback from the coaches association for further consideration.

Howie discussed concerns with coaches not timely entering previous advancement information for their wrestlers in Trackwrestling. The committee supported a December 31 deadline and that fines should be issued for late, or missing, submissions.

Colleen updated the committee that the Realignment Committee will be meeting on Monday. Ken has been busy updating the rating criteria and compiling other data to be reviewed by the committee. The committee will look at the current rating criteria formula and may recommend changes. Any changes to the model and/or alignment process will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval at its May meeting.

Steve agreed to additional feedback from the coaches association on the following additional topics:

- During the state tournament, should the higher seed team be the designated home team and choose odds or evens – eliminating the coin toss.
- Should wrestling adopt the football classification model for public schools, which means a north and south “super-section” and snake-seed the sectional tournament.
- Team championships date – should the team championships be moved to Saturday, instead of Sunday, which will allow for an additional day of rest before the District Tournament.

### 3. Individual State Championships

Committee members provided positive feedback on the new format and this past year’s tournament. Colleen commented that average daily attendance had increased by 8% year over year. Howie discussed some options that he is considering with the current schedule, such as moving to a 10-mat format, and other subtle changes to the rounds to bring them in line with some feedback he has received.

Howie addressed the need to determine a policy when a wrestler does not make weight on the first day of the individual state championships – should the opponent receive a bye, or should the wrestlers move up one seed. The committee supported a policy that will move the wrestlers up one seed under this scenario.

Colleen informed the committee that beginning with next season, the head coach will be the only individual allowed to sign for the coaches credentials...and the head coach will be required to show an ID. This is a result from this past season when someone claimed to be a coach at a school and stole that school’s credentials.

4. 2024-2025 Season Dates

The committee reviewed the draft dates for the 2024-2025 season. Colleen presented two options for the state tournament dates based on availability at Boardwalk Hall. The committee recommended staying with the corresponding dates from the 2023-2024 season, which means the Individual State Championships will be held Thursday, March 6, 2025 – Saturday, March 8, 2025.

The committee discussed the date for the 2-pound weight allowance, which had been tied to the transfer sit eligibility date in previous seasons. Bryan Stoll made a motion, and Steve Johnston seconded the motion, to establish January 1 as the 2-pound weight allowance date moving forward. All present were in favor.

5. NFHS Rules Changes for 2024-2025

Gary informed the committee that the NFHS rules committee met earlier in the month and that a formal announcement of all approved rule changes is forthcoming. Gary is aware that certain rule changes will result in increased scoring, reductions to match timing and identifying certain illegal moves that will be deemed flagrant.

6. Review of Correspondences

The committee reviewed one correspondence received from a member school.

- North Brunswick High School submitted a proposal that will require a flagrant DQ (in accordance with NJSIAA disqualification rules) in certain situations when a technical disqualification results in injury and the opponent being unable to compete. Committee members feel these situations should be handled by the officials and questioned whether NFHS rules permit this scenario. Gary commented that NFHS is adopting rule changes to recognize certain illegal moves as flagrant, which should address some of the concern expressed in the correspondence. The proposal did not receive a motion or a second therefore it did not move out of the committee.

7. District/Region Tournament Proposal

Mike Beirao, AD, Cherry Hill School District, and Mike Lamb, AD, Rancocas Valley High School, presented a proposal to realign the current District/Region tournaments to be league/conference based. Committee members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Colleen asked Steve to coordinate a meeting with the coaches association to solicit further feedback for future conversations.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Maguire,  
Executive Director