



**FOOTBALL SPORTS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**2023 – 2024 SEASON**  
January 23, 2024 – 10:00am

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Greg Bailey, Football Coordinator  
Mike Bartram, State Rules Interpreter  
Mark Bitar, State Assignor  
John McKenna, DePaul Catholic Athletic Director  
Dennis Carey, Allentown Athletic Director  
Tarig Holman, St. Thomas Aquinas Coach  
Brian Dunn, No. Valley Old Tappan Coach  
Stephen Everette, Willingboro Coach  
Gary Mobley, Columbia Coach

1. Season in Review

*Non-Public Multiplier:*

Colleen presented a proposal on behalf of the Football Leagues & Conferences committee. The proposal eliminates the use of additional power points and provides an increased percentage of a multiplier's Strength Index (SI) for a loss. The proposal also identifies four categories of multiplier teams – the categories will be reviewed and updated each year. If a multiplier school loses to a non-multiplier school during the season, then they will move down or out of the multiplier categories. The purpose of the proposal is to continue to assist leagues and conferences in scheduling games for their non-public schools but to also provide fluidity during the course of a season to ensure multiplier schools are accurately identified.

*Point Differential/Running Clock Rule:*

Mark presented a proposal that would remove the requirement that normal timing rules resume once the score differential drops below 25 points. This proposal would be applicable to all levels of play during both the regular season and state tournament. Therefore, once the score differential reaches 33 points or more in the second half of a game, a running clock will only stop for scores, time outs, penalties and injuries.

*Officiating – Ratings/Feedback:*

Tarig discussed opportunities to provide feedback on officials during the course of the season. Mark informed the committee that he encourages and welcomes feedback, and that he will share the feedback with chapter officers as appropriate. However, he did caution that feedback should only come from the athletic director at least 24 hours after a game has concluded. Colleen and Mark will look to provide a mid-season opportunity for schools to submit feedback on officials across all chapters – this information will be useful when identifying crews for state tournament games as well as provide meaningful feedback for training purposes.

*Games Per Nine Days, Per 24-Hour Period Rule:*

Brian presented a proposal to modify the 24-hour period rule. The rule currently states “a player may not participate in more than one scheduled game during a twenty-four (24) hour period.” The proposal modifies this restriction to be “more than 5 quarters” of any scheduled game during a twenty-four (24) hour period. Placing a limit on the number of quarters is consistent with other sports, such as basketball, while allowing flexibility for coaches to play sub-varsity players in both varsity games on Friday and sub-varsity games on Saturday. Colleen will present this proposal to the NJSIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee for their feedback and endorsement.

All members of the committee were in support of each of these proposals.

2. Tournament in Review

*Regional Crossover Games:*

Colleen updated the committee that NJSIAA will no longer schedule regional crossover games. Schools that do not qualify for the state tournament will have the autonomy to schedule games as they wish; however, these games will only be permitted to be played on Thursday or Saturday.

*Public State Semifinals:*

Colleen informed the committee that they received positive feedback from schools participating in the public state semifinals – the games being hosted by the higher seed went well. NJSIAA will continue to host these games at the higher seed moving forward.

*State Championship Games:*

Colleen reported that all games went well at Met Life Stadium and Rutgers University, in spite of some being played during the week. Overall, there was minimal difference in total attendance relative to the prior year. Met Life Stadium continues to be interested in hosting more football games – their availability is dependent on the NFL schedule. Tournament staff is optimistic that we will be able to host additional games at Met Life Stadium next season to better balance the number of games between each venue.

3. Season Dates

Colleen provided a handout to the committee of proposed dates for the 2024 season, which primarily reflect corresponding dates to the 2023 season.

4. Tournament Staff Updates

Greg recently attended the NFHS Football Rules Committee meeting in Indianapolis. One rule change was approved which will be announced next month; however, much of the conversation centered around NFHS staff’s concern with unsportsmanlike conduct and non-compliance with uniform rules. Non-compliance specifically surrounding knee pads/coverings and eye black. NJSIAA is going to be making both of these concerns a point of emphasis prior to the start of the 2024 season.

Mike updated the committee on continued concerns regarding schools wearing illegal uniforms – some teams are wearing light colors, such as grey, which are not allowed by NFHS rules – and reminded all of the new NFHS uniform rules taking effect with the 2024 season.

Mark updated the committee that the use of the 7-man crews during both the public state semifinals and state championships went very well. NJSIAA will continue with assigning 7-man crews to these games moving forward. In addition, 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

*Non-Public Classifications:*

NJSIAA received correspondence from a member school proposing changes to the non-public classifications. Colleen discussed the concerns identified; however, the proposal lacks merit on several points. The proposal is not in line with the Association's Bylaws on classifications, which requires classifications be based on enrollment. The proposal also adds a third classification that is not supported by the number of non-public schools hosting football.

Colleen presented an alternative model to be used for non-public classifications to help address concerns raised by committee members, which are specific to the Non-Public B state tournament. There has been a decreasing trend in the number of schools participating in the Non-Public B tournament – the 2023 state tournament had 6 teams participating. Colleen's proposal would rely on the public group equivalents to determine the non-public school classifications – public group equivalents of III, IV and V would be in non-public A and public group equivalents of I and II would be in non-public B. This methodology will result in more schools being classified as non-public B and should result in more teams being seeded and a more competitive tournament.

All members of the committee were in support of this proposal. In addition, the Football Leagues & Conferences Committee is in support of this proposal as well.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Maguire, Executive Director