

NMAA Commission Meeting

September 6, 2023 @ 9:00 AM

Hall of Pride and Honor

Welcome – The meeting was called to order by Mr. Gary Allison, Chairman of the Commission at 9:02 am. A roll call was conducted by Ms. Alissa Wesbrook, NMAA Assistant to the Executive Director, and the following members were present:

Mr. Ben Tensay (Large Area A)
Mr. Gary Allison (Small Area A)
Mr. Robert Arreola (Large, Area B)
Mr. Dickie Roybal (Small, Area B)
Ms. Karen Nougues (Large, Area C)
Mr. Jory Mirabal (Small, Area C)
Ms. Ann Stewart (Large, Area D)
Ms. Robbie Robinson (Small Area D)
Mr. Thomas Mabrey (New Mexico High School Coaches Association)
Mr. Isaac Gamboa (New Mexico High School Athletic Directors Association)
Mr. Scott Affentranger (New Mexico Association of Secondary School Principals)
Mr. Jess Martinez (New Mexico Officials Association)
Ms. Linda Montoya (State School Boards Association)
Mr. Adrian Pete (Jr. High/Middle School Committee)
Mr. Willie Owens (Non-Public Schools) **joined after approval of minutes*
Ms. Mary Hahn (Activities Council) **joined after approval of minutes*

14 members were present representing a quorum. Two more joined after the approval of the minutes.

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Pete seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (14-0).

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2023, Commission Meeting as presented. Ms. Montoya made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (14-0).

Ms. Hahn and Mr. Owens joined the meeting.

NMAA Director's Report:

Mr. Dusty Young, NMAA Associate Director, presented the Director's Report. He discussed six (6) items on his report: 1) reported that fall sports have begun and are going well; 2) welcomed to the Commission, Mr. Isaac Gamboa from Farmington Schools representing the NMADA, and Mr. Robert Arreola, representing Large Area A from Lovington High School; 3) stated registration for the NMAA/NMADA Fall Conference has been posted and the event will take place September 24-25 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Albuquerque; 4) reported that elections for open Commission and Board of Directors seats will take place in October after the Fall Conference; open positions on the Commission include Large Area A, Small Area D, and Non-Public Schools and on the Board of Directors for Large A, Large C, and Small D; 5) provided information pertaining to the NMAA Foundation scholarship and school grant/support programs; 6) stated that Mr. Mark Geiger, Legal Counsel for the NMAA for the past 25+ year, passed away earlier in the week.

NMAA Financial Report

Ms. Shari Kessler-Schwamer, NMAA Business Manager, presented the financial report. She discussed two (2) items on her report: 1) She presented the financial reports for the 2022-2023 school year; and 2) reviewed the 2022-2023 ticket sales.

NMAA Activities Report:

Ms. Tammy Richards, NMAA Assistant Director, presented the activities report. She discussed four (4) items on her report: 1) stated the Annual Activities Council Meeting was held at the NMAA on September 5th; 2)

reported that most activities saw an increase in participant numbers over the last year and these groups are now targeting middle school students to help continue this trend; 3) stated that State One Act Play / Drama will take place in the fall, with all other state events set for the spring semester; and 4) provided information regarding the success of the student leadership regional meetings that have started and will continue over the next few weeks. Mr. Mabrey asked about current leadership training opportunities for activities directors and coaches/sponsors and the possibility of including sessions for this during next year's collaborative summer conference; feedback supported this idea. Ms. Hahn reported to the group that Rio Rancho HS will host the National Student Leadership Conference in 2024.

New Mexico Officials Association Report:

Mr. Zac Stevenson, NMAA Commissioner of Officials, presented the NMOA report. He discussed eight (8) items on his report: 1) thanked assignors, athletic directors, and officials for the collaborative work that has been done to cover games to start the year; 2) reported on official numbers which show an increase in most sports again this year, but noted they are still down from pre- COVID; 3) provided an update on the recruitment initiatives underway by schools, officials groups, and the NMAA; 4) stated that Regional Coordinator meetings are again being held and have been successful as officials and schools try to adapt schedules to ensure coverage; 5) provided information regarding the new "Travel Ring" payment system and tutorials available regarding this process; 6) stated that 2023-2024 is a bylaws review year for the NMOA and that officials advancement policies would be a point of emphasis; 7) reported on the Ref Reps officials education initiative; and 8) stated that the NMAA will be pushing coach feedback on officials after each contest and described possible updates to the state tournament selection process that might include school personnel as a part of the committee. Ms. Nougues & Ms. Stewart stated that there is still quite a bit of confusion regarding some of the specifics with the new Travel Rings. Mr. Martinez echoed these comments. Mr. Stevenson stated that it was still a work in progress but assured the group that the NMAA will continue to work with schools and officials to provide solutions.

Discussion/Informational Items:

Officials Fees - Consistency by Sport: Mr. Stevenson discussed the need to review officials' fees for all-day events versus single game contests. This would include fees for officials in the sports of Track & Field, Spirit, Wrestling, and Swimming & Diving. Feedback included doubling these fees or using an hourly rate model to ensure the individuals working these events receive comparable compensation. Mr. Mabrey also suggested looking at the use of certified coaches for Track & Field as was done many years ago – the group supported this, and the NMAA will explore the possibility moving forward.

Football: State Playoff Officials' Assignments - Mr. Stevenson discussed the constraints that are in place when it comes to assigning officials to state playoff football games based on the region of each school. He stated that it has become much more difficult to assign officials this way based on limited availability of state level officials in each region and the travel required for many of these individuals when using this process. He proposed using officials from the host school's region but ensuring that these individuals are not from the host school's city. Mr. Mabrey stated that using officials from the same region as the host school would not be supported by coaches. The group also discussed true conflicts of interest versus perception of "home-town" officials.

Classification and Alignment - Ms. Sally Marquez, NMAA Executive Director, stated the proposal for the 2024-2026 Classification and Alignment of Schools will be presented at the Board of Director meeting in late November. She reported that the NMAA office has final 80-day counts for the previous two school years but is still waiting for 40-day counts for the current year which will be certified by the PED soon. She also provided information regarding the NMAA's intent to keep the same five classification (seven in football) system and enrollment thresholds in place for 2024-2026, but noted that a non-success factor will be proposed in the sport of football. Mr. Young added that the NMAA will look to increase district sizes in football to help with the scheduling issues that have occurred in this sport in recent years.

Appeals Process - Ms. Marquez discussed the current appeals process and possible updates that would add the use of a retired judge or independent hearing officer. More information and a possible proposal to update NMAA bylaws for 2024-2025 will be forthcoming at a future Commission meeting.

Specialized Sports Training & Did Not Participate - Ms. Marquez discussed the new specialized sports training bylaw and stated that the NMAA may need to update verbiage or add Q & As to this section of the handbook in an effort to clarify the rule.

Sanctions for Dropping Games/Tournaments - Ms. Marquez discussed concerns with the dropping of games/tournaments which causes scheduling issues for the opposing school(s). She asked how the NMAA can better assist in this area. Feedback included the consistent use of forfeiture fee sanctions to ensure accountability with schools that are not honoring contracts.

Scholastic Eligibility: Summer Schools Courses - Ms. Marquez discussed the bylaw regarding summer school make up classes needing to be the exact same course. This has raised some concerns due to limited offerings during the summer - i.e. AP English versus English. Feedback was mixed between leaving things as is and adjusting the bylaw so that it could be any similar course since it is accepted for graduation by the school.

Eligibility: Semesters of Attendance - Ms. Marquez discussed a situation where an 8th grade student does not participate at the high school level, then drops out of school the next year, and comes back as a 9th grader after a year off from school. Current bylaws state that a 9th grader's "semesters of attendance clock" does not start until the student first participates at the high school level. The NMAA suggested that this should be adjusted so that only four years of participation would be granted to a student that is not retained as an 8th grader. Feedback supported this adjustment.

Action Items:

Advertising/Sponsorship Bylaws - Ms. Marquez presented a proposal to update bylaws to include marijuana as a restricted product to be marketed or advertised during NMAA sanctioned events. Bylaw 7.7.5 Advertising shall read as follows: Liquor, tobacco, or marijuana advertising will not be included in any advertising related to an athletic/non-athletic event sponsored or sanctioned by the Association. Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Affentranger made the motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Pete seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (16-0).

Officials Fees: State Playoffs - Ms. Marquez presented a proposal to modify current officials' fees for state playoff level contests/events. Mr. Allison asked for a motion to amend the current proposal to a \$100 flat fee for baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, and volleyball, and \$50 for line judging and tabling the proposal for Wrestling, Track and Field, Swimming and Diving and Spirit which will be brought back to the November meeting. Ms. Robinson made the motion to approve the amended proposal. Ms. Hahn seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (16-0).

Wrestling: Regional Seeding & Wildcard Limitations - Mr. Scott Owen, NMAA Assistant Director, presented a proposal that in order to be eligible for a regional seed or a state wildcard, wrestlers must have at least 25% of their season's total varsity matches at the weight class entered at the regional tournament. Mr. Allison asked for a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Affentranger made the motion to approve the proposal. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (16-0).

Consider Adjournment:

Mr. Allison asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 a.m. Ms. Hahn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. (16-0).

Next Commission Meeting- November 15, 2023 (NMAA)