

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Gaylord, May 3-4, 2009

Members Present:

Renee Bird, Tawas City
Jim Derocher, Negaunee
Scott Grimes, Grand Haven
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Ken Dietz, Watervliet
Lafayette Evans, Detroit
Eric Federico, Gibraltar
Dan Flynn, Escanaba
Rudy Godefroidt, Hemlock
Chip Hansen, East Jordan
Kris Isom, Adrian
Karen Leinaar, Benzonia
Steve Newkirk, Clare
Pete Ryan, Saginaw
Fred Smith, Buchanan
Mark Woodson, Romulus
Wendy Zdeb, Rochester Hills

Members Absent:

Kyle Guerrant, Lansing
Arnetta Thompson, Grand Rapids

Staff Members Present:

Randy Allen
Nate Hampton
John Johnson
Gina Mazzolini
Tom Minter
Tom Rashid
Jack Roberts (Recorder)
Mark Uyl
Kathy Westdorp
Karen Yonkers

Accounts of Meetings – Motion by Eric Federico, supported by Kris Isom, to approve the minutes of the Representative Council meeting of March 27, 2009; and the Executive Committee meeting minutes of March 26 and April 22, 2009; as well as the oral report of the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee meeting of April 24 presented by Dan Flynn and Jim Derocher. Adopted.

REPORTS

Administration – MHSAA membership during the 2008-09 school year was 770 high schools and 820 junior high/middle schools as of April 1, 2009. This compares to 767 and 813, respectively, as of April 1, 2008.

As of April 3, 2009, there were 219 **cooperative program agreements** for high schools for 375 sports (an increase of seven programs and 32 sports over the previous year) and 57 cooperative program agreements for 222 sports for junior high/middle schools (an increase of five programs and eight sports). The most frequent sports involved in cooperative programs at the high school level are (in order) ice hockey, girls swimming & diving, boys swimming & diving, and football. At the junior high/middle school level, the sports most frequently involved in cooperative programs are boys track & field, girls track & field, football and wrestling.

Eligibility advancement applications were received and approved for 15 students during the 2008-09 school year, compared to seven during 2007-08 which was the lowest number since the eligibility advancement provision was begun during the 1987-88 school year. The highest number of applications was 94 during the 1991-92 school year.

It was reported that 312 **Educational Transfer Forms** were processed for the 2008-09 school year through April 10, 2009, compared to 305 to that date in the previous year and 242 to that date in 2006-07. Public to public school transfers continue to be the most common (241), and the divorce exception (#8) continues to be the most frequent reason (211) for the Educational Transfer Form to be used.

The eight **Update Meetings** of September and October 2008 were attended by 1,006 persons, compared to 993 the previous year and the record 1,268 in 2004. The schedule of seven Update Meetings for 2009 was presented.

A listing of **violations** by schools and officials between April 11, 2008 and April 10, 2009 indicated that the total number of violations for the year had increased significantly as a result of the increasing failure of schools to rate any officials. The Representative Council discussed new strategies for officials ratings and alternative penalties which might be considered for schools which fail to rate any officials at all.

Assistant Director Mark Uyl reported that **officials' registrations** for 2008-09 will be close to exceeding the record numbers of 2007-08.

Rules meeting attendance increased by 5,000 to 6,000 persons during 2008-09, mostly as a result of online rules meeting becoming available in most sports. This has increased availabilities of officials qualified to work MHSAA tournaments.

Officials Reports for the spring 2008, fall 2008 and winter 2008-09 seasons were reviewed, revealing no particular trends or increases in ejections even though the form is now available online to officials.

Officials' feedback regarding schools' sportsmanship, new in 2008-09, has so far resulted in 706 schools receiving feedback from 892 officials. There were 18 schools which received 40 or more feedback reports, with the highest for any school being 55. There were 12 officials who each provided over 100 feedbacks. The highest number of feedbacks provided by any one official was 197.

Mr. Uyl reported on **officials' training** initiatives, including: the status of an online video training initiative begun by Midwest states and subsequently transferred to the responsibility of the National Federation of State High School Associations; the development of free online mechanics manuals tailored to interscholastic officials in Michigan as a substitute for expensive national printed publications; and the planning for the first annual MHSAA/MSU basketball officials clinic in conjunction with the MSU Girls Basketball Shootout June 25-28, 2009, which, along with the officiating component of the "Reaching Higher" experiences, is intended to be the prototype for additional inexpensive, high school-centered officials training events conducted by the MHSAA in conjunction with other camps throughout Michigan.

Associate Director Tom Rashid described the **Athletic Director In-Service** programs conducted by the MHSAA during 2008-09, reporting another year of attendance increases in all types of meetings: for the traditional meetings, as well as two sessions for new athletic directors and a special session for administrators of small schools and charter schools. The schedule for the fall of 2009 was presented.

Assistant Director Kathy Westdorp reported a record number of sessions and attendees for the MHSAA **Coaches Advancement Program (CAP)** during the 2008-09 school year. Of special note was the increasing number of CAP participants through colleges and universities in Michigan. It was also noted that there was greater participation than in previous years in the higher levels of CAP, demonstrating that advancement of coaches through the six-level program.

The Representative Council was informed of the eight members of the Class of 2011 who will join the MHSAA **Student Advisory Council** for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Legislation – The Council discussed legislation related to physical education and athletics that has been introduced into the Michigan Legislature which is of concern to schools and being monitored by the MHSAA.

Litigation – The Representative Council was advised of the final details of the settlement of fees, expenses and interest in the sports seasons litigation and the confidentiality agreement of the parties.

National Federation – Karen Leinaar reported on ten topics being addressed by the National Federation Board of Directors on which she serves as a representative of National Federation Sections 1 and 4.

MIAAA – The position statements of the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association were provided for the Council's review.

MHSACA – A presentation was made by Rich Tompkins, representing the Michigan High School Athletic Coaches Association.

OLD BUSINESS

Out-of-Season Coaching – Following two years of study and discussion, including two task force meetings on the subject of limitations on schools and coaches outside high school sports seasons, member schools were surveyed and the results reported to the Representative Council prior to its meeting in March when four topics were isolated to be prepared for Council action in May.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the following changes:

1. Eliminate the requirement that open gyms have a diversity of activity, and emphasize that there not be any organized drills, no practice structure and no instruction regarding offensive or defensive teams by any person, including team captains and parents.
2. Allow the use of non-competition practice jerseys of schools at out-of-season camps and competitions.
3. Increase the three-player rule to a four-player rule for all sports out of season during the school year during coach/athlete interaction that does not include practice or competition with students or others not enrolled in that school district.
4. End the limited player rule (three or four) on the same date for all schools regardless of when their school year ends in the spring (summer rules begin Monday after Memorial Day observed – June 7, 2010).

Adopted. (See Appendix "1.")

Eight-Player Football – Following expressions of interest in the fall, the MHSAA conducted three informational meetings in January regarding football for fewer than 11-player teams. On Feb. 5, the MHSAA Football Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Representative Council that (a) a committee be established to formulate regular season and tournament plans for 11-player football teams, and (b) such should be the eight-player version using established National Federation rules published for the eight-player game. On March 27, 2009, the MHSAA Representative Council approved a month-long process to prepare major components of a plan to accommodate small schools' interest in the eight-player game to create or preserve the interscholastic football experience for their students and communities. This included two meetings of a planning group in the MHSAA office, between which the work of the planning committee was emailed to athletic directors of all Class C and D schools, whether or not they currently sponsor football. The result of this process was 11 planning points submitted to the Representative Council for approval.

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Chip Hansen, to approve the plan for implementation of one or more eight-player football divisions in the MHSAA Playoffs, as early as 2010 if at least 20 Class D schools commit by the previous April to the eight-player game. Adopted. (See Appendix “2.”)

2009 Mission Action Plan (MAP) – The executive director reviewed progress toward completion of the revised Mission Action Plan presented to the Representative Council last December. Special attention was given to the recent “Reaching Higher” basketball events, a school video streaming opportunity through mhsaa.tv, and expansion of mhsaa.com through the use of social media.

REGULATIONS

Regulations I through V of the *MHSAA Handbook* and their interpretations were submitted for review by the Representative Council.

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Rudy Godefroidt, to approve the consent package of miscellaneous changes for the purpose of organization, clarity or updating and to incorporate changes or interpretations previously adopted by the Representative Council. Adopted.

Regulation I, Section 9 – Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Lafayette Evans, to approve the following new interpretation before 2008-09 *Handbook* Interpretation 85: “Students whose school of residence is changed when a school district both closes one or more schools and reorganizes attendance boundaries for one or more schools of the same district (Exception 7) are not immediately eligible at any school, as under Exception 6, unless the school district determines this preference that students from the closed school be eligible immediately at any school. Immediate eligibility would then apply to any student enrolled on the first day of the next school year at any school within the district or outside the district as under Interpretation 62.” Adopted.

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Chip Hansen, to approve the following new interpretation to appear after 2008-09 *Handbook* Interpretation 85: “Students who change residence between parents who were never married and therefore not divorced may seek eligibility using an Educational Transfer Form by submitting one or more of the following documents: a valid birth certificate indicating both parents, Circuit Court or Friend of the Court documents indicating the parents and the student, an Order of Filiation and Support, a notarized Affidavit of Parentage from the State Department of Community Health. All other applications and interpretations related to Exception 8 continue to apply. The student is not eligible until the form is completed and returned signed by the MHSAA executive director and is allowed one time in grades 9-12.” Adopted.

Regulation I, Section 10 – Motion by Eric Federico, supported by Kris Isom, to clarify that high school coaches or athletic directors may conduct once each school year for each sport a sport-specific group presentation at the high school building for all feeder junior high/middle schools **or** may do so once at each of those feeder schools, and to also add the following interpretation at the end of 2008-09 *Handbook* Interpretation 94:

These sport-specific group presentations must adhere to all applicable Undue Influence interpretations and the following:

- (1) They must be voluntary on the part of the junior high/middle school (a school or team may decline to permit the presentation).

- (2) They may only be conducted at the high school or the junior high/middle school building, regular practice location for the junior high/middle school team, or at a facility/location jointly operated and governed by the high school and junior high/middle school.
- (3) They may not be held in conjunction with regular season high school or junior high/middle school contests or MHSAA tournament competitions (on the same day, site or time as a game, meet or scrimmage).

Adopted.

Regulation II, Section 11 – Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Lafayette Evans, to modify 2008-09 *Handbook* Interpretation 225 to read as follows: “A coach may not show films, DVDs, videotapes, Internet-based or other digital programming out of season during the school year to more than four students of grades 7-12 of the same school district, assembled at one time in-person or electronically, if that coach provides any instruction during or within the presentation.” Adopted.

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Motion by Scott Grimes, supported by Kris Isom, to approve the Junior High/Middle School Committee recommendation to not approve the Football Committee recommendation to allow ten-minute quarters in junior high/middle school football games. Adopted (no change).

OFFICIALS

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Wendy Zdeb, to not approve the Officials Review Committee recommendation to require that an official take and pass with a minimum score of 80 percent the optional 30-question rules test in order to be eligible for selection at the Quarterfinal, Semifinal and Final tournament rounds. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Chip Hansen, to approve the Officials Review Committee recommendation that the member in good standing requirement in an approved association be extended to baseball and softball officials who wish to be eligible to work the Regional level and beyond in the MHSAA tournaments. Adopted.

COMMITTEES

The Council was supplied with a description of MHSAA committees, a copy of the MHSAA Sport Committee Guide, a review of the committee appointment procedures adopted by the Representative Council in May of 1987 and modified in December 2007, a list of those who had identified themselves as candidates for committees in 2009-10, a list of schools not represented on any committees for the past five years, and a list of those who had declined committee appointments in 2008-09. Council members were encouraged to submit nominations for committees, making special efforts to provide nominations from principals, small schools, females and minorities, and any school which has not been represented in recent years. The staff will compile the suggestions and submit them to the Executive Committee for review and appointment. Names of committee members selected to serve during the 2009-10 school year will be published in the *MHSAA Bulletin*. The only exceptions are those committees involving the selection of tournament officials and award recipients.

It was reported that staff will test alternatives to face-to-face meetings with several committees during 2009-10 in order to reduce the time commitment required for committee member travel and related expenses.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Baseball/Softball – Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Scott Grimes, to approve the Baseball/Softball Committee recommendation to allow member junior high/middle schools to use in baseball the bat standards currently allowed by Little League Baseball. Adopted.

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Renee Bird, to approve the Baseball/Softball Committee recommendation to use the international tiebreaker beginning with the 11th inning of MHSAA Softball Tournament games; and for regular season games, to allow use of the international tiebreaker by local league and conference adoption any time after seven innings. Adopted.

Motion by Kris Isom, supported by Dan Flynn, to approve the Baseball/Softball Committee recommendation to require all games of the MHSAA Semifinal and Final Baseball and Softball Tournaments to be played to the completion of seven innings or the published run rule differential, eliminating rain-shortened games at the Semifinals and Finals only. Adopted.

Bowling – Motion by Rudy Godefroidt, supported by Pete Ryan, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to continue the use of the Kegel Challenge Series lane oil patterns for the MHSAA tournament, and adopt the “Middle Road” pattern for the 2010 Regional and Final tournaments. Adopted.

Motion by Chip Hansen, supported by Dan Flynn, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to allow six singles entries per school (presently five) in MHSAA tournaments. Adopted.

Motion by Renee Bird, supported by Wendy Zdeb, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to change to a two games, total pins format for the singles match play in the MHSAA Final tournament (presently two-out-of-three game format). Adopted.

Motion by Wendy Zdeb, supported by Lafayette Evans, to approve the Bowling Committee recommendation to move the first allowed practice date for Lower Peninsula bowling from Thursday to the previous Monday (two Mondays prior to Thanksgiving) to align more with other winter sports and to allow more time to conduct tryouts and team selection before Thanksgiving. Adopted.

Girls Competitive Cheer – Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Karen Leinaar, to approve the two technical changes developed by the Competitive Cheer Subcommittee and recommended by the Girls Competitive Cheer Committee:

- (1) Allow extended stunts to brace an extension level stunt when the bracing flyer is in an upright position. This must be a double-based stunt with a back spot.
- (2) Allow a team to perform a near and far arm cartwheel and a switch split, side split and/or triple splits in Round 2.

Adopted.

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Wendy Zdeb, to not approve the Girls Competitive Cheer Committee recommendation to remove the competitor multiplier and require a specific range of competitors per division for all competitive cheer teams beginning with the 2010-11 school year. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Chip Hansen, supported by Pete Ryan, to approve the Girls Competitive Cheer Committee recommendation to allow both Friday night as well as Saturdays for MHSAA District tournaments beginning in the 2009-10 season. Adopted.

Cross Country/Track & Field – Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the Cross Country/Track & Field Committee recommendation to add cross country to the schedule for online rules meetings (without face-to-face options and without penalties until 2010). Adopted.

Motion by Vic Michaels, supported by Rudy Godefroidt, to table the Cross Country/Track & Field Committee recommendation to maintain the current length of the track & field season if or when any adjustment of the spring season is considered. Adopted.

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Karen Leinaar, to not approve the Cross Country/Track & Field Committee recommendation to provide a one-year exception to the summer dead period for track & field coaches during the United States Track & Field Youth National Championship Track & Field Meet June 30-July 5, 2009 at Eastern Michigan University. Adopted (no change).

Football – The Representative Council reaffirmed that all games of the MHSAA Football Playoffs will utilize only the six legal models of the Rawlings football and, consistent with National Federation playing rules, in the event that one of the participating schools is unprepared, it shall use one of the six Rawlings models provided by the opposing school.

Golf – Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Pete Ryan, to approve the Golf Committee recommendation to move the Boys Golf Tournament one week later, but beginning in 2011. Adopted.

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Pete Ryan, to not approve the Golf Committee recommendation to modify MHSAA amateur status rules to prohibit merchandise or cash awards given for special “flag” events during a round of scramble golf such as longest drive, closest to the pin and holes in one. Adopted (no change).

Girls Gymnastics – Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Kris Isom, to approve the Girls Gymnastics Committee recommendation to require judges to wear black and white attire rather than navy and white, effective with the 2009-10 school year. Adopted.

Ice Hockey – Motion by Eric Federico, supported by Karen Leinaar, to approve the Ice Hockey Committee recommendation to require minimum warm-up periods of ten minutes prior to the game and eight minutes between periods. Adopted.

Motion by Wendy Zdeb, supported by Pete Ryan, to approve the Ice Hockey Committee recommendation, tabled in May of 2008, to allow league and conference adoption of the 17-minute period option for regular season games, as permitted in National Federation Rule 6-37-2. Adopted.

Boys Lacrosse – Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Mark Woodson, to approve the Boys Lacrosse Committee recommendation, tabled in May of 2008, to increase to 150 minutes running time for boys lacrosse multi-team tournaments at the junior high/middle school level. Adopted.

Alpine Skiing – Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Scott Grimes, to not approve the Ski Committee recommendation to allow a long-standing school team to enter the Regional meet with fewer than the required four skiers. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Dan Flynn, to table the Ski Committee recommendation to decrease the riser height from 55 mm to 50 mm beginning with the 2010-11 school year. Adopted.

Soccer – Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Kris Isom, to deviate from the alternating year schedule of rule book purchases and not purchase Soccer Rule Books for the 2009-10 school year because of lack of substance in the rules changes. Adopted.

Swimming & Diving – Motion by Kris Isom, supported by Eric Federico, to not approve the Swimming & Diving Committee recommendation to advance nine divers from each of the three diving Regionals in each division and then allow nine at-large divers coming from the Regional with the top divers based on their previous performance at the MHSAA Finals. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Pete Ryan, supported by Lafayette Evans, to approve the Swimming & Diving Committee recommendation to use Hy-Tek to enter qualified swimmers, effective with the 2010-11 school year. Adopted.

Tennis – Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Fred Smith, to approve the Tennis Committee recommendation to change *MHSAA Handbook* Regulation II, Section 10, Article 13, to stipulate that a student may participate in no more than three matches per day, without stipulating that it must be either singles or doubles. Adopted.

Motion by Dan Flynn, supported by Kris Isom, to not approve the Tennis Committee recommendation to exempt tennis from the summer dead period. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Eric Federico, supported by Steve Newkirk, to not approve the Tennis Committee recommendation to modify the Limited Team Membership rule for tennis to commence with the first day of team practice, regardless of when a player joins the team. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Mark Woodson, to approve the Tennis Committee recommendation to modify the Tennis Coaches Manual to read: “If there are more than two sites being used, the school may appoint an additional person to coach each additional site used.” This stipulation, which is already in effect for MHSAA tournaments, would thus become an option also for regular season events. Adopted.

Girls Volleyball – Motion by Kris Isom, supported by Scott Grimes, to not approve the Girls Volleyball Committee recommendation to set a 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. range for the starting times of Regional Semifinal matches. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Karen Leinaar, supported by Ken Dietz, to not approve the Girls Volleyball Committee recommendation to prohibit a participating school from hosting a Quarterfinal game in which it would participate in the MHSAA tournament. Adopted (no change).

Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Dan Flynn, to approve the Girls Volleyball Committee recommendation to change a Quarterfinal site if either team (not requiring both teams) has inordinate travel (140 miles or more one way). Staff will select an alternate site if an appropriate site is available. (This will not alter the opportunity for staff to also change sites when the venue is not located between the two opposing schools, is significantly distant from one or both schools, but is less than 140 miles away from either school one way.) Adopted.

Wrestling – The Council again discussed concerns over abuses in some situations where the home weigh-in is used for wrestling. The matter will be among those topics emphasized during Athletic Director In-Service meetings this fall.

OPERATIONS

Calendar – Motion by Dan Flynn, supported by Pete Ryan, to approve the seven-year calendar of MHSAA events, with the modifications required as a result of Council action earlier in these meetings and additional clarifications for golf and tennis and several minor corrections. Adopted.

Meeting Expenses – Motion by Steve Newkirk, supported by Karen Leinaar, to approve the expenses for this meeting as follows: the specified hotel rate, the IRS-stipulated amounts for meals, and a 30¢ per mile mileage allowance, round trip. Adopted.

Future Meetings – The next meeting of the Representative Council is Dec. 4, 2009, at the MHSAA office in East Lansing, with a full-day schedule anticipated. The March meeting of the Representative Council will be March 26, 2010 at the MHSAA office. The spring meeting of the Representative Council will be May 2-4, 2010 at Treetops Resort in Gaylord.

The Annual Business Meeting of the MHSAA will be incorporated into the Update Meeting at Warren on Oct. 28, 2009. This event will be video streamed live and archived.

Allen W. Bush Award – Council members were invited to vote for up to three candidates from the seven presented. The one or more who receives the most votes will be notified in May and honored at events important to them during the fall of 2009 or early in 2010. The recipient(s) will be featured in the August/September *Bulletin* of the MHSAA.

Finance – Motion by Fred Smith, supported by Eric Federico, to approve the 2009-10 revenue and expense budgets, and a capital improvement budget that would result in additions to cash of \$100,040. Adopted.

OUT-OF-SEASON RULES CHANGES

Adopted May 2009

Effective August 1, 2009

1

1. Open Gyms

Eliminate the requirement that open gyms have a diversity of activity.

Revise 2008-09 *Handbook* page 68 as follows:

- “4. Except as limited by 2 b (3) and (4) preceding, school-sponsored “open gyms” or “after school” activities are permitted in the school district’s facilities out of season if they are voluntary and not part of the team selection process and adhere to these principles:
- “a. Diversity of students – open to all students.
 - “b. Student-conducted – any coach of a sport under MHSAA jurisdiction who is present shall not coach, instruct, critique, direct, evaluate or participate in a sport he/she coaches.
 - “c. Recreational emphasis – not an organized program of instruction and/or competition. There must not be any organized drills, no practice structure and no instruction regarding offensive or defensive schemes by any person, including team captains and parents.”

2. School Apparel

Allow the use of non-competition practice jerseys of schools at camps and competitions.

Revise 2008-09 *Handbook* in three ways:

- (1) Page 68: Modify 3-a as follows:
“At no time out of season may school transportation be used. There may be no use of school owned and issued competition warm-ups and/or uniforms (non-competition practice jerseys may be worn whether or not school owned or issued). Neither the school nor . . .”
- (2) Page 68: Eliminate (2) from 3-c.
- (3) Page 70: Eliminate Interpretation 214.

3. Limited Player Rule

Increase the three-player rule to four for all sports out of season during the school year during coach/athlete interaction that does not include practice or competition with students from other school districts.

(Continued)

Revise 2008-09 *Handbook* in these ways:

(1) Page 66: Modify 2-a as follows:

“a. Outside the school season during the school year (from Monday the week of Aug. 15 to the last day of the school year at that school), school coaches are prohibited from providing coaching at any time under one roof, facility or campus to more than three students in grades 7-12 of the district or cooperative program for which they coach (four students if the coaching does not involve practice or competition with students or others not enrolled in that school district). This applies...”

(2) Pages 70-73: Modify references to “three-player,” in Interpretations 216, 217 and 221.

4. Summer Rules

End the limited player rule (three or four) on the same date for all schools regardless of when their school ends in the spring.

Revise 2008-09 *Handbook* page 66 as follows:

“Outside the school season during the school year (from Monday the week of Aug. 15 through the Sunday after Memorial Day observance), school coaches...”

Following expressions of interest in the fall, the MHSAA conducted three informational meetings in January regarding football for fewer than 11-player teams. On Feb. 5, the MHSAA Football Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Representative Council that (a) a committee be established to formulate regular season and tournament plans for a new division of 11-player football teams, and (b) such division should be the eight-player version using established National Federation rules published for the eight-player game.

On March 27, 2009, the MHSAA Representative Council approved a month-long process to prepare major components of a plan to accommodate small schools' interest in the eight-player game to create or preserve the interscholastic football experience for their students and communities.

The first step in this process was a meeting on April 2 during which a working group of member school constituents developed draft recommendations and raised several unresolved issues which are included in a document that was sent to all MHSAA member Class C and D schools.

The working group reconvened on April 21 to consider all input that was received on the initial recommendations and to discuss additional topics raised during this process. This second expanded draft of recommendations was reviewed by several groups in late April and the Representative Council in May.

Recommendations Approved by the Representative Council
May 3, 2009

1. To further assess interest, receive not later than Nov. 19, 2009 from each interested school a letter, signed by at least the athletic director, stating the school's intent to support eight-player football beginning 2010.
2. To assess commitment, receive by April 1, 2010 from each interested school's superintendent a letter of commitment for eight-player football in 2010.
3. Establish the maximum Class D enrollment as the limit to participate in the MHSAA eight-player football division(s). The enrollment of any single school or the combined enrollment of any involved cooperative schools shall not exceed Class D enrollment.

If the enrollment of a school which has been playing eight-player football increases beyond the Class D maximum, it may continue to sponsor eight-player football. However, it will not be eligible to participate in the eight-player division(s) of the MHSAA Football Playoffs unless a waiver is granted by the MHSAA Executive Committee.

4. Establish 20 schools as the minimum number to support eight-player football before the MHSAA sponsors a post-season tournament for an eight-player division.
5. Require eight-player competitions to comply with NFHS Rules for the eight-player game. The number of officials for games in the eight-player division(s) of MHSAA Playoffs is five.

(Continued)

6. Require the field size for the eight-player division(s) of the MHSAA Tournament to be 100 x 40 yards.
7. Establish the tournament qualification format as follows:
 - a. If 20-39 schools sponsor eight-player teams:
16-team, four-week playoff format.
 - b. If 40-64:
32-team, five-week playoff format.
 - c. If teams exceed 64:
Two divisions, four-week playoff format.
8. Facilitate a meeting for all schools sponsoring eight-player football to assist in their developing regular season schedules.
9. Schools will declare as they submit schedules in April of each year that they are eight-player teams or 11-player teams for the purpose of MHSAA playoffs. Games between an eight-player school and an 11-player school will not count toward MHSAA Football Playoff qualification, regardless if the game is played under eight-player or 11-player rules. A minimum of seven games of eight-player football would be required to qualify for the MHSAA playoffs (same as for 11-player divisions).
10. A school which has an enrollment too large for the MHSAA eight-player playoff division(s) may sponsor eight-player football but not qualify for the MHSAA playoffs. If that school's schedule includes at least seven eight-player games, then games against that school would count toward MHSAA Football Playoff qualification for schools of proper size. (That opponent would provide playoff points corresponding to its classification.)
11. Schools which must terminate contracts because they change from the 11-player to the eight-player format will not be subject to penalties, nor will their opponents receive forfeits if notice is provided prior to June 1 of the year in question.