NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

1161 Route 130 North Robbinsville, NJ 08691

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 14, 2026

Roll Call - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Kurt Karcich, at 11:01 am.

The following members were present: Mike Bartram, Tom Berrios, Brian Bosworth, Anthony Browning, Christopher Chiera, Maria Crowley, Jorge Diaz, Judy Finch-Johnson, Barry Fitzgerald, John Fraraccio, Michael Gallo, Natalie Gorman, Ahmad Hamdeh, Dr. Brack Healy, Brian Henry, Steven Jenkins, Dr. Elizabeth Jewett, Jennifer Killough-Herrera, Dr. Michael Kuchar, Greg Lasher, Dr. Matthew Mazzoni, Irv McFarland, Brendan McGovern, Jason Miller, Dr. Anne Mucci, Dr. Timothy Purnell, Michael Raimondi, Steve Shohfi, Dr. Gregory Troxell, Joseph Ursino, and Tammy Wagner. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director; Paul Popadiuk, Chief Compliance Officer; Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer; Al Stumpf, Derryk Sellers and Sandy Mamary, Assistant Directors; Steven P. Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Patrick Lanni and Dhani Joseph, *NJ.com;* Darren Cooper, *NorthJersey.com;* and Mike McGarry, *Press of Atlantic City.* Also present: Paul Anzano of Pringle Quinn Anzano, P.C.; Kyle Neeld, Audit Partner & Audrey Kandel, Audit Manager from Mercadien, P.C.

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Dr. Gregory Troxell, seconded by Anthony Browning, to accept the minutes of the September 16, 2026 Executive Committee meeting. Motion passed with one abstention.

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – Mr. Anzano is following over fifty bills currently in the legislative process right now. Tomorrow, the Assembly Education Committee will vote on a bill that allows veterans to coach without obtaining teacher certification. The association asked the sponsor, former Cape May AD, Assemblyman Erik Simonsen, to include law officers as well in the bill. Senator Bucco is introducing a bill that prevents redshirting in grammar school but Mr. Anzano is unsure if there's support behind it yet.

Executive Director Update – Colleen Maguire

Audited Financial Statements/Form 990 – Mercadien CPA Presentation– Roll Call Vote – Kyle Neeld, Partner and Audrey Kandel, Manager from Mercadien, P.C. reviewed the June 30, 2026 year-ending audit results with both the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee. Special thanks were given to Michele Perez, Accounting Manager, for another seamless audit. The association received an unmodified opinion and there were no material adjustments necessary or issues as a result of the audit. Form 990 is a public document so all executive committee members from 2025-2026 will be listed in it. A motion was made by Christopher Chiera, seconded by Jorge Diaz, to approve the FYE 2026 financial audit statements and Form 990. A roll call vote was taken. Final Vote: Yes-31; No-0; Abstain-0. Motion carried unanimously.

NJSIAA Annual Report – FY 2025-2026 – The FY 2025-2026 annual report was distributed. Staff member Dena Maggio did a terrific job highlighting the 2025-2026 school year and putting the report together. Ms. Maguire also thanked nj.com for the use of their photos to create the publication. Ms. Maguire was very proud to share that the cover of the book is a picture of the Jackson Twp girls wrestling team, who won the association's inaugural girls wrestling state championships.

Corporate Sponsor Update – Ben Derda, Manager (Teall Property) – Just like 30 other state associations around the country, in 2020, the association partnered with Teall Property Group. TPG General Manager, Ben Derda and Account Manager, Jack Bisaha, have done a tremendous job growing NJSIAA's corporate sponsorships, which have increased by 60% and continue to grow across all categories. Mr. Derda shared that TPG not only works with sponsors to have their name on a banner, but to engage them with the community through unique campaigns and initiatives. Examples of some fall initiatives include Xfinity's Student Section of the Week, NJEA Coach of all Season - which recognizes dedicated coaches who make an impact on student-athletes all year long. There's also Zebra Pen's Signature Moment campaign that invites student-athletes and coaches across NJ to share the moments that made their fall sports season unforgettable. Another example is Horizon Pest Controls' campaign to recognize great sportsmanship in high school athletics by sharing examples of athletes, coaches, and teams going above and beyond to demonstrate respect, character and good sportsmanship.

Football Update – There were some weather interruptions this season, but Ms. Maguire complimented the schools for getting games played on Monday, keeping the schedules on track. The public cut-off is Saturday, October 24, followed by seeding the next day on Sunday, October 25. The non-public cut-off is the following Saturday, October 31, with seeding the next day on Sunday, November 1. Ms. Maguire thanked Executive Committee president Kurt Karcich for serving on the non-public seeding committee and recognized Chris Faytok from nj.com for the seamless transition of switching football powerpoint data, stats and record keeping from Gridiron NJ to nj.com.

Wrestling Update – The team state championships are scheduled for Sunday, February 7. Unfortunately, Rutgers cannot host due to their home dual meet against Iowa on that date. Thankfully, Dr. Troxell and Phillipsburg High School have offered their facility, which is a fantastic site. The association is in the process of finalizing host schools for the boys district and region tournaments. Sites should be posted later in the month. Ms. Maguire anticipates posting the host schools for the girls district and region tournaments in November. Lastly, Trackwrestling will open on Monday, November 2 for weight assessments. New to this season is a software being used by weight assessors that will provide a direct API feed to Trackwrestling. There will be a learning curve but overall, the API is going to make weight assessments very efficient and more accurate. Assessors are going to be very happy with the new software.

Chief Compliance Officer Update (Paul Popadiuk)

Eligibility Updates – Four football teams and three boys soccer teams are ineligible for the state tournament due to accumulating three or more disqualifications during the season. And for the first time, this fall season, there was a disqualification in cross country.

League & Conference Committee Hearing Update – Mr. Popadiuk summarized the hearing that took place after last month's Executive Committee meeting. Bernards HS, a member of the Skyland Conference, wanted to move from the Skyland Conference to the Northwest Jersey Athletic Conference ("NJAC"). In April, the Skyland Conference voted to deny the request. Bernards appealed the decision to the NJSIAA. On September 16, 2026, the NJSIAA League and Conference Committee heard the school's appeal.

The primary factors driving Bernard's request were: a significant change in school size and enrollment, demographics, travel concerns, competing against larger schools, and that the NJAC offers a better overall fit for its student-athletes. The primary factors for the Skyland Conference's denial were: Bernard's importance to the conference membership, Bernard's departure would significantly weaken the conference, lack of replacement schools, and maintaining the integrity and stability of the conference.

After hearing the arguments, the Committee had to make its decision based on the following Standard:

> The NJSIAA's League & Conference Position Statement sets forth the standard of review for the NJSIAA to consider when a school appeals from a conference decision denying its request to transfer conferences:
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> When a school seeks to transfer membership from one conference to another, any appeal from denial by either Conference must be based on substantial reasons, recognizing the goal of assuring the stability of Conference structures.

The League and Conference Committee determined that the Skyland Conference's decision to deny Bernards' application to leave the conference was reasonable. Bernards did not meet its burden of proving "substantial reasons [to leave the conference], recognizing the goal of assuring the stability of Conference structures." The Committee's vote was 6-1. If Bernards wishes to appeal, it will be heard by the Executive Committee. Mr. Popadiuk thanked Judy Finch-Johnson (chair), Mike Bartram, Dr. Fisicaro, John Fraraccio, Natalie Gorman, Dr. Healy, John Niesz, and Michael Raimondi for their time serving on the hearing panel and for their professionalism throughout the process.

Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)

Sports Medical Advisory Committee Meeting – The committee met last week. Mr. Maselli and SMAC members are very proud of the concussion video made for New Jersey's officials. It is only 15 minutes, simple, and teaches key signs to recognize a concussion. It's been well received by officials. NJ is one of only two other states that has made this type of video.

The committee also discussed plans to amend NJSIAA's heat policy to include more tools and education for schools on how to handle when the heat hits a certain index. Schools continue to reach out for guidance. A subcommittee was formed to work on expanding the current policy. The goal is not to change what's there, but to add more tools and detailed instructions.

Another big topic was the current thunder and lightning policy. The committee would like to clarify how far away lightning should be to employ the lightning and thunder policy. The NCAA utilizes 8 miles away while the NFHS uses 10 miles. The two organizations plan to meet and agree on a uniform mileage. Once that number is determined, NJSIAA will adopt that mileage away and amend the current lightning policy.

Athletic trainers currently receive $100 per season to input their data into the RIO data system. This is not required but is encouraged since the data is so important. Last year, NJ had the second highest participation in the country, so Mr. Maselli is hoping to continue that trend. Currently, there's only eight athletic trainers taking part in this program.

Beginning this ice hockey season, all high school ice hockey coaches must wear helmets in practice, as recommended by USA Hockey guidelines. All other NJ ice hockey organizations such as youth hockey follow this practice.

Lastly, to request a helmet visor, an additional required signoff was added, this one by a neurologist. Nationwide, there's been increase in visor requests. New Jersey has always been strict in issuing visor approvals and utilizes the same request form as the NFL. Officials don't like them because you can't see a person's eyes if they have a concussion and you can't take the helmet off to examine, in case of head/neck injury.

Winter Tournament Regulations/Modifications – These will be posted by 11/1. Winter dates are already on each sport's landing page on NJSIAA's website.

Officials Fee Committee Update – The committee met last month to 1-review current officials' fees and 2-determine what the fee for each sport should be for the next two years. Each sports committee submitted their proposed suggestions. After review, the fee to officiate for all sports was increased. The hope is each conference will use this standard fee instead of every conference paying different amounts but until current contracts expire, this may not be possible. NJSIAA utilizes the committee's recommendations for the first three rounds of the state tournament. Then beginning with the sectional final rounds and beyond, NJSIAA pays a different rate to its officials.

Al Stumpf Assistant Director Update

Soccer Update – Entries close for the soccer tournament on 10/15 with the tournament beginning on 11/2.

Cross Country Update – MileSplit closes on 10/24, and sectionals will begin on 10/31.

NJ Basketball Coaches Association Clinic – 147 coaches attended the NJBCA clinic at Iron Peak Sports Center in Hillsborough. Attendees enjoyed an array of successful guest speakers, including coaches from Marist, VCU and NYU. It was a very well received clinic.

Derryk Sellers Assistant Director Update

Gymnastics Update – The team and individual gymnastics cutoff dates are 10/30 and 11/7 respectively. Mr. Sellers thanked Brick Memorial HS for hosting both championship events.

Girls Volleyball Update – Seeding for the tournament takes place on 10/27.

NJSCA Clinics – 75 coaches attended the Bowling Coaches Clinic on 10/8 at Howell Lanes. The Golf Coaches Clinic being held on 10/17 at the Galloping Hills Golf Course is so popular, there is a waiting list to attend.

Sandy Mamary Assistant Director Update

Girls Tennis and Field Hockey Updates – The tennis tournament is wrapping up as the five group champions will be crowned tomorrow, 10/15. The singles/doubles events held at Princeton University's indoor courts were wonderful - athletes truly enjoy being there.

Field Hockey Update – Cutoff is 10/24, with seeding taking place on 10/27.

NJPSA Workshop Series – The first workshop of the year - Defining Roles and Engaging in Progressive Supervision of Athletics Staff - took place on 9/30/26 at NJSIAA. This presentation has been posted to the association website, along with the workshop presentations from last year. The next three workshops will be virtual, while the fifth/last one will be in-person again.

Report of Counsel (Steven P. Goodell) – No report.

Old Business / New Business – none

Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made by Steve Shohfi, seconded by Judy Finch-Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 11:44 am. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire
Executive Director

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