

NMAA Commission Meeting

February 14, 2024 @ 9:00 AM

Hall of Pride and Honor

Welcome – The meeting was called to order by Mr. Gary Allison, Chairman of the Commission, at 9:00 am. A roll call was conducted by Mrs. Alissa Wesbrook, NMAA Assistant to the Executive Director, and the following members were present:

Mr. Gary Allison (Small Area A)
Mr. Ben Tensay (Large Area A)
Mr. Dickie Roybal (Small Area B)
Mr. Robert Arreola (Large Area B)
Mr. Jory Mirabal (Small Area C)
Ms. Karen Nougues (Large Area C)
Ms. Robbie Robinson (Small Area D)
Ms. Taryn Bachis (Non-Public Schools)
Ms. Isaac Gamboa (New Mexico High School Athletic Directors Association)
Mr. Roy Sanchez (New Mexico High School Coaches Association)
Mr. Adrian Pete (Jr. High/Middle School Committee)
Mr. Scott Affentranger (New Mexico Association of Secondary School Principals)
Mr. Jess Martinez (New Mexico Officials Association)
Mr. Earl James Martinez (New Mexico School Boards Association)
Ms. Mary Hahn (Activities Council)

Not Present:

Ms. Ann Stewart (Large Area D)

15 members were present representing a quorum.

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. E. Martinez made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Tensay seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023, Commission Meeting as presented. Mr. Tensay made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Gamboa seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

NMAA Director's Report:

Mr. Dusty Young, NMAA Associate Director, discussed four (4) items in his report: 1) introduced new members to the Commission (Ms. Taryn Bachis, Academy – Non Public Schools; Mr. Roy Sanchez, Eldorado – NM High School Coaches Association; Mr. Earl James Martinez, Chama Schools – NM School Boards Association); 2) reported on the upcoming winter championship season which features State Swimming & Diving and Wrestling in February, State Basketball in March, and State Spirit and Powerlifting in April; 3) stated that over 400 applications were submitted by students through the NMAA Foundation Scholarship portal with approximately 60 awards to be granted once packets are reviewed; and 4) provided information regarding the NMAA Foundation Golf Classic fundraiser that will take place in June.

NMAA Financial Report:

Ms. Shari Kessler-Schwaner, NMAA Business Manager, presented the NMAA Financial Report. She discussed two (2) items in her report: 1) presented the 2023-2024 fall championship box reports; and 2) provided ticket sales information for 2023-2024 fall championships.

NMAA Activities Report:

Ms. Tammy Richards, NMAA Assistant Director, presented the activities report. She discussed four (4) items on her report: 1) reported on state events that have taken place in One Act Play, Bowling, and Student Council; 2) provided an overview of the many remaining state activity competitions and/or conferences that will take place throughout the spring semester; and 3) promoted the NMAA Foundation Golf Classic and other fundraising events.

New Mexico Officials Association Report:

Mr. Zac Stevenson, NMAA Commissioner of Officials, presented the officials report. He discussed three (3) items in his report: 1) provided information regarding the recent selection of officials for the NMAA's various winter championships; 2) stated that the NMOA is currently reviewing its constitution and bylaws and will be focusing on potential changes to state tournament eligibility requirements; and 3) reported that the NMOA is in an election year for its various officer positions.

Discussion/Information Items:

Boys Volleyball - Mr. Ben Tensay, Athletic Director at Bloomfield High School, requested feedback and clarification regarding the progress of Boys Volleyball in New Mexico. Mr. Greg Villareal, Sandia High School Volleyball Coach, provided information regarding the boys' spring/club league and increases in participation/interest not only in NM, but also across the country. Feedback included concerns with funding the new activity/sport, potential Title IX issues by adding a boys' sport only, small school participation, and how other sports during the same season may be impacted. Pros included providing new opportunities for students to participate in sports/activities.

Displacement/Following Coach/ Residing out of District - Mr. Joseph Esquibel, Athletic Director at Santa Rosa High School, discussed concerns surrounding Class A and 2A schools that are located near larger cities and thus can grow school enrollment and athletic participation with students outside of their attendance zone. He stated this can create a disadvantage for small/rural schools that do not have the same opportunity. He also referenced potential issues with the recruitment of athletes from one community to another which can lead to the displacement of local students. Mr. Allison recommended that the NMAA collect feedback from Class A and 2A athletic directors to see if this is an issue that should be addressed with potential bylaw change proposals.

8th Grade Student Open Enrollment Choice - Mr. Robert Arreola, Athletic Director at Lovington High School, discussed a potential bylaw change that would allow 8th graders to participate at the high school level regardless of their attendance zone if the student was enrolled in the district as a 7th grader. Mr. Arreola asked for a recommendation from the Commission to take this as Action to the Board of Directors, but Mr. Allison stated that this would be a Discussion Item only and would need to come back to the Commission as an Action Item in May after soliciting additional feedback from the membership.

Football Seeding and Selection Criteria - Mr. Isaac Gamboa, District Athletic Director at Farmington Schools, discussed concerns from the Football Sports Specific Committee regarding the current criteria used to seed/select teams for the State Football Championships. He stated that coaches have always felt that certain criteria points are unattainable due to the unique nature of football with only ten regular season games played. Coaches would like to see possible adjustments to the wins versus district champion and district placement criteria points, especially now since the new Classification & Alignment breakdown includes larger districts. Mr. Young confirmed that this has been a priority for the Football SSC for many years, but now more than ever because of the new

district alignments approved in December. Mr. Gamboa stated that a proposal changing the seeding/selection criteria in the sport of football only will be proposed in May.

Individual Sport Transfer Student Eligibility - Ms. Sally Marquez, NMAA Executive Director, discussed transfer students and situations where these athletes cannot participate in individual sports at all due to the lack of a JV program at the new school. She stated that Alaska has a policy in place that allows these athletes to compete in Varsity competitions but does not allow them to score nor qualify for the postseason. Feedback included some support for future discussion, but some concerns came up regarding individual sports like wrestling and tennis where individual match results can impact seeding for the state tournament.

Ejections for Use of Profanity - Ms. Marquez discussed an ejection policy for the use of profanity during competition that has been implemented in Iowa. Foul language has become more prominent in recent years, and she asked for feedback as to implementing something similar in New Mexico. Feedback included support for this type of regulation, but with a gradual process of implementing warnings first and then issuing ejections as needed. The group also discussed current rules and how those could be implemented by officials, coaches, and administrators in an effort to clean up some of this language.

Heat Illness Policy - Mr. Scott Owen, NMAA Assistant Director, discussed the current heat illness policy used by the NMAA and possible adjustments moving forward that would incorporate not only the continued use of Heat Index, but also the use of Wet Bulb Globe technology that is currently recommended/required in other states across the country.

Air Quality Policy - Mr. Owen presented information pertaining to Air Quality and the possible creation of policies/standards to aid member school administrators in situations where wildfires or other phenomena may impact outdoor competition.

Action Items

Soccer: District Tiebreaker Procedures - Mr. Chris Kedge, NMAA Assistant Director, presented a proposal to consider updates to soccer bylaws pertaining to the process used for ties in district standings. Bylaw 7.7.1.h District Tie Breaking Procedures to Determine Placement shall read as follows: If two or more teams tie during regular season district play, placement is determined by a goal differential system during the season as follows: 7. If all teams are still tied, a coin toss, conducted by NMAA Administration, determines placement. Q & A's will also be edited accordingly. Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Tensay made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Pete seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

Soccer: Postseason Card Accumulation - Mr. Kedge presented a proposal to consider updates to soccer bylaws pertaining to the misconduct progression rule for the postseason. Bylaw 7.17.3.B. – Misconduct Progression Rule - Postseason shall read as follows:

1. If a player is ejected for “persisting in misconduct after receiving caution” (a “second yellow card” offense), the player ejected is not permitted to participate in the following contest.
2. Athletes who receive a second yellow card in post-season play will be required to sit out the next game. Also, an athlete who receives a red card must sit out the next game minimally, no matter when it is received.

Q & A's will also be edited accordingly.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. E. Martinez made the motion to approve the proposal. Ms. Bachis seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

Football: State Playoff Qualifiers - Mr. Young presented a proposal to consider adjusting the number of qualifiers for the 8-man and 2A State Football playoffs from 8 to 12 starting with the 2024-2025 school year (2024 football season). Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Roybal made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Tensay seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

Football: Summer Regulations - Mr. Young presented a proposal to consider adjusting bylaws for the sport of football so that schools would have the option to utilize helmets/pads for limited full contact workouts during the offseason/summer.

Edit Bylaws 7.5.2.G and 7.15.1.B.4 to read as follows:

7.5.2.G. Football Specific 1. If approved by school/district administration, helmets and/or pads are permitted for a period of no more than two consecutive weeks (Monday-Saturday) beginning the Monday of week #47 through the Saturday of week #3 of the following NMAA calendar year. If a school opts to conduct off-season/summer workouts in this capacity, the following regulations must be followed:

Week 1 – The first two days of practice should be in shorts and helmets (no pads). During days three and four players should be in shorts, shoulder pads, and helmets (“shells”). Full pads can then be worn during days five and six – during this time full contact is allowed but should be limited to no more than 20 minutes per player on each day.

Week 2 – Full contact is allowed for a total of no more than 90 minutes per player for the week. Also, on a single day, full contact should be limited to no more than 30 minutes per player. In addition, schools could utilize this second week as an opportunity for students to attend a full padded camp if approved by local administration.

Note – As is the case with all sports, football workouts/camps held during the off-season/summer cannot be mandatory for student-athletes.

2. Outside of the above two-week helmeted/padded practice opportunity, the following provisions shall apply: a. Equipment such as, but not confined to football helmets, pads, etc. is prohibited in school sponsored off-season and summer programs. b. Schools may use dummies, blocking sleds, and hand shields for conditioning and instructional purposes during the off-season and summer programs. c. Schools are prohibited from attending full contact team camps during the off-season and summer programs. d. Individuals may attend full contact summer position camps. They may utilize school owned football safety equipment if approved by the local school district.

7.15.1.B. Practice Regulations

4. The use of helmets/pads is mostly prohibited during the off-season/summer. If approved by school/district administration, helmets/pads may be used in a limited capacity beginning the Monday of week #47 through the Saturday of week #3 of the following NMAA calendar year. See Bylaw 7.5.2.G for exact regulations.

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. E. Martinez made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).

Esports: Sanction at Middle School Level - Mr. Young presented a proposal to consider approving Esports as an NMAA Sanctioned Activity at the Middle School Level. Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. E. Martinez made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Pete seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed (14-1).

Consider Adjournment:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 a.m. Mr. Affentranger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gamboa seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (15-0).