

will host 25-30 more virtual workshops for winter officials. Ms. Maguire was grateful for staff member, Dena Maggio, who did a terrific job with the training presentation and working with Zoom to set up the workshops and assist the trainers. This initiative took place because of her efforts.

Sportsmanship Summit – League and Conference Grants – The Finance Committee approved Ms. Maguire’s recommendation that NJSIAA support its leagues and conferences with their sportsmanship efforts, so monies were allocated in the current year budget for this initiative. Last year, there were too many violations of NJSIAA’s sportsmanship policy, too many teams ineligible for the NJSIAA state tournament from disqualifications, and too many games terminated early for unsportsmanlike conduct. Many of these violations are referred to the leagues and conferences for investigation. At NJSIAA’s monthly meetings with L&C officers, Ms. Maguire has been encouraging them to host an event locally prior to the start of each season. She has asked officers to bring student-athletes together across all sports and all schools, specifically upperclassmen who play a big role in setting the tone for the team. NJSIAA will provide a \$1,000 grant to each league and conference for their first event, and \$500 for each subsequent event – up to 3 events per year for a total of \$2,000. Ms. Maguire is optimistic that more efforts such as this at the local level will start to make a difference.

NJSIAA Fall Newsletter – The fall newsletter was distributed. Ms. Maguire started a seasonal newsletter last year in efforts to provide efficient updates on important NJSIAA items, highlight changes, provide a list of important dates, and summarize important topics of note. She encouraged committee members to share the newsletter with anyone that they feel will benefit from this information.

Name, Image, and Likeness Policy Update – First Reading – Voice Vote – In November 2021, NJSIAA adopted a policy permitting student-athletes the opportunity to profit off the use of their Name, Image, and Likeness in certain activities. Since adoption, the activity surrounding the use of a student-athletes’ Name, Image and Likeness continues to evolve. The association is continually reviewing its policy to ensure it is current in addressing the evolving landscape. One area that has evolved more recently is the use of NIL collectives – specifically at the college level. An NIL collective provides a way for supporters, such as boosters or alumni, to pool their financial resources and independently offer NIL opportunities to student-athletes. Currently, there is little to no evidence that NIL collectives are engaging with interscholastic student-athletes; however, state associations recognize that oftentimes some activities at the college-level eventually trickle down to the interscholastic-level. As a proactive measure to clearly articulate that NIL collectives are not permissible, regardless of any affiliation with a member school, Ms. Maguire proposed the following update to the NJSIAA Name, Image and Likeness Bylaw (*Additions are underlined and deletions are struck through*).

Bylaws, Article V [Eligibility of Athletes] Section 2 [Amateur-Athlete]

D. Name, Image and Likeness.

“No school or anyone ~~No one~~ employed by a member school, including coaches and administrators, may be involved with a student-athletes use of their NIL. No one associated with or acting at the direction of a member school, such as booster clubs, alumni, or collectives, may use the promise of NIL opportunities to entice student-athletes to transfer to or attend their school.”

A motion was made by Russell Petrocelli, seconded by Barry Fitzgerald, to amend Bylaws, Article V [Eligibility of Athletes] Section 2 [Amateur-Athlete], D. Name, Image and Likeness, to clearly articulate that NIL collectives are not permissible, regardless of any affiliation with a member school. Motion passed first reading unanimously. A second and final reading will take place in the October 2023 meeting.

Program Review

16 members of the Program Review committee met on Monday, 9/11. Four proposals were reviewed and unanimously endorsed.

Girls Ice Hockey Pilot Program – One Reading – Voice Vote – In October 2021, the NJSIAA Executive Committee unanimously approved a two-year pilot program which allowed NJSIAA to sponsor a Girls Ice Hockey State Tournament. The state tournament has gone very well with the championship game being played at The Prudential Center on the same day as the boys state championship games. During the 2022-2023 school year, there were 16 girls ice hockey teams among NJSIAA member schools, 13 of which competed in the NJSIAA state tournament. Ms. Maguire proposed that NJSIAA extend the pilot program for one additional school year. This will allow time for legislation to adopt girls ice hockey as an NJSIAA sanctioned sport to be submitted to the Advisory Committee in December for their consideration. If approved by the Advisory Committee, then the legislation will be on the ballot at the Annual Meeting in May 2024.

During this one-year pilot program, all teams will follow the boys ice hockey regular season rules and regulations, specific to season dates, maximum number of games, etc., while all student-athletes will be required to meet all NJSIAA eligibility standards. In addition, during this one-year pilot program, girls will be permitted to participate on their boys team if they choose; however, they will not be permitted to participate on both the boys and girls team.

A motion was made by Maria Crowley, seconded by Joseph Ursino, to extend the girls ice hockey pilot program for one additional school year, so there's time for legislation to be submitted to the Advisory Committee in December, to adopt girls ice hockey as an NJSIAA sanctioned sport. Motion carried unanimously.

Steve Jenkins asked the association and the Executive Committee to also consider competitive cheer as a NJSIAA sanctioned sport. When girls wrestling was approved, participation increased. Competitive cheer has hundreds of students already engaged in the sport.

Boys/Girls Ice Hockey Overtime Period – One Reading – Voice Vote – The NJSIAA Ice Hockey Committee unanimously approved a modification to the ice hockey rules that will allow teams to play one 5-minute overtime period during the regular season. This modification is by state adoption and is allowable under NFHS rules. The committee believes that adding one 5-minute period will help teams prepare for overtime during the state tournament. Mr. Maselli consulted several ice rinks that host NJSIAA member schools, and all confirmed that the one 5-minute overtime period will not significantly impact scheduling at their facilities and that they can accommodate the overtime period.

A motion was made by Alaa Abdelaziz, seconded by Jason Miller, to approve ice hockey teams playing one 5-minute overtime period during the regular season starting with the 2023-2024 ice hockey season. Teams will receive a 2-minute rest period at the conclusion of the third period. During the overtime period (which will be played with 5 players - four skaters and one goalie), the first goal scored will end the game. If the game is still tied upon completion of the 5-minute overtime period, then the game will end in a tie – no additional overtime periods will be played. Motion carried unanimously.

Boys/Girls Tennis 3rd Set Procedures – One Reading – Voice Vote – United States Tennis Association (USTA) rules rely on a 10-point tie breaker for the third set. The 10-point tie breaker is most often used in all other levels of youth tennis. During the regular season, schools have reported that matches are unable to be completed due to several factors, such as darkness, township-imposed time limits and weather. As schools are experiencing issues with busing, the start of many matches is often delayed. By allowing flexibility to use the 10-point tie breaker, coaches can better manage the timing of their matches.

The NJSIAA Tennis Committee recommends the following procedures for the third set in a tennis match:

During the regular season:

- a. Both coaches must agree on the third set 10-point tiebreaker before the start of the entire match.
- b. If only one coach agrees, then the full third set will be played.
- c. If both coaches agree on the 10-point tiebreaker, it must be for all five matches.
- d. If the match is decided before the end of all five matches, then both coaches may agree at that point to use the 10-point tiebreaker for the remaining matches.

During the state tournament (Team, Singles & Doubles):

- a. All third sets will go to a 10-point tiebreaker except for the singles and doubles state finals.

This will also be the procedure for the boys in the spring as well. At the end of the season, the tennis committee will look to possibly make the third set tiebreaker mandatory for next year based on coaches' feedback from this season.

A motion was made by Maria Crowley, seconded by Steven Jenkins, to allow the 10-point tie breaker in boys and girls tennis regular season if both coaches agree on it before the start of the entire match (if both coaches agree, it must be for all five matches.) During the state tournament (Team, Singles & Doubles), all third sets will go to a 10-point tiebreaker except for the singles and doubles state finals. Motion carried unanimously.

Baseball Pitch Count Update – One Reading – Voice Vote – Over the past few years, the pitch count tracking system has moved online which has allowed schools to see the pitch count sheets for all games. This visibility has led to an increasing number of violations. The most prevalent violation is the 150 maximum pitches in a five-calendar day period rule. This rule has a “hard” stop for the pitcher while the other daily pitch count rules allow the pitcher to finish the current batter even after reaching the maximum pitches. Several schools have violated the 150-max rule over the past two years which has resulted in many forfeited games. At the end of season meeting, the Baseball Committee discussed the increasing trend in violations of 150-max rule. The committee agreed to keep the 150-max rule in place but did approve a proposal that will allow the pitcher to finish the batter upon reaching 150 maximum pitches in five-calendar days. The Baseball Committee unanimously approved this proposal, as did the NJSIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee (SMAC) who felt there are minimal safety concerns with allowing the pitcher to finish the batter once reaching the 150-max.

A motion was made by Jason Miller, seconded by Joseph Ursino, to amend the pitch count rule, beginning with the 2023-24 school year, to allow a pitcher to finish the batter upon reaching 150 maximum pitches in five-calendar days. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Compliance Officer Update (Paul Popadiuk)

Controversies Committee Approval – Voice Vote – A list of the proposed 2023-2024 Controversies Committee was distributed. A motion was made by Russell Petrocelli, seconded by John Fraraccio, to approve the 2023-2024 Controversies Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Transfers Update – The new Transfer Rule went into effect 6/1/23. It's been crazier than normal for Mr. Popadiuk because now he must apply two different rules, depending on when the student transferred. If it was before 6/1 – he must apply the 30-day sit rule. This has taken an extraordinary amount of time but should be more expeditious going forward once there's only one transfer rule to apply. There was an increase of approximately 300 students in the portal from June to September compared to last year. 226 students had to sit 30 days this year since they transferred after 6/1. That number will increase because there's still 216 athletes in the portal who were entered this summer and not cleared because their former schools has not done their due diligence. The influx of students is not concerning, considering the thousands of students who have transferred. There was a good amount of movement in the spring prior to the new rule going into effect but should decrease next year. This rule change is positive. Now if a student transfers due to a parent losing their job or extenuating circumstances, there is no penalty to the

student, whereas before the rule didn't have exceptions and kids had to sit regardless of their reason for transferring.

Eligibility Update – A record number of age, credit, and semester waivers were submitted and heard by the Eligibility Committee this past August. The next Eligibility Committee meeting is 9/26. Forms are due 9/18.

Cooperative Sports Application Deadline – Spring applications are due 10/22 (which is an extension. Was originally due 10/15). The Cooperative Sports Committee will meet on 10/26 to review all spring applications.

Recruiting Investigations – Mr. Popadiuk has been busy investing eight cases of alleged violations of NJSIAA's recruiting rule. This is an increase from past years. He's hoping none of these cases lead to a Controversies Committee hearing. The number of coaches and administrators that are not following rules and showing integrity is concerning. Entering the third week of football and finishing up the first week of sports for all other fall sports, there has already been 40+ disqualifications and teams removed from the state tournament because they've accumulated 3+ disqualifications. There needs to be a point of emphasis for better role models dealing with adversity. We have to get better, and emphasize what high school sports are really about.

Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)

NJSIAA Infectious Disease Policy – Voice Vote – The NJSIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee reviewed the Infectious Disease Policy and recommended updates to reflect societal changes. The updated policy is clearer, more concise, and more reader friendly. The last time the policy was updated was in the 2004-2005 school year. A motion was made by Mohammed Abdelaziz, seconded by Leon Owen, to approve the updated Infectious Disease Policy approved by the NJSIAA SMAC. Motion carried unanimously.

Mental Health Awareness Initiative Proposal - Voice Vote – The NJSIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee (SMAC) is aware of the increasing concerns regarding student-athlete mental health – these concerns are well documented and prevalent in all types of communities. The committee spent a lot of time last school year discussing the importance of NJSIAA coaches being given the resources to assist their student-athletes when necessary. The committee recommends that a behavioral health awareness curriculum be included as a coaching certification requirement. The committee also recommends the “be nice.” online program to meet this requirement. The “be nice.” program is based in Michigan and is designed for high school coaches. The course is an online, asynchronous 30-minute program – coaches can take the online course at their convenience.

The course is free to the coach and its goal is to provide a foundational level of awareness, it is not designed to be a more involved behavioral health first aid program. The awareness program is solely designed to help coaches recognize a student-athlete in need and how to refer them to appropriate school and/or local resources.

There will be a two-year phase in for this certification requirement – all certified NJSIAA coaches will be required to complete the program by the end of the 2024-2025 school year. The course will be a one-time requirement and will remain available for new coaches hired in the future. NJSIAA will cover the cost of this program, which has been presented to the NJSIAA Finance Committee.

A motion was made by Dr. Birnbohm, seconded by Daniel Finkle, to approve a one-time behavioral mental health awareness curriculum be included as a coaching certification requirement. All current coaches must take the online course by the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Motion passed unanimously.

Disqualification Report – The final 2022-2023 Disqualification Report was distributed. There was a 32-player increase in football, which is quite large considering it was relatively stable before this year. Boys Lacrosse jumped from 26 to 83 disqualifications, but that was due to one game that ended in a bench clearing brawl in which 55 total players were ejected. If we do not include that game, the number would be down to 28. Basketball disqualifications increased from 28 to 60.

Officials were asked to report bad behaviors demonstrated by coaches last year. As a result, coach disqualifications were stable so maybe this practice is working. Now the association needs to find a way to decrease player disqualifications. There's a 123 jump in player DQs from two years ago, an alarming trend.

Steven Jenkins recommended that the association publish a list of schools who received sportsmanship banners in each of its championship programs, like they do with the disqualification-free schools each year. This would highlight the schools for a positive accomplishment and promote good sportsmanship.

NJSOA Awards Luncheon – September 17th – Mr. Maselli is excited to honor 37 outstanding officials at this year's NJSOA awards program. Each chapter gets an opportunity to nominate a worthy official on a three-year rotating basis.

Tennis and Field Hockey Updates – The tennis tournament cutoff date is fast approaching. Field hockey is moving along smoothly.

Al Stumpf

Cross Country Update – A new site, Central Park Morris County (aka Greystone Park), will host the North 2 Sectionals since Oak Ridge has become cost prohibitive. The state tournament begins on 10/28.

Girls Soccer Update – The state tournament begins on 10/26. All state finals (boys and girls / public and non-public) are tentatively scheduled to be played at Kean University the weekend of November 10th. If Kean makes the NCAA tournament in field hockey, they will not be able to host, so Mr. Stumpf secured Franklin HS as the backup site for the finals.

Unifield Sports Update – This year, NJSIAA will offer Unified Basketball, Bowling and Spring Track. Last year there were originally 17 teams scheduled to participate in the Spring Track Unified Finals, but several teams dropped out due to the poor air quality. Instead, 10 teams participated, which is still more than previous years.

NCAA Basketball Evaluation Period – Coaches should refer to page 2 in the Guidelines, Policies and Procedure section of our handbook for the complete guidelines. If a NCAA Coach is present, then the high school coach can also be there, but if there is no NCAA Coach, then high school coaches cannot be present.

Derryk Sellers

Gymnastics Update – Ridgewood HS, Saint Thomas Aquinas HS, Hillsborough HS, and Manalapan HS will host the four gymnastics sectionals.

Boys Soccer Update – Mr. Stumpf explained the plans for the boys and girls / public and non-public finals at Kean University in his report. If Kean can't host, Franklin HS will.

Girls Volleyball Update – Franklin HS will also host the Girls Volleyball State Finals on November 12th.

NFCA/NJSCA Program Updates – Congratulations to Executive Committee member, Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly, who was selected to be inducted in to the NJSCA HOF. The induction will take place on 1/14/24.

NJSCA Clinics – There are two upcoming NJSCA clinics:

1. Bowling Clinic on 10/4 at Howell Lane.
2. Golf Clinic on 10/20 at Galloping Hills Golf Course.

Finance Committee Update – Jason Corley

Approval of Monthly Checks – The June 6, 2023 through September 11, 2023 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. Russell Petrocelli made a motion, seconded by Kurt Karcich, to approve the June 6 through September 11, 2023 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business / New Business – Steve Shohfi thanked Paul Popadiuk. His district wanted to update their spectator policy after they experienced several adult fan ejections. Within hours, Mr. Popadiuk had emailed him several policies from across the nation, which helped Mr. Shohfi's district make changes to their spectator code of conduct, which went into effect this year.

Report of Counsel (Steven P. Goodell) – Mr. Goodell and Ms. Smith handled the following litigation this past summer:

1. The Paramus Catholic coaching recruitment case (Coach Russo and Coach Maldonado) was resolved. Both coaches appealed the Executive Committee final decision to the Bergen County Superior Court. Oral arguments were presented. The court affirmed the penalties given by the Controversies Committee and as enhanced by the Executive Committee for Coach Maldonado. The judge ruled that texting a prospective student during the school day was a violation that couldn't be ignored. As for Coach Russo, the judge couldn't find evidence that Coach Russo was aware of or participated in the recruitment, and therefore vacated the four-game suspension penalty. The judge found that NJSIAA did not have a rule that held a head coach responsible for the actions of the assistant coaches. NJSIAA plans to propose a future update to the Handbook.

2. Camden Basketball. The association hired a Hearing Officer and special counsel to handle this issue since Mr. Goodell and his office had conflicts. Special counsel was an experienced state prosecutor and civil attorney. On the day of the hearing, Camden counsel proposed a resolution before evidence was considered by the Controversies Committee. A compromise was agreed to in the best interest of all parties. Camden agreed to appoint an outside monitor to monitor all their sports programs for two years. A retired Superior Court judge was chosen to oversee their programs and he's already met with Mr. Popadiuk and Ms. Maguire. NJSIAA agreed to not strip the school of its 2021-2022 basketball state championship. NJSIAA believed it was appropriate to compromise because, among other things, 1- Everyone involved (players, coaches, etc) have left the school; 2-One of the big issues was the association wanted the controversy resolved prior to the state tournament so the team couldn't enter if allegations were found true. This became a non-issue because the school became ineligible to enter this year's state tournament due to too many disqualifications; 3-The monitor will help make sure this kind of thing does not happen again.

3. Counsel had been busy working with Mr. Popadiuk to enforce the old transfer rule. If a student-athlete transferred before 6/1, they were subject to the old transfer rule. Four people reached out to attorneys to

contest the application of the old rule. Mr. Goodell spoke with them, and though some were close to filing litigation, none were officially filed. Three of those four people had issues because they felt their reasons for transferring were worthy of a waiver of the rule. None of those requests was granted. The fourth case was cleared because they were able to prove they had a bona fide change of address.

Closed Session – A motion was made by Jorge Diaz, seconded by Dr. Danny Robertozzi, to enter in to closed session at 12:09 pm. Motion carried unanimously. A motion to enter open session was made by Al Abdelaziz, seconded by Dr. Danny Robertozzi at 12:18 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made by Russell Petrocelli, seconded by Tammy Wagner at 12:18 pm, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire
Executive Director

CEM: ln