

Minnesota State High School League
Board of Directors Meeting
December 4, 2014

Meeting Synopsis

Action Items

- League member schools will now have some guidance from the Board on determining the eligibility of transgender male-to-female (MTF) students to participate in gender-specific athletic programs. Effective with the 2015-16 school year, member schools are encouraged to base such MTF eligibility decisions on the criteria the Board approved for addition to the Fair Hearing Procedure already in place for appeals of other eligibility determinations. The language that will be added to the Fair Hearing Procedure includes specific criteria that will be reviewed, including but not limited to written statements from a student or student's parents and others that address the student's gender identity or expression. Additionally, a statement from an appropriate health care professional addressing the student's gender identity or expression may be submitted. These criteria are not exclusive of any other information that may be presented to the local school administrator making the initial eligibility determination. Today's action follows months of research, consultation with other state high school associations, meetings with the Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of School Administrators, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals and Minnesota Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, and several public hearings. After the issue was tabled at its October meeting, general comments were solicited on the League website about several specific aspects pertinent to the issue and elicited thousands of responses. In addition to approving the additional language that will be added to the Fair Hearing Procedure, the Board approved the distribution of a lengthy fact sheet to member schools that details the evolution of the process that culminated in today's action. Both the fact sheet and the Fair Hearing Procedure language are available for review on the League website home page under the League News heading.
- The Board approved an additional requirement for League membership, effective with the 2015-16 school year. The governing board representative and superintendent of each school will be required to certify that its governing board viewed the League's *Why We Play* training video that defines the purpose of education-based athletic and activity programs. The intent is to assist school communities in communicating a shared common language as related to the value of the League's programs.
- March 13, 2015, was set as the date for the next meeting of the League Representative Assembly. At least two bylaw amendments are expected for consideration. One deals with restrictions for summer football practice during the waiver period. The second deals with pre-season practice and heat acclimatization policy for all appropriate sports. It will also serve a dual purpose of kicking off the celebration of the League's first 100 years that will begin with the Spring 2015 season and extend through the Winter 2016 season.

Discussion Items

- The various Board committees and their respective staff liaisons reviewed a number of goals that were discussed and established at its August and October meetings.

- Staff recommended that a new game-ending procedure be instituted for lacrosse. It will require that every championship-level game at the state tournament be a complete game, not shortened by weather or other conditions as permitted by the rules of the game. Action is expected at the next Board meeting.
- A recommendation from the Tennis Advisory Committee was reviewed. One recommendation changes the certified lineup process that requires ranking each team's players 1-to-10 based on singles skills. Coaches can still create three separate lineups, but all will be independent of each other. A second recommendation asks for the addition of two alternates to each team's official squad. Action is expected at the next Board meeting.
- Associate Director Kevin Merkle briefly detailed the summer waiver period football practice policy and the pre-season practice and heat acclimatization policy.

Board Committee Reports

- *Executive Committee*
The Board approved the recommendation to alter the girls' hockey tournament final day to play the third-place games of both classes first and then combine the two championship games into a second session. The Board also approved the recommendation to require that all section golf tournaments be played in 36 holes on the same course beginning with the 2016 season. The Board also approved the recommendation that the makeup of the girls' dance team committee be changed.
- *Eligibility Committee*
The Board approved numerous recommendations to accept corrective action plans from several member schools for various bylaw violations and the censure of head coaches for bylaw violations. The Board also approved the committee's recommendation to immediately allow students to participate in college tryouts or auditions until the issue of conflicting bylaws can be addressed by the Representative Assembly. The Board also approved the committee's recommendation to reverse its previous action and grant varsity eligibility for a student at Duluth East High School.
- *Audit/Finance Committee*
The Board approved the committee's recommendation to accept the financial statements for the months of September and October. The committee reported that the annual financial audit has been completed without any issues. The Board also approved the committee's recommendation to grant Administrative Region 4A \$20,000 to help offset expenses for section tournament competition. Finance Director Rich Matter briefed the committee and the full Board on the estimated revenue shortfall of \$500,000 to \$540,000 for the State Football Tournament due to a significant decline in attendance. Semifinals and championship games were played outdoors for the first time in more than three decades because the Metrodome no longer exists.
- *Technology/Coaches and Officials Education Committee*
Staff briefed the committee on continuing education of coaches and development of education curriculum for activities directors and contest officials. In addition, an educational summit for Minnesota officials is in the planning stages.
- *Communications and Marketing Committee*
Staff briefed the committee about contract extensions with several corporate partners and continuing talks with several others. Staff and committee members brainstormed ideas on

how to get member schools involved in the League's 100 years celebration. Ideas were also solicited from other Board members.

Extra Point

- The Board was informed that the League office will be closed at noon on Friday, Dec. 19, for an employee recognition luncheon, reopen on Monday, Dec. 22 and Tuesday, Dec. 23, and then be closed until 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 5, 2015.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the League Board of Directors is Thursday, Feb. 5, 2015.