

M E N T O R



The Michigan High School Athletic Association Newsletter for Coaches and Officials

HOOP DREAMS



BCAM, MHSAA Team Up for Reaching Higher Basketball Experience

During the spring of 2007, on the heels of the Sports Seasons court decision, the MHSAA presented “Big Plans for a Bright Future,” a document outlining the Association’s goals and objectives for the next decade. Among the “Big Plans” was the idea of coordinating sports camps or combines itself for fear that such present-day cattle calls were spiraling out of control and had no regard for the the student-athlete’s *educational preparation* for the next level. Just two short years later, that vision becomes reality in April.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan will provide for the first time an opportunity for 100 high school girls and 100 high school boys to gather for a day under MHSAA and BCAM supervision to learn what it takes to become a college basketball player and succeed in college life at the Reaching Higher Experience on April 19 and 26.

In separate events for girls (April 19 at South Lyon HS) and boys (April 26 at Brighton HS), these students, selected by BCAM members, will have classroom sessions, engage in on-court drills and testing, and scrimmage. Classroom sessions will be conducted for parents as well. College coaching staffs will be invited to observe.

“These will be days of education,” says MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts, who proposed the idea on a two-year experimental basis to the MHSAA Representative Council and BCAM’s Board of Directors, which both enthusiastically approved the initiative. “The events intend to strengthen the ties between high school players and coaches, to show students and parents how to prepare for college on the court and in the classroom, and to provide college coaches a convenient and inexpensive means for evaluating a large number of players with potential to ‘reach higher.’”

April’s events are the first of a multi-phase program intended to encourage an educational orientation for sports participation for



Visual Image Photography

high school, middle school and even younger students. As each phase is implemented, it will be evaluated and thereafter adapted for application in other sports.

“The events intend to . . . show students and parents how to prepare for college on the court and in the classroom, and to provide college coaches a convenient and inexpensive means for evaluating a large number of players with potential to ‘reach higher.’” — MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts.

In December, letters were mailed from the MHSAA to Association boys and girls head basketball coaches inviting them to nominate players. In mid-February, 100 girls and 100 boys, plus up to 40 alternates will be identified by BCAM Selection Committee members.

From there, the timeline is:

February 15, 2009 – The Reaching Higher Selection Committee met to identify the top 100 underclass players in the state. Each BCAM Region receives one automatic nomination. The Reaching Higher Selection Committee then sends a list of selected players to the Michigan High School Athletic Association. The Selection Committee also identifies and ranks the top 40 alternate players.

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February 16, 2009 – The MHSAA sends congratulatory letters to the Top 100 players and to the Top 40 alternates. Coaches of each player also receive letters notifying them that their player was selected. Players then have three weeks (March 9 deadline) to commit to attending the event. The BCAM Selection Committee members contacts the coaches of the Top 100 players from their region and the alternates via telephone. BCAM Selection Committee members are instructed to report back to the MHSAA on the status of their assigned players.

March 2, 2009 –The MHSAA will follow up with an email/telephone call to each player and their coach, instructing them that they have one week to commit to attending the Reaching Higher Experience.

March 9, 2009 – Biographical information along with the Reaching Higher Experience fee must be turned in by this date.

March 16, 2008 – The MHSAA will send letters to the players who have been selected to attend the Reaching Higher Experience.

March 21, 2009 – The Girls Reaching Higher Selection Committee will meet during the MHSAA Girls Basketball Finals and place the Top 100 female players on ten competitive teams. The information will be sent immediately to the MHSAA office electronically. Player information must be emailed using the online forms provided by the MHSAA.

March 28, 2009 – The Boys Reaching Higher Selection Committee will meet during the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals to place the Top 100 male players on ten competitive teams. The information will be sent immediately to the MHSAA electronically. Player information must be emailed using the online forms provided by the MHSAA. Faxed/mailed/handwritten documents will not be accepted.

April 19, 2009 – Girls Reaching Higher Experience.

April 26, 2009 – Boys Reaching Higher Experience.

RAWLINGS TO BECOME OFFICIAL MHSAA PLAYOFF FOOTBALL

Beginning with the 2009 season, the MHSAA welcomes Rawlings as the official game ball provider for all levels of its Football Playoffs. The agreement capped a process that began with a November 2007 Audit and Finance Committee request and ended with Representative Council approval on Dec. 5, 2008.

Every football-sponsoring MHSAA member high school will be provided with two Rawlings balls of their choice prior to kickoff for the 2009 season. Subsequently, two balls will be provided to all playoff qualifiers in 2010, and one ball of each school's choice will be provided to playoff qualifiers in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

MHSAA staff was asked in the fall of 2007 to research policies and procedures of other state high school associations – as well as the interest of manufacturers – to supply footballs for the MHSAA Football Playoffs. This topic was discussed by the Audit and Finance Committee again in April 2008, with more information requested.



Findings confirmed that all neighboring high school associations and the majority of other states across the country had endorsed a football, most requiring the use of a particular model or models for all levels of their playoff series; and it was discovered that manufacturers' interest in a football endorsement exceeded their interest in any other sport.

Proposals were requested and submitted throughout the summer and early fall, culminating with Representative Council approval of Rawlings as the official supplier for all MHSAA Football Playoff contests at its Dec. 5 meeting. Any model of Rawlings football that meets National Federation rules may be used by participating teams.

Rawlings makes the endorsed football of California (three sections), Kentucky, Maine, Missouri, Montana, New York and Vermont. Rawlings also provides the official ball for the MHSAA Girls and Boys Basketball Tournament, extending to all levels – Districts through Finals – in 2010 through 2014.

We Are High School

The following is an excerpt from remarks presented by New York State Public High School Athletic Association Executive Director Nina Van Erk at the New York State Athletic Administrators Conference and the NYSPHSAA Central Committee meeting earlier this school year.

This is an opportunity that I truly cherish as I am able to share my personal beliefs and philosophy pertaining to the education based athletic programs we all are responsible for.

We, together represent the collective leadership of the interscholastic athletic program in New York State. I believe that we are at the cross road of our education based athletic program. A few years ago, in a conversation with my brother, I shared with him that I thought **high school athletics has taken on a false sense of importance**. I never had verbalized that thought before and frankly it was frightening to me. I thought – this is terrible – I am so involved, entrenched and dedicated to high school athletics.

This evolution, I believe, can be attributed to certain situations. First, there was the “every child gets a trophy” era. It was that revolutionary concept that began to disintegrate the concept of self assessment and work ethic amongst our youngsters. In my opinion, this led to the sense of entitlement of today’s athletes and parents – everyone wants an exception – everyone wants a break.

But I suggest there is hope. Interscholastic athletics is **worth** fighting for. Simply put, **today’s** kids deserve the opportunity to participate in our interscholastic athletic program.

So how can we preserve what we love about interscholastic athletics? How do we protect the outside influences from eroding the essential core of our programs? I believe there are three strategies to address this issue; passion, courage and identity.

The first answer is our collective passion for athletics.

For over ten years, I have shared my personal philosophy regarding our influence over the interscholastic athletic program. I call it **Passion vs. Power**. I do not believe **power** gets anything done. Power is an ego based concept. Power is pushy. Power is not productive. On the other hand there is **passion**. Passion is real. Passion is emotional. Passion motivates and inspires. Passion allows us to commit and dedicate. Passion is thoughtful and insightful. Passion creates influence and it is that influence that creates change.

We are compelled to provide for **appropriate change** in interscholastic athletics. In the summer of 2006 I shared some of following remarks at the Central Committee meeting and they are still meaningful today. We need to have the courage to change. Not simply change for the sake of change, but for the betterment of our interscholastic athletic programs in our high and middle schools. Today’s student athletes and athletic programs are so very different from 20 years ago. We have to acknowledge their importance yet restrict ourselves when we are tempted to encourage that false sense of importance.

We have been blessed with the responsibility of administering high school athletics and consequently it is our duty to provide the very best education-based opportunity for our student athletes.

I have the privilege of attending numerous National Federation of High School Associations meetings throughout the year. At two of the meetings I was fortunate to listen to Dr. Rich Luker speak. He addressed the current issues of high school athletics across our nation. He stressed that we need to “market” our programs to our target audience, our audience of community. The conversation he had with us was a mixture of a visionary approach sprinkled with a business concept.

But he said four little words that were the most meaningful to me. I immediately decided that these four words were going to be the focus of my remarks today: **We Are High School**.

We Are High School: We are about school community, not all

star teams. We are about healthy local rivalries, not national championships. We teach citizenship, competency, civility and commitment.

We Are High School: We establish effective Codes of Conduct. We hold athletes and coaches accountable for their actions and behavior. We focus on the values of sportsmanship.



We Are High School: We strike the balance between academics and athletics.

We care for the safety of student athletes. Last spring I received an email from a wrestling coach. He wrote with his concern over the increase in participation in club sports during the high school season. He cited that his team members and those at nearby schools participate in practice six days a week and then head off to club practices on two of those evenings and Sundays. He struggles in his attempt to educate parents on the need for rest and recovery, but his comments fall on deaf ears because the parents feel they are doing what is right for their child. Another coach shared that in his practices he works to develop not only skills but stresses the importance of respect, loyalty and good sportsmanship. He reluctantly suggested these important values are being compromised by some clubs.

We Are High School: We teach and model integrity. We console, we mentor, we parent. Unfortunately the trend for parents today is to peer and not parent.

We Are High School: We set standards of fairness. We teach diversity. We encourage the acceptance of the weaknesses in others while training students to maximize their strengths and the strengths of others so that a common goal can be achieved.

We are about memories. Think about your own high school athletic experiences.

I must admit that I rarely attend regular season contests. In early February, a friend invited me to watch her 7th grade daughter play in a Modified Basketball Game at Red Hook High School, the district in which I reside. It was the last home game of the season and all the spectators were given a small game program. This special touch – a memory was created. **We Are High School**.

We need to ensure that all stakeholders understand the concept of: **We Are High School**. We are the last remaining pure aspect of sport. Let’s share this notion at every opportunity we have.

When They Grow Up They Want To Be What?

It's not unusual at all to get a call in the MHSAA office from time to time from an education reporter at a media outlet. They find themselves in the position of covering something related to school sports that falls outside the lines of the playing field, and get referred to us by their own sports staff.

But the call I took right before the holidays absolutely flabbergasted me. The reporter wanted my reaction to a school district study of students as they progressed from the eighth grade to the twelfth grade about their career aspirations. In this particular school district, the study showed that the top occupation was not a teacher, not a public service position like a fire fighter, law enforcement agent or emergency medical technician, not a business leader – but a professional athlete.

What!? A professional athlete? Incredible!

Depending on your source, the odds of becoming a professional athlete are 1 in 25 thousand for a white male, 1 in 50 thousand for a black male and 1 in 330 thousand for a Hispanic male. For every 10 million white basketball players, 28 make the pros; and it's 65 of every 10 million for black basketball players. In football, those numbers are 16 out of a million white players, 21 out of a million black players, and 4 out of a million Hispanic players. In baseball, it's 12 in a million for whites, 3 in a million for blacks, and 2 in a million for Hispanics.

All of this for an average professional career that lasts five years. To give this some additional perspective, the average player's salary in major league baseball in 2007 was approaching 3 million dollars. Divide that by 162 games and for three days work, a baseball player makes about what the average public school teacher made for an entire year. Yet we think nothing of what that ball player makes, and complain that it's wrong for teachers to make what they get.

So where do they get these ideas, the reporter asked. I opined that when we were little kids we all had ideas about what we'd do when we grew up – but we had no understanding of what we were talking about. By the 8th grade, however, and certainly by the 12th grade, kids ought to be able to somewhat comprehend the different career options out there, and the probability of getting there.

Which made the number one answer of becoming a professional athlete all the more ludicrous – or all the more disturbing.

I told the reporter I wasn't sure of how the seed got planted, but I knew how this weed could be rooted out. Parents really need to become more aware of the realities in play here – but my generation of parents failed miserably in this respect, and the generation behind us is even worse.

If you need proof, an old coach I visited with recently told me he saw today's coaches running kids in and out of the lineup with no scheme, with no purpose, with no other reason than to keep parents off their backs. And we agreed that it probably was as true to a degree at the collegiate level as well.

But coaches don't get off scot free here. Every time they talk about a kid playing at the next so-called level, talk to them about specialization in a single sport, or fight with another coach in their own school about which sport that youngster will or won't play, they poison the waters themselves.

This is one of those things that makes you wonder if the perspective battle, the need to keep school sports an after-school activity chronologically in the school day and in the order of what's really important, isn't tipping in favor of the dark side – the win-at-all-costs, play year-round, be like the colleges and the pros, get a college scholarship and become a pro athlete mentality.

If the scale is tipping that way, it doesn't bode well for the future of school sports because when we stop being educational, we're not worthy of being sponsored by schools. There's plenty of non-school programs where kids can play sports and have their perspectives twisted. When it happens in our own buildings – and it is happening in our own buildings – it's time to step back and look at what we do, how we do it and why we do it.



Set their sights on the sure thing: a high school diploma.

— John Johnson
MHSAA Communications Director

NOTE: This commentary can be heard this week on the radio program MHSAA Perspective, which airs on over 25 radio stations across the state, and is also available on-demand on the MHSAA Network – mhsaanetwork.com.

MHSAA Online Rules Meetings: More Green in Your Pockets; More Green for Our Future



Consult the MHSAA Rules Meetings Schedule on mhsaa.com for details

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Officiating's Future

This is the third in a six-part Bulletin series "Taking Stock," as MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts addresses six major issues of school sports in Michigan over the past two decades.

Let's face facts. The problems of 20 years ago are still with us. We still need more and better officials.

The fact that the problems persist does not mean there has not been progress:

- We registered 2,510 more officials last year than 20 years before (+24 percent); and all of them have been subject to criminal history checks.
- We processed more schools' ratings of officials last year in one season than we did 20 years before for the entire school year.
- We have training programs for local officials association officers and trainers and assignors that did not occur 20 years ago.
- In registering, rating and training, we utilized technology last year that hadn't been invented 20 years ago.

Online rules meetings in just three sports – track & field last spring and soccer and volleyball last fall – conserved coaches and officials enough miles to circle the Earth at the equator more than a dozen times. It saved more than 10,000 gallons of gas. It kept more than \$37,000 in wallets and purses of coaches and officials.

This winter online rules meetings were introduced as an option for basketball, ice hockey and wrestling. This spring and thereafter, the online rules meeting option will exist for all MHSAA sports.

The most exciting feature of the future may be online video training, a free and easy means for individual officials or local officials associations to access a huge video library organized by sport, rule and point of emphasis through the MHSAA Website.

That the problems of quantity and quality in sports officiating persist reflects an expanding interscholastic athletic program – more sports and more levels of teams in each sport – and a program whose coaches, athletes and spectators continue to expect more of officials each year. This is how things should be. **Everybody** is getting better! It's **good** news.



John Johnson, Okemos

Quick Whistles

Officials for Kids

As you officiate contests throughout the school year, the MHSAA urges you to remember those children who aren't fortunate enough to run around our courts, fields and other athletic facilities.



Just one game check can make a difference when you pledge it to Officials for Kids, a program designed to assist the four Children's Miracle Network hospitals in Michigan on a variety of projects. The Children's Miracle Network is a non-profit organization which raises funds for 174 children's hospitals across North America. The four CMN hospitals in Michigan are William Beaumont Hospital in Detroit, Helen DeVos Children's

Hospital in Grand Rapids, Hurley Medical Center in Flint, and Sparrow Regional Children's Center in Lansing.

The Officials for Kids program has three primary objectives for the children's hospitals in Michigan. First, to promote healthy habits and lifestyle choices for Michigan youth. Second, to support outstanding health care for Michigan children. And third, to enhance the public image of sports officials across the state.

Visit the Officials for Kids page from the Officials section of MHSAA.com for further information.

Online Services

Officials are encouraged to take advantage of the myriad of online services offered through MHSAA.com.

From online registration to Officials Report Forms, it's all there for you by clicking on "Officials" from the MHSAA Home Page.

Some materials, such as the registration procedure, the Officials Report Form and Season Schedules for Tournament Consideration, are available without your personal login and password.

Should you desire other services such as online Rules Meetings, the Officials Directory, Ratings, Sport Tests and Member in Good Standing status, you need to login using your Official's ID number and password.

Remember that officials can now offer **School Sportsmanship Feedback** online by following the first link on the member services page. Simply enter the sport, school and date of the contest and rate the level of sportsmanship displayed by the coaches and student-athletes. For further detail, one can also access the Officials Report Form through this screen.

For those officials who have never taken online tests in those sports for which the service is offered, we encourage you to do so. Not only will it hone your knowledge of the game and get you into the rules book, but the practice could become an MHSAA requirement for tournament consideration in the near future.

See you online!

The Super-Charged Postgame Climate

“You can’t win for winning.” I don’t know how many times I have heard coaches and players say this. Just when you think everything is going your way something negative surfaces. Imagine this scenario:

Your team just pulled off a thrilling victory over a cross-town rival. The fans are going nuts and the coaches are extremely satisfied with the team’s effort. Not everyone on the winning team was happy with the game, however. Brian sat the last six minutes because he failed to execute the offense and turned the ball over several times. Compounding these errors, he took several poor shots. The coaches decided to pull him because he was not handling the pressure.



As parents are milling around and the teams are headed to the locker room after the handshake, Brian is quiet and heading to the locker room. He feels happy that his team won, but disappointed with his play. Then Brian’s dad grabs his

attention in the hallway. Brian’s dad looks upset. He approaches Brian with a scowl on his face and arms in the air, saying, “Why weren’t you in the game?” Brian, wanting to get over the game and feeling frustrated, barks back, “I don’t know. The coaches were mad at me!” Brian just wants to go to the locker room.

Brian’s dad finds the head coach and immediately begins questioning him in an emotional tone about how he mistreated his son: “How could you do this to him in a big game? You are killing his confidence!” The coach, not totally caught off guard, tells the dad to call him tomorrow afternoon. The team watches as Brian’s dad walks away upset with many of them wondering why there always has to be “drama.” Brian is embarrassed, frustrated, and thinks to himself, “Do I really need this?” The joy of victory suddenly has been tainted.

You win a big game, the team plays well, and yet it seems it is not enough. Win or lose, the postgame of high school athletics can often be emotionally super-charged. While many athletes, parents, and coaches are happy, others are frus-

trated, disappointed, and angry.

Why is this important to discuss? Well this emotional time period after a game is critical in the formation of athlete’s perceptions of competence, success, and enjoyment in sport. Furthermore, it is formative period for coach-parent-player relationships. When handled well, these relationships become stronger. When not handled well, it is not good for all involved.

The immediate postgame is the moment when players leave the floor or field and are approached by coaches and parents. It is a highly evaluative time. Athletes are looking to the faces of those they trust to get a sense if they are happy or disappointed with their performance. And, if they know they played poorly they are often looking for a supportive coach, athletic director, or parent to help them deal with the disappointment. Postgame reactions of those people important to the student-athlete greatly affect their confidence. This time frame can provide a player with a lift after a tough game or knock down their self-esteem. And the most ironic quality of the postgame is that adults often do not realize how student-athletes perceive the messages they are communicating. Having a frown on your face, and yet saying, “It’s ok that you played badly,” does not make the student-athlete feel very confident. Or, the perplexed face and, “What were you doing out there?” is a classic motivation and confidence-crusher.

Believe it or not, athletes are not often in the mood to be evaluated immediately after a game. They need time to come down from emotion of the game with their teammates. And, this is natural. The critical comments can often be saved for practice. And, parents’ critical comments should be saved forever. Parents provide unconditional love and support. Coaches provide the coaching. And, athletic directors oversee this whole process to make sure it is running smoothly.

The postgame period is an emotional time when tempers can flare and feelings are easily hurt. Many coach-parent, coach-player, parent-child relationships have been damaged because of poor communication. What can an athletic director tell the coaches and parents under his or her direction to improve the emotional reactions of the postgame?

1. Be a positive source of support and encouragement. Coaches, save the critical comments for a private setting when emotions have subsided. Parents, save the critical evaluation for your coaches and be an unconditional source of support.



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF
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- 2. Read the athlete.** If they are upset and don’t want to talk, its best to change the subject. Pushing the subject will probably lead to emotional reactions that won’t improve the situation.
- 3. Be aware of body language.** 70 percent of communication is non-verbal. So, if you are attempting to communicate that the sun will come up tomorrow, but your non-verbals show a lack of belief or sincerity, then that is what the athlete will sense. If your arms are crossed and you have a scowl, work on setting a positive image of confidence and acceptance. This will go a long way toward creating good relationships with student-athletes.
- 4. Be emotionally intelligent.** Avoid critical questions such as, “What were you doing?” Instead, point out what you thought was good – if you feel the need to say something – and move on. Also, depending on the personality of the student-athlete, you may want to avoid, “Did you have fun?” This can sound condescending or disingenuous to the upset athlete. Instead, a pat on the back can be enough.
- 5. For Coaches:** Keep postgame team conversations brief. Plan two or three important points that will be addressed in practice. Avoid getting on the pulpit and make sure to point out the positive.
- 6. Remind student-athletes that every game is a part of the process of getting better.** Mistakes are opportunities to learn, and losing and playing poorly says nothing about your worth as a person.

Changes on the Horizon

MHSAA Studies Fewer-Than-11 Football Format

The Michigan High School Athletic Association conducted three meetings in January to determine interest on the part of its smallest schools for a football format utilizing fewer than 11 players. The meetings took place at Escanaba High School on Jan. 12, in Indian River at the Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Ile Educational Service District building on Jan. 13, and in East Lansing at the MHSAA office on Jan. 29.

The Representative Council authorized the meetings at its Dec. 5, 2008 meeting, following a review of a survey conducted of member schools in the fall. Every Class D and C school in the MHSAA membership was invited to attend.

The meetings reviewed the formats used in other states for fewer than 11 players. Twenty-one state associations conduct postseason tournaments under three different formats. The nine-player game takes place in Maine, Minnesota and North Dakota; eight-player football exists in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington and South Dakota; and the six-player version is played in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico and Texas.

Rules differences between the 11 player and the reduced-player formats, the impact of the game on neighboring schools, and a potential MHSAA-sponsored reduced-player football playoff were also discussed at the meetings. Feedback was reported to the MHSAA Football Committee Feb. 5. The Representative Council will discuss the topic at upcoming meetings.



An 8- or 9-player football format would offer wide-open offenses, and allow smaller schools the opportunity to field teams.

In the 1930s, approximately 75 small schools sponsored six-player football in Michigan. Sponsorship declined throughout the 1950s as smaller school districts consolidated, giving way to eight-player and eventually to 11-player teams.

New Academic Requirements in '09-10

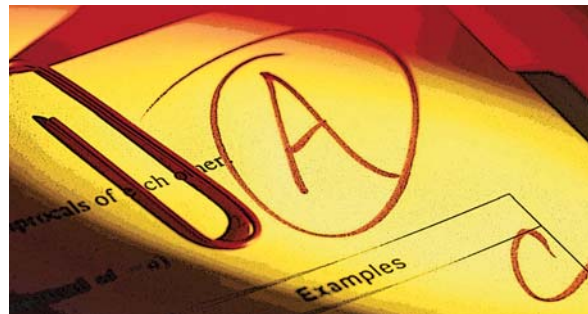
Effective with the 2009-10 school year, the minimum academic standard for athletic eligibility changes to "66 percent of credit load potential for a full-time student," and the period of ineligibility following a deficiency at the end of a term is "the next trimester or 60 scheduled school days in schools not operating under a trimester system."

These changes were approved by the MHSAA Representative Council on Dec. 5, 2008, after more than two years of discussion throughout the MHSAA's diverse constituency. As always, MHSAA member schools may apply higher standards and longer periods of ineligibility than the MHSAA minimum standard.

Prior to the 1986-87 school year, the minimum requirement was that students be passing 15 credit hours. For the past 22 years, the minimum standard has required passing 20 credit hours, usually four courses. The new minimum standard will mean that students who pass four of seven courses, or three of five courses, will no longer meet the minimum standard.

The current rule states that students who are failing to meet the minimum standard are ineligible for the next semester, or 90 school days in schools using academic systems other than semesters. The change that is coming in 2009-10 stipulates that students are ineligible for the next trimester, or 60 school days in schools using academic systems other than trimesters.

The 2009-10 school year will be one of transition, and the following policies and procedures have been approved by the MHSAA Executive Committee as minimum standards for this time of transition:



1. Students must be completing 66% in their first term of the 2009-10 school year.
2. Students in trimester systems who were ineligible at the end of the second trimester of the 2008-09 school year but have a satisfactory third trimester record become eligible on Aug. 1, 2009.
3. Students in trimester systems who were ineligible at the end of the third trimester of the 2008-09 school year become eligible at the start of their second trimester of the 2009-10 school year.
4. Students in semester systems who are ineligible at the end of the second semester of the 2008-09 school year become eligible on their 61st scheduled school day of the 2009-10 school year, provided they have been doing passing work cumulatively for the previous 60 days.
5. Students who achieve credit for 20 credit hours but not 66% of full course load potential for a full-time student (e.g., three of five or four of seven courses) during their last academic term of 2008-09 remain eligible at the start of the 2009-10 school year only.

Weight Monitoring Program Gets Generous Boost

Greg Hatcher, a 1983 graduate of Alma College and current member of the Alma College Board of Trustees, is underwriting Michigan's costs for the National Wrestling Coaches Association's administration of the Michigan Wrestling Weight Monitoring Program.

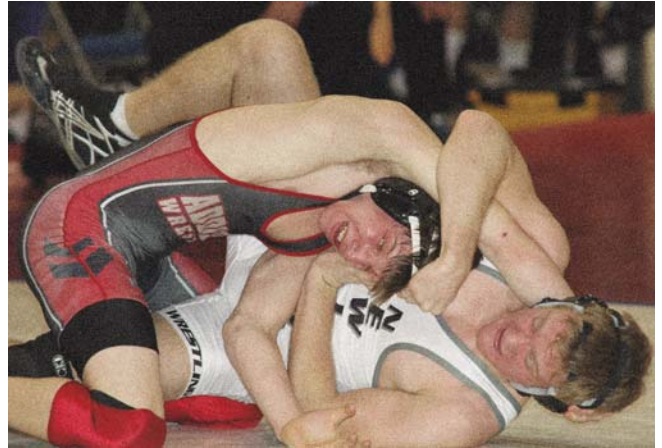
Hatcher is CEO of the Hatcher Agency headquartered in Little Rock, Ark., where the company is the No. 1 producer for eight different insurance companies serving the state. Hatcher graduated from Alma College with a degree in Public Relations. While at Alma, he was president of the student body and lettered in soccer, wrestling and baseball.

Michigan's Wrestling Weight Monitoring Program began with a nutrition education component in the 1994-95 school year. By the 1997-98 school year, the MHSAA was requiring every high school wrestler to have a body fat assessment and then stipulated a lowest eligible weight for competition for each wrestler and a maximum pace for weight reduction to reach that lowest eligible weight.

For the 2004-05 school year, the MHSAA replaced its in-house computer processing and reporting to all teams and schools with the NWCA program that was introduced and successfully tested during the 2001-02 school year.

Michigan was one of the nation's earliest pioneers of a comprehensive weight education and control program in wrestling, taking encouragement and the best ideas from several states, especially Wisconsin. National high school wrestling rules began to require healthy weight management programs during the 2006-07 school year.

Mike Moyer, Executive Director of the National Wrestling Coaches Association, was instrumental in securing Hatcher's support for Michigan high school wrestling. Both Moyer and Hatcher have as a long-term goal restoring intercollegiate wrestling programs in Michigan, in part to help replenish the depleted pool of high school wrestling coaches throughout the state. With nearly 500 high schools sponsoring wrestling for almost 12,000 wrestlers in Michigan, the five intercollegiate wrestling programs that remain in Michigan are inadequate to serve the interscholastic program.



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