

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**
Helena Public Schools Administration Building
September 11, 2023

ATTENDANCE

Steve Thennis, Helena
Krystal Zentner, Bridger
John Fitzgerald, Red Lodge
Aric Harris, Whitefish
Kara Triplett, Lambert
Joe McElroy, Missoula
Jimmy Patelis, Billings (Zoom)
Brian Michelotti, Helena
Kip Ryan, Helena
Scott Wilson, Helena
Amy Bartels, Helena
Greta Buehler, Helena
Jenise Cockhill, Helena
Ryan Richards, Helena

Delegations:

Mitch Wassam, Ronan
Kevin Kenelty, Ronan
Student: MR, Ronan
Terry Hauser, Three Forks
Jordan Overstreet, Ennis (Zoom)
Josh Jannusch, Missoula
Devan Bahm, Missoula (Zoom)
Dustin Bahm, Missoula (Zoom)
Chris Hess, Forsyth (Zoom)
Paul Crisologo, Forsyth (Zoom)
Jospehine Crisologo, Forsyth (Zoom)
Student: KC, Forsyth (Zoom)
Tony Wagner, Browning (Zoom)
Jen Wagner, Browning (Zoom)
Jack Parrent, Browning (Zoom)
Lynnel Bullshoe, Browning (Zoom)
Polly Gardipee, Browning (Zoom)
Student: KG, Browning (Zoom)
Student: JOC, Browning (Zoom)
Brian Kessler, East Helena
Shaun Murgel, East Helena
Patrick Culpon, East Helena

Terri Culpon, East Helena
Student: PC, East Helena

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Thennis at 8:30 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

REVISIONS/ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Michelotti gave a schedule overview and there are no revisions to the agenda. Jenise Cockhill, new MHSA employee was introduced to the Board.

PUBLIC INPUT STATEMENT

Mr. Thennis read the rules for public comment in an open meeting. A synopsis was given to the Board members.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Mr. McElroy motioned to approve the meeting minutes for April 17-18, 2023. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. McElroy motioned to approve the meeting minutes for June 22, 2023 and August 16, 2023. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY APPEAL—RONAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT MR

Mr. Wilson introduced student MR, Mr. Kenelty and Mr. Wassam to the board. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, the student chose to continue with an open meeting. Student MR read statement requesting appeal. Transcripts were discussed. Student is currently enrolled and doing credit recovery. Student is currently living with cousin in Ronan. Mr. Thennis read the requirements in order to waive the academic eligibility rule from the MHSA Handbook. Mr. Fitzgerald motioned to waive the academic eligibility rule, Ms. Zentner seconded and the motion passed unanimously. In addition, Mr. Harris motioned to waive the transfer rule, Ms. Triplett seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP – THREE FORKS/ENNIS WRESTLING

Mr. Wilson introduced Mr. Hauser in person and Mr. Overstreet via Zoom to the board. Mr. Hauser and Mr. Overstreet explained wrestling co-op details with regard to travel as well as concern for low numbers in Ennis. This is the third year of the co-op. Ms. Zentner motioned to waive the co-op enrollment rule. The motion failed for lack of a second. Mr. Fitzgerald motioned to deny waiver the co-op enrollment rule. Ms. Triplett seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The co-op will compete as Class A for the 2023-24 season and the remainder of the co-op term.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY APPEAL—MISSOULA SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BB

Mr. Wilson introduced Mr. Jannusch in person; Mr. Bahm, and Mrs. Bahm via Zoom. Student BB could not be present as he is in class. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Bahm chose to continue with an open meeting. Mrs. Bahm and Mr. Jannusch reviewed past issues and steps in place to promote accountability with grades. Mr. Thennis read the requirements in order to waive the academic eligibility rule from the MHSA Handbook. Mr. McElroy motioned to deny the academic eligibility appeal. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

TRANSFER RULE APPEAL—FORSYTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT KC

Mr. Michelotti introduced Mr. Hess via Zoom. Mr. Hess introduced Paul Crisologo, Josephine Crisologo and student KC as present via Zoom. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Crisologo chose to continue with an open meeting. Mr. Hess reviewed the history of residence and enrollment. Mr. Thennis read the criteria for waiving the transfer rule from the MHSA Handbook. Ms. Zentner moved to approve the waiver of the transfer rule for student KC. Mr. Harris seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY APPEAL—BROWNING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT KG

Mr. Michelotti introduced Mr. Wagner via Zoom. Mr. Wagner introduced Mr. Parrent, Ms. Bullshoe, Mrs. Gardipee and student KG via Zoom. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, Mr. Wagner and student chose to continue with an open meeting. Ms. Bullshoe and Mrs. Gardipee reviewed past issues the student had with academics and access to technology. Mr. Thennis read the requirements to waive the academic eligibility rule from the MHSA Handbook. Mr. McElroy moved to approve the waiver of the academic eligibility rule. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald. There was a vote of 5-1 to approve with one dissenting vote from Mr. Thennis. The motion was approved by a majority vote.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY APPEAL—BROWNING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT JOC

Mr. Michelotti introduced Mr. Wagner via Zoom. Mr. Wagner introduced student JOC. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, and the student chose to continue with an open meeting. The student discussed his past issues with his home life and steps being taken to try to move forward. Mr. Thennis read the requirements to waive the academic eligibility rule from the MHSA Handbook. Mr. Fitzgerald moved to approve the waiver of academic eligibility. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris. There was a vote of 5-1 to approve with one dissenting vote from Mr. McElroy. The motion was approved by a majority vote.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY APPEAL—EAST HELENA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PC

Mr. Wilson introduced Brian Kessler, Shaun Murgel, Terri Culpon and student PC in person from East Helena. Mr. Thennis gave the option for an open or closed meeting, and the student chose to continue with a closed meeting. The motion was made to approve the academic eligibility waiver by Mr. McElroy. Mr. Harris seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The motion was made to deny a waiver of the transfer rule by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald. The motion tied 3-3 with dissension by Ms. Zentner, Mr. Harris and Ms. Triplett and therefore the appeal was denied.

FINANCES

Mr. Michelotti and Ms. Buehler discussed the bills paid April 1 – August 31, 2023. Mr. Michelotti and Ms. Buehler reviewed the financial statement as of August 31, 2023.

Ms. Zentner motioned to approve the bills paid. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Fitzgerald motioned to approve the financial statement. Mr. Triplett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

GENERAL OFFICE REPORT

Mr. Michelotti handed out the General Office Report.

Insurance Overview

There are no significant changes from the last three years, with the exception of Directors and Officers Premium which increased.

Technology

Mr. Michelotti discussed the Website and Final Forms. Different platforms will be assessed with regard to Dragonfly.

Previous Appeals Update

Reviewed previous appeal and two coming up for semester rule.

Social Media Update

Mr. Richards introduced the board to Team of the Month and Score Graphics for posting to Social Media. Wellness Wednesday with Logan Health information will be pushed to high school students.

AIM Higher Schedule

Mr. Wilson reviewed the schedule and registration form.

Other Information

Ms. Buehler stated the external audit by WipFli will be in November. Mr. Ryan discussed Academic Excellence Award winners. Mr. Fitzgerald shared information on smoke monitors and the use in small, rural areas. Ms. Zentner shared information about the Belfry Hall of Fame Ceremony. MHSAs Staff and Board will continue to travel and appear at every school in the state.

STATE SOLO & ENSEMBLE FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ms. Bartels reviewed festival locations and financial information.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Mr. Richards gave an update with regard to new Corporate Sponsors and renewals. Future programs discussed included Team of the Week, Athlete of the Week and Play of the Week.

OFFICE ACTION

Mr. Michelotti gave a report on hardship waivers that have been approved and denied. There have not been any 19-year old appeals nor 15-year old appeals.

Mr. Michelotti stated there have been 3 penalties imposed thus far. One was self-reported.

OFFICE REPORTS

Mr. Thennis, Mr. Michelotti and Ms. Buehler attended the National Federation Summer Meeting in Seattle, WA. Mr. Thennis reviewed their attendance.

Mr. Ryan commented on MHSAs Committee Meetings and that they had only 3. Mr. Michelotti spoke on the Sports Advisory Committee.

Mr. Michelotti advised they will be watching details at the Section 7/8 Meeting in Alaska to help prepare for the sectional meeting in Montana next year.

Mr. Michelotti reported 7 ejections.

Mr. Michelotti discussed the Online Clinic Reports are available for Football, Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, Volleyball and Spirit. The Eligibility and Equity Clinic will be live now as well.

Ms. Bartels reported numbers for Officials Registration. There is a push to get younger officials involved. Mr. Michelotti reported on his meetings with both the Billings and Missoula referee pools, and that the season is going well overall.

Mr. Wilson asked for Board direction on any changes for upcoming calendars, specifically regarding Winter Sports.

Mr. Wilson reported on past NFHS Network reimbursements to schools and that the MHSA will start adding GoFan to the distribution.

Mr. Michelotti requested the current Board President be on the MHSA Leadership Committee. By Law language will need to be changed. Ms. Zentner motioned to change the language to include current Board President. Mr. Harris seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

LEGAL

Mr. Michelotti reported on current legal issues and brought attention to some possible upcoming litigation instances. He reports business as usual with regard to legal costs.

REQUESTS

Schools Removed from Sport Rules and Regulations Handbook

Mr. Michelotti requested to remove the listing of schools from the printed MHSA Handbook. He proposed these be online. This was requested in order to get the Handbook out to the public sooner. Mr. Patelis motioned to approve removing the school listing from the MHSA Handbook. Mr. McElroy seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The discussion on where to list in the future was tabled until the next meeting.

Baker/Glendive Co-Op Dissolution

Mr. Michelotti advised that this co-op should be allowed to dissolve. Mr. Fitzgerald motioned to approve the dissolution. Mr. McElroy seconded with the motion to dissolve and it passed unanimously.

Music

Ms. Bartels presented the 2023-24 music handbook changes. She requested Ronan be moved from District 1 to 2, the addition of new Committee Member to represent Indigenous schools, State Festival fee increase 2023-24 and State Concert fee increase 2024-25. The motion to approve all of these requests was made by Ms. Zentner. Ms. Triplett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

State Bids

Mr. Wilson requested approval of bids for State A Tennis in Flathead, State BC Tennis in Missoula and State Baseball in Missoula. Mr. Fitzgerald motioned to approve all venues. Mr. McElroy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Speech & Drama Update

Ms. Bartels reported that they are waiting for more interest in the next months to fill spots on this committee.

Spirit Changes

Ms. Bartels will try to fill positions for a Class AA Cheer Committee Member as well as an additional Committee Member for Dance.

MHSA Handbook Revision

Mr. Wilson requested language changes to the MHSA Handbook for both 8 player/6 player for football, regarding the season scheduling of games. The language for 8 and 6 man football will be removed to better align with other classifications. Mr. McElroy motioned to approve the removal of language. Mr. Patelis seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Section 7/8 Meeting Montana—Fall 2024—Budget Request

Mr. Wilson requested \$25K be allocated for this meeting in Whitefish. This will be utilized primarily to pay for rooms for all Board Members to attend the meeting in Whitefish. Board members will also help with some duties necessary for meeting logistics. The dates will be 9/14/24-9/18/24. The motion to approve the budget request was brought by Mr. Patelis. Mr. Harris seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

GENERAL

Mr. Ryan previewed the new committee appointments. He also stated that they will be adding Native American and female representatives to these committees. These will be brought to the Board in November.

Mr. Michelotti highlighted issues to be discussed at the November Board meeting, including realignment, reclassification, athletic committee recommendations and annual meeting proposals. These meeting proposals include two periods in the brick and mortar, Native American and MOA representation on the Executive Board, 8th grade participation in Speech and Drama and a higher post-season fine for NFHS Network violations.

Mr. Ryan presented information on the different State Tournaments. Mr. Thennis assigned Board members to fall activities. Winter Activities will be assigned at the November Meeting.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Ryan advised that the Annual Meeting will be held in Bozeman in January. The Executive Board Meeting will be on Saturday. Mr. Michelotti discussed sportsmanship issues with Manhattan High School.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Mr. Michelotti brought up scheduling for basketball games for the B/C schools to have girls and boys participate equally during prime time without violating equity rules. Discussion on this was tabled until more information is received from member schools.

Mr. Thennis adjourned the meeting at 2:34 p.m.