

NMAA Board of Directors' Meeting
February 28, 2024
9:00 a.m.
NMAA Hall of Pride and Honor

Welcome - Meeting called to order by Mr. Anthony Casados, NMAA Board of Directors President, at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Alissa Wesbrook, NMAA Assistant to the Executive Director, conducted roll call and the following members were present:

Mr. Anthony Casados (Small Area A - President)
Mr. Cody Diehl (Large Area A)
Mr. Matt Moyer (Small Area B)
Mr. Gene Strickland (Large Area B)
Mr. David Lackey (Small Area C)
Mr. Travis Dempsey (Large Area C)
Mr. Lee White (Small Area D)
Mr. Hilario Chavez (Large Area D)
Mr. Martin Madrid (At-Large)
Mr. Scott Elder (Large School District I)
Mr. Ignacio Ruiz (Large Schools District II) **joined at 9:02 a.m. via teleconference*
Mr. Gary Allison (NMAA Commission)
Mr. Gary Tripp (New Mexico School Boards Association)

13 members were present representing a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Dempsey made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Strickland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (12-0).

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2024, Board Meeting. Mr. Allison made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Strickland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (12-0).

Mr. Ruiz joined the meeting.

Affirmation of Board Members:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to affirm the Board positions for Large School District I (Mr. Elder), Large School District II (Mr. Ruiz), NMAA Commission (Mr. Allison), and New Mexico School Boards Association (Mr. Tripp). Mr. Strickland made a motion to affirm these members. Mr. Dempsey seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0)

Appeals:

Gallup-McKinley County Schools - Mr. Mike Hyatt, Superintendent of Gallup-McKinley County Schools presented an appeal to the enrollment numbers used to classify and align schools within the GMCS district for the 2024-2026 two-year block.

NMAA Director's Report:

Ms. Sally Marquez, NMAA Executive Director, discussed three (3) items in her report: 1) welcomed Mr. Gary Tripp (NM School Boards Association – Rio Rancho Public Schools) and Mr. Cody Diehl (Large Area A – Farmington Schools) to the Board of Directors; 2) reported that State Swimming & Diving and Wrestling took place last weekend and went well; and 3) stated that Basketball District Tournaments are underway with State Championship brackets set to be released on Sunday.

NMAA Financial Report:

Ms. Shari Kessler-Schwane, NMAA Business Manager, presented the NMAA Financial Report. She discussed three (3) items in her report: 1) presented revenue and expense information for the 2023 Fall Championship season; 2) reported on ticket sales information for the Fall Championships and State Wrestling & Swimming & Diving; and 3) stated that digital ticketing is going well.

NMAA Activities Report:

Ms. Tammy Richards, NMAA Assistant Director, presented the activities report. She discussed four (4) items on her report: 1) reported that about half of the NMAA's 23 state activity events have now taken place; 2) stated that the Activities Council is still looking at the master calendar to see if some events can be spread around throughout the school year; 3) reported that participation numbers in activities are still on the rise; and 4) provided an overview of the remaining state events that will take place over the next few months.

New Mexico Officials Association Report: Mr. Zac Stevenson, NMAA Commissioner of Officials, presented the officials report. He discussed seven (7) items in his report: 1) provided a recap of the officiating selections/work from State Wrestling and Swimming & Diving; 2) reported that more officials are being selected for state to ensure increased championship experience; 3) recapped the recent NMOA Executive Board Meeting; 4) stated that the NMOA is working to solidify sessions for the upcoming collaborative Summer Conference; 5) reported on some of the positive behavior from coaches and students that has taken place during the basketball season; 6) stated that it is currently an election year and bylaws/constitution review year for the NMOA; and 7) provided information about a possible increase in registration fees for next year that would also eliminate the fee for officials to sign up for a second sport.

General Discussion/Information Items:

Displacement/Following Coaches/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 there are also issues with the recruitment of athletes from larger schools creating displacement of local students. He requested that the NMAA look at potential bylaw/policy changes that could address these issues.

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. He asked that this be considered by the membership as a possible action item moving forward. Mr. Tripp stated that he has concerns with 8th grade participation in general due to the age difference between those students and upperclassmen. Mr. Lackey added that most small schools would not be able to field sub-varsity teams if 8th graders could not play up.

Boys Volleyball - Mr. Greg Villareal, New Mexico Boys Volleyball Association Representative, provided information regarding the boys' spring/club league and increases in participation/interest not only in NM, but also across the country. He stated the boys volleyball has grown tremendously over the year with more than 16 high schools now either competing or planning to participate in the near future. Because of this, he requested that the NMAA consider sanctioning Boys Volleyball as an activity.

Individual Sport Transfer Student Eligibility - Ms. Marquez, discussed transfer students and situations where these athletes cannot participate in individual sports at all due to the lack of a sub-varsity 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.

Tryouts & Practice / Transfers - Ms. Marquez discussed the bylaw regarding a student trying out at one school and then attempting to transfer to another school after being cut. Currently a student in this situation would be ineligible at all levels in that sport for the remainder of the school year. She stated the “5-day practice rule” constituting a season also results in the same ineligibility. The NMAA Bylaws Committee and Commission have both shown some support for adjustments to this rule so that a student in this situation could play at the sub-varsity level at another school. Feedback was mixed, but the NMAA will continue to explore this issue.

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 a change in this type of culture/behavior, but by using current NFHS Rules and NFHS/NMAA Points of Emphasis instead of an official policy/bylaw.

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. Casados asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Dempsey made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Tripp seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0).

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 & As will also be edited accordingly.

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Madrid made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Allison seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0).

Football: State Playoff Qualifiers - Mr. Dusty Young, NMAA Associate Director, 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. Casados asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Elder made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Tripp seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0).

Football: Off-season/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. Casados asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Moyer made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Strickland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (12-1).

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. Casados asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Dempsey made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Madrid seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0).

Executive Session:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:59 a.m. for the purpose of discussing the appeal and personnel, financial, and pending/possible legal matters. Mr. Allison made the motion to enter into Executive Session. Mr. Elder seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously (13-0).

Mr. Dempsey left the meeting at 11:51 a.m.

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to exit out of Executive Session at 11:51 a.m. Mr. White made the motion to exit out of Executive Session. Mr. Strickland seconded the motion. Mr. Casados stated no action was taken during Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously. (12-0).

Appeal Ruling:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion regarding the Gallup-McKinley County Schools Appeal. Mr. Madrid made a motion to overturn the Board's original decision, thus adjusting GMCS high school enrollment numbers which would move Miyamura High School down to Class 4A. Mr. Strickland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (12-0).

Consider Adjournment:

Mr. Casados asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 a.m. Mr. Strickland made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Elder seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (12-0).

The next regular Board Meeting is scheduled for May 30, 2024