

# MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, February 18, 2015

### Members Present:

Scott Grimes, Grand Haven  
Fred Smith, Buchanan  
Vic Michaels, Detroit  
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake  
Pete Ryan, Saginaw

### Staff Members Present:

Tom Rashid  
Jack Roberts (Recorder)

Executive Committee Authority and Responsibility – The Executive Committee reviewed its authority under Article VII of the MHSAA Constitution and specifically its responsibility to consider each application for waiver of an eligibility requirement on its individual merits, determining if the regulation serves the purpose for which it was intended in each case or if the regulation works an undue hardship on any student who is the subject of a request for waiver. (These underlying criteria may not be restated for every subject of these minutes.)

The Executive Committee was reminded that it was the responsibility of each member school involved to provide sufficient information about the specific request for the Executive Committee to reach a decision without further investigation. If information is incomplete, contradictory or otherwise unclear or has been received too late to be studied completely, the Executive Committee may deny the request for waiver or delay action. Such requests may be resubmitted to the Executive Committee with additional information at a subsequent meeting or appealed to the full Representative Council.

It is possible that some of the information presented as facts to the Executive Committee by school personnel and others may be inaccurate. However, to avoid constant repetition in this report of phrases such as “it was alleged” or “it was reported,” no attempt is made in the introduction of each waiver request to distinguish between truth, allegation, hearsay, opinion, summary or conclusion. If any information provided to the Executive Committee is inaccurate, any decision of the Executive Committee to grant waiver of a regulation shall be null and void.

The Executive Committee is not authorized to approve waiver based on alleged or actual differences between schools based on “environment,” demographics, curriculum or extracurricular offerings. A determination of undue hardship is a matter addressed to the discretion of the Executive Committee within the educational philosophy and secondary role of voluntary extracurricular competitive athletics in the academic environment. The Executive Committee will avoid making exceptions that would create precedent that effectively changes a rule without Representative Council action or local board of education adoption, which would exceed Executive Committee authority. The contract the MHSAA has with member schools obligates the MHSAA to not change rules during the school year.

Students for whom waiver of a particular regulation is approved must be eligible in all other respects under all sections and interpretations of the regulations prior to their participation.

Adoption of these regulations, as well as policies, procedures and schedules of MHSAA tournaments, is a choice schools make locally when they consider their option of MHSAA membership. Consistent with rulings of the Attorney General and Michigan Supreme Court, schools are not bound by the decisions of the Executive Committee, but the association may limit participation in the post-season tournaments it sponsors to those schools which choose to apply rules and penalties as promulgated by the MHSAA and adopted by each member school’s board of education. The MHSAA exercises no independent authority over schools or students.

Byron Center-Zion Christian High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10<sup>th</sup>-grade student who experienced a reaction to medication which caused the student mental and emotional changes. The former school's counselors and the student's physicians recommended a change of schools. The student participated in athletics previously. The student enrolled at Zion Christian on Jan. 20, 2015. Zion Christian is not the closest non-public school.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Farmington Hills-North Farmington High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student who attended the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades at Detroit-U of D Jesuit and began the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at a boarding school, Genesis Academy, in Virginia. Over the holiday break, the student returned to live with his father in the North Farmington attendance area (Exception 2). The student's mother will be returning in June from Europe where the student's sister is attending school. The student is returning to the same home and parent that he had lived with before enrolling in the boarding school, but not the same school.

The school also requested that the student be considered enrolled prior to Feb. 1, 2015, as under Section 9(G). The student visited and completed an enrollment form to attend North Farmington on Jan. 7, 2015. North Farmington advised the student to continue completing courses through the Genesis Academy which uses online courses through CompuHigh and the Whitmore School. Two courses were completed Jan. 19, 2015, and one course through the Michigan Virtual School was completed on Jan. 26, 2015, and credited by North Farmington under the previous academic credit record regulation. The CompuHigh courses were completed prior to Jan. 19, 2015, but not faxed by Whitmore School to North Farmington until Feb. 3, 2015. The student did not attend a class at North Farmington High School until Feb. 5, 2015.

The Executive Committee approved the request to waive Section 9(A), Exception 2 but did not approve the request to waive Section 9(G). The student may participate in remaining regular season contests but not in winter 2015 MHSAA tournaments.

Linden-Lake Fenton High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 9<sup>th</sup>-grade student who previously attended Linden and experienced conflict with 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students at the former school. The student enrolled at Lake Fenton on Nov. 24, 2014, and has no prior history of athletic participation but is interested in running track which is not sponsored at the subvarsity level by Lake Fenton.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for immediate eligibility at the varsity level; but eligibility at the subvarsity level for the remainder of the 2014-15 school year was approved.

Marshall Academy High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91<sup>st</sup> school day of enrollment was made on behalf of an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student who experienced difficulties with students at her former high school. The student enrolled at Marshall Academy on Nov. 3, 2014.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Middleton-Fulton High School (Regulation I, Section 9[D]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility on the 91<sup>st</sup> school day of enrollment was made on behalf of a 9<sup>th</sup>-grade student who previously attended Ithaca and experienced difficulties with students which caused anxiety to the point where the student was unable to attend school on a consistent basis. The student completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade through homebound status at Ithaca, stays with an aunt in the Fulton School District and enrolled at Fulton on Oct. 16, 2014. The student remains in therapy, has no prior history of athletic participation but is interested in running track which is not sponsored at the subvarsity level by Fulton.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for eligibility at the varsity level on the student's 91<sup>st</sup> school day of enrollment at Middleton-Fulton High School, but eligibility at the subvarsity level for the remainder of the 2014-15 school year was approved.

Morley Stanwood High School (Regulation I, Section 9[B]) – A request to waive the transfer regulation to permit eligibility at the subvarsity level only was made on behalf of a 9<sup>th</sup>-grade student who attended Big Rapids High School and participated in football before enrolling at Morley Stanwood on Dec. 1, 2014. The student was responsible for caring for the household due to his father's illness. He had grown closer to his cousins who assisted in caring for the father and wanted to attend school with them.

Citing the specific requirement of this Section that the student must not have participated previously in high school athletics, the Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Portland High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student who previously attended St. Johns High School and has moved to the residence of an aunt and uncle in Portland because of difficult circumstances and an unstable environment with the mother and stepfather. The student enrolled at Portland on Jan. 26, 2015.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Quincy High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 10<sup>th</sup>-grade student whose mother has been unable to care for the student two times in the past two years. For the 2013-14 school year the student moved to Florida with an aunt. Over the summer of 2014, the student returned to Michigan to live with her mother and mother's boyfriend and attended Coldwater to begin the 2014-15 school year. Because the mother was again unable to support the student, she moved into her sister's home in Coldwater and enrolled at Quincy on Feb. 10, 2015.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Riverview High School (Regulation I, Section 9) – A request to waive the transfer regulation was made on behalf of a 12<sup>th</sup>-grade student who experienced harassment from other students while enrolled at Garden City High School which led to extreme stress and anxiousness, inhibiting the student's ability to concentrate on her studies. The change of schools was recommended by her healthcare professionals. The two school principals agreed to transfer the student between schools. The former school principal wrote in support of eligibility. The student enrolled on Feb. 5, 2015, and has no history of athletic participation.

The Executive Committee approved the request for waiver.

Subvarsity Waiver Requests Meeting All Conditions of Section 9(B) – The Executive Committee approved immediate eligibility at the subvarsity level for the following transferring 9<sup>th</sup>- or 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students (after entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade, before completing 10<sup>th</sup> grade) **who have not previously participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest in any MHSAA sport at the high school level** (whether MHSAA member schools or not) and who do not qualify for one of the 15 stated exceptions to the transfer regulation and have transferred for reasons having nothing to do with athletics, discipline or family finances and would not require Executive Committee evaluation or comparison of school demographics or curriculum:

Requesting High School	Grade	Former High School	Date of Enrollment	Length of Subvarsity Eligibility Status
Orchard Lake-St. Mary	9	Lake Orion	Jan. 26, 2015	Remainder of 14-15 school year

Flint-Michigan School for the Deaf (Regulation II, Section 6) – A request was made to waive the 600-mile round-trip travel limitation to permit the boys and girls track & field teams' participation at the Berg/Seeger Track & Field Classic on April 17-18, 2015 in Danville, Kentucky which is 422 miles one way from Flint. Approval has been given in years past with some concerns related to NFHS sanctioning as teams were added after sanctioning was granted. A NFHS-MHSAA sanction is questionable considering that several more distant state schools for the deaf have been added this year that did not appear previously including California, Iowa, Mississippi, Oregon, South Carolina and Texas. Teams from 2014 included schools from Indiana, Kentucky (host), Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

The Executive Committee did not approve the request for waiver.

Regulation III, Section 1(C) – Pursuant to *Handbook* Interpretation 265, the Executive Committee approved waiver of the enrollment regulation for the following junior high/middle schools to permit 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students to participate with and against 7<sup>th</sup>- and/or 8<sup>th</sup>-graders for the sports listed in the 2014-15 school year only.

<b>Junior High/ Middle School</b>	<b>Sport(s)</b>	<b>High School Enrollment</b>	<b>Middle School Enrollment</b>
Atlantic Mine-EB Holman	2015-16 boys & girls basketball, boys & girls track & field	N/A	41 7 <sup>th</sup> - & 8 <sup>th</sup> -graders

Zeeland Christian and Holland Christian Middle Schools (Regulation III, Section 1[D]) – The Executive Committee approved the addition of baseball to a cooperative program which exists between these two member middle schools in several sports. Zeeland Christian will be the primary school.

Representative Council – The Executive Committee reviewed a draft agenda for the March 27, 2015 Representative Council meeting.

Next Meetings – The next meetings of the Executive Committee are scheduled for Thursday, Mar. 26, 2015, at 9 a.m. in East Lansing (Rep Council follows on Mar. 27); Wednesday, Apr. 22, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. in East Lansing (Audit & Finance Committee follows); Sunday, May 3, 2015, at 10 a.m. in Glen Arbor (Representative Council follows at 1 p.m.); and Wednesday, June 10, 2015, at 9 a.m. in East Lansing.