



Executive Director's Update

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

33 Forge Parkway Franklin, MA 02038 | 508-541-7997 | miaa.net

An Update from Executive Director Robert Baldwin

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

December 14, 2023

Student Eligibility–Winter Waiver Deadline

As a reminder, the deadline for winter student eligibility waiver submissions is Friday, December 15, 2023. This is a firm deadline and late waivers will not be accepted.

Suspended Game and Overtime Procedures

In an effort to support our Athletic Directors, linked below is a document that outlines all MIAA suspended game and overtime procedures. This document is intended to assist Athletic Directors and Game Officials with the suspended game policies and overtime procedures of the MIAA and NFHS. [Click here](#) to access the document.

Success of the Statewide Tournament

The Fall 2023 postseason marked the beginning of the third year of the MIAA statewide tournament format. The state tournament is administered based upon objective criteria for qualification in order to energize athletic teams and schools, and to provide experiences for entire communities to rally around their student athletes. A key component of the objective criteria is a power rankings formula that is consistent across all MIAA tournament sports, based on a team's **Average Margin of Victory** (capped by sport) plus the **Average of Opponent Ratings** (Strength of Schedule). The top 32 teams in each division plus any additional teams with a .500 record or better are selected and seeded in all tournament sports except Football (top 16 in each division with at least 3 wins) and Rugby (top 4, plus .500 or better record). With seven full tournament seasons of data to evaluate, the MIAA power rankings system continues to be the most accurate method of tournament seeding, allowing for the best teams to advance through the brackets and ultimately compete for state championships. Here is a breakdown of the data back to the start of the statewide tournament format in Fall 2021, based on the percentage of higher seeds winning matchups during tournament play:

- **FALL 2023:** 83.04 percent
- **SPRING 2023:** 82.35 percent
- **WINTER 2023:** 83.92 percent
- **FALL 2022:** 83.69 percent
- **SPRING 2022:** 82.38 percent
- **WINTER 2022:** 82.54 percent
- **FALL 2021:** 79.36 percent

[Click here](#) for a deeper breakdown of each season by sport. The success of the power rankings formula also is reflected by the frequency in which higher seeds advance through tournament brackets and play for state championships. Here is a breakdown of state champions by seed across the 175 total tournament brackets since the implementation of the statewide format in Fall 2021:

- **No. 1 seeds:** 80 (45.7 percent)
- **No. 2 seeds:** 29 (16.6 percent)
- **No. 3 seeds:** 27 (15.4 percent)
- **No. 4 seeds:** 16 (9.1 percent)
- **No. 5 seeds:** 5 (2.9 percent)
- **No. 6 seeds:** 8 (4.6 percent)
- **No. 7 or higher:** 10 (5.7 percent)

Across 175 total tournament brackets, state champions were among the top 3 seeds more than three out of four times (77.7 percent), among the top 4 seeds at an 86.9 percent rate, and a top 6 seed in 94.3 percent of tournaments contested.

On Wednesday, December 13th the Tournament Management Committee voted 5-11 against making any changes to the current Power Rankings formula.

Fall 2023 Tournament Data

On Friday September 29, 2023 we began publishing the Fall 2023 Power Rankings. Every Tuesday and Friday through October 27, 2023, we published power rankings for Football (8 divisions), Fall Volleyball (5 divisions), Field hockey (4 divisions), Boys soccer (5 divisions), and Girls soccer (5 divisions). Power rankings were published on nine (9) different occasions without incident. Prior to the release of the statewide tournament brackets (on time and without incident) records and score results were disseminated to school athletic directors for their verification. [Click here](#) for Fall 2023 Tournament analysis.

Fall Tournament Tidbits

- A total of 338 member schools (out of 383 ... 88.2 percent) participated in at least one of the MIAA's five power seeded fall tournaments – Field Hockey, Football, Boys or Girls Soccer, and Girls Volleyball.
- Of those 338 schools, 323 were host schools in at least one sport, while an additional 15 were guest schools on cooperative teams.
- A total of 34 schools had a team participating in postseason tournaments in all five power-seeded sports. (By comparison, only 22 schools qualified in all five sports in Fall 2022.)
- There were 254 schools that hosted at least one event across the five power seeded tournaments (66.3 percent).
- Two schools earned No. 1 seeds in two power seeded sports – Medfield High School (Girls Soccer, Fall Volleyball) and Uxbridge High School (Field Hockey, Football).
- Uxbridge (Field Hockey, Football) was one of two schools to win State Championships in two sports, joining Norwell High School (Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer).
- Each of the nine MIAA districts had at least two State Championship teams across all Fall 2023 sports (including Cross Country, Fall Golf, and Fall Swimming & Diving).



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- There were 90 different schools (23.4 percent) that reached the State Semifinals round in at least one of the five power seeded sports.
- Of those 90 schools, 18 reached the State Semifinals round in at least two sports.
- Unified Basketball Jamborees were hosted by 17 schools, the largest number of jamborees to date.

Board of Director's Institutional Dues Vote

The Board of Directors approved a recommendation of the Institutional Dues Sub-Committee (IDSC – created in 2020) to increase dues beginning in FY23. The original plan called for an increase over a four-year span to offset obvious increases in services that we are all seeing. However, only year one of the plan was approved (FY23) as the then recently appointed Executive Director wanted to gather more data and information during his first year. Therefore, the scheduled increase in FY24 did not occur. The Board of Directors recently voted to continue the plan as outlined by the IDSC in its original document. It should be noted that prior to this decision, there had not been an increase in dues and service fees since 2014.

For the FY23 budget, the plan called for a \$100.00 increase to the base fee for all member schools and an increase to the service fee, determined by the number of programs at each school (in groups of 5), as a measurement to the level of services. Again, there was no increase for FY24. As we approach FY25, in an attempt to ensure the most consistent stream of revenue, the MIAA Finance Committee and the MIAA Board of Directors voted to approve and continue with the 2020 recommendation of the IDSC.

Therefore, the IDSC approved year two plan of a \$50.00 increase to the base fee and a \$100.00 increase to the service fee (again based by groups of 5) will be implemented for the FY25 academic year.

We hope this will allow you to plan accordingly as you begin to develop the FY25 budget.

Wrestling - Guidance on how to communicate with officials & properly set-up a gym

Last April, the MIAA Wrestling Committee met with the leaders of the Massachusetts Wrestling Officials Association. During the meeting, the leaders from the Wrestling Officials Association expressed deep concerns about the poor treatment of wrestling officials throughout the state, and the negative impact it is having on the dwindling number of wrestling officials we have. Sadly, some of our state's best wrestling officials have walked away from the profession recently, due to the poor treatment they have endured from coaches, fans, parents, etc. The poor treatment of our officials combined with the dwindling number of officials is an extremely concerning trend that could jeopardize schools' abilities to host dual meets, quads, and tournaments. It is our collective responsibility to put an end to this concerning trend and ensure that our wrestling officials feel safe, supported, and

valued. We are asking all Athletic Directors, Wrestling Coaches, wrestlers, school staff, parents, and fans to help us in stopping this negative behavior and concerning trend.

Members of the wrestling committee and officials' association have collaborated to come up with ideas on how to address this problem. Together, they created a document (linked below) intended to outline how Athletic Directors and Coaches should properly set-up their gym for a wrestling event, as well as provide guidance on how coaches should appropriately approach and communicate with the officials.

[Click here](#) to access the guidance document on how to appropriately communicate with officials and how to properly set-up your gym for a wrestling meet. This is also posted on the [MIAA Wrestling page](#).

MIAA Rule Change Proposals

Reminder! MIAA Rule Change Proposals must be submitted to Phil Napolitano (pnapolitano@miaa.net) by June 1, 2024. The form can be found by [clicking here](#).

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit

The 7th Annual MSAA/MIAA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit is scheduled for January 19, 2024 at Holy Cross in Worcester. This year's theme is "From Ally to Activist: Creating Just and Equitable Schools". The event will include breakout workshop sessions and a keynote presentation by Robert Lewis, Jr., Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston Nicholas President and CEO. Please [click here](#) for event and registration information.

MSAA Professional Development Workshops

MIAA's sister organization, the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA), is hosting several tremendous [professional development opportunities](#) this academic year.

The MSAA has listened to its members and created a tremendous list of PD offerings for the coming year. Please send this link to your school Community and support their attendance at these great events. Any questions, please call us- hope to see you soon.

Football Scheduling Fall 2024

In the Fall of 2024, Labor Day is early, 9/2/24 and Thanksgiving is late, 11/28/24. As has been the case in the past, this creates an extra weekend in the qualifying period before the beginning of the state tournament. The extra week is labeled "Week 1A". Schools can schedule a maximum of 8 games in the 9-week period between Labor Day and the cutoff date. The football cutoff date is Sunday, 11/3/24 which is only to allow for postponed games (from Fri. or Sat.) on the final weekend. Schools cannot schedule games on the cutoff date. The Fall 2024 football weekly schedule is posted on the Football Page or at this [link](#).



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NFHS Basketball Uniform Rules

Please note – effective in 2024-25, the number design option that allows for the number to be the same color as the jersey when bordered with no more than two ¼ inch solid border(s) contrasting with the team jersey color will be eliminated (NFHS Rule 3-4-3-e-2). Please [click here](#) for additional information.

NFHS Rule Change Proposals

Each year the NFHS Rule Change Proposal process begins with submissions of possible rule changes through the NFHS website. The Rule Change Proposal timeline and schedule of deadlines can be found [here](#). If you wish to submit a rule change, that may be submitted [here](#). The success of all NFHS rules for high school athletes depends on the collective work and input from coaches, officials, and administrators from across the country.

MIAA Sports Theme Week – created by the MIAA Student Advisory Committee

Each year the MIAA Student Advisory Committee designs a way to leave its “footprint” in Massachusetts. For the 2023-2024 cohort, they have decided to implement a ‘Sports Theme Week’ with the goal of increasing student support and attendance at all athletic events, not just the popular sports. [Click here](#) to access the flyer and details of the ‘Sports Theme Week’ for the winter season. This information, along with a video where you can meet most of the members, is posted on the [MIAA Student Advisory Committee](#) page. We hope all schools within the MIAA participate!

Esports

Esports is a great opportunity for students in your school who spend time with competitive gaming. The MSAA has successfully offered esports for 5 years in collaboration with PlayVS, holding state championship events in the fall and spring. The Fall season is underway but there will be another season beginning in February 2024. This is the perfect time to investigate starting a team at your school. Please consider beginning this very exciting opportunity! If you would like more information, you can reach out to Richard Pearson at the MIAA office (rpearson@miaa.net), inquiring at the PlayVS website [here](#) or email MA PlayVS representative Parker Duwelius at parker.duwelius@playvs.com.

Student Ambassador Information

Registration for the 2023-2024 MIAA Student Ambassador Program is available! Principals and Athletic Directors can register students by [clicking here](#). More information about the MIAA Student Ambassador Program can be found on the [Student Ambassador Program Page](#).

Student-Athlete of the Month Award

Nominations are accepted for the MIAA Student-Athlete of the Month Award. This award recognizes two student-athletes on a monthly basis (from September through May) who display excellence in the areas of academics, athletics and community service. Students in grades 9-12 who attend MIAA member schools are eligible to receive the award. To nominate a Student-Athlete of the Month please [click here](#).

Upcoming Events

- January 19 – MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit at Holy Cross
- January 26 – MIAA Student Ambassador Huddle at MIAA Office
- March 1 – Student Leadership Workshop

Calendar

- December 20 – ERB/MIAC Appeals
- January 9 – Football Committee
- January 10 – Baseball Committee
- January 10 – Basketball Committee
- January 11 – Lacrosse Committee
- January 16 – Unified Sports Committee
- January 17 – Track Committee
- January 18 – Ski Committee
- January 18 – Wrestling Committee
- January 23 – Sportsmanship Committee
- January 25 – TMC
- January 30 – Ice Hockey Committee
- January 31 – Student Advisory Committee

Thanks for your continued support and wishing everyone a wonderful holiday season!

Robert Baldwin



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