

Minnesota State High School League
Board of Directors Meeting
December 1, 2011

Meeting Synopsis

Action Items

- Unanimous approval was given to the addition of a third form of debate – public forum debate – for member school participation. Currently schools can compete in policy debate – teams of two arguing a single topic with cartons of evidence at break-neck speed – and Lincoln-Douglas debate – individual against individual. Public forum debate also involves teams of two facing off on topics that change monthly. The topics tend to reflect important current events. For example, the December 2011 topic in the form of a resolution is “Resolved: In the United States, current income disparities threaten democratic ideals.” The National Forensic League website defines it as “audience friendly debate.” Another website dedicated to public forum debate states, “The clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or ‘citizen judge.’” Minnesota Debate Teachers Association President D.J. Brynteson spoke in favor of the proposal, explaining that it will be much more accessible to classroom teachers and will likely increase overall participation in debate. Assistant Director Chris Franson added that it will offer students life-long learning skills in research and persuasive speaking.
- At the recommendation of staff, the Board approved three additional state track and field events for athletes in wheelchairs. During the 2011 season, athletes in the wheelchair division could compete in the 800-meter and 1600-meter track events and in the shot put. The three additional events offered during the 2012 season will be the 100-meter dash, the 3200-meter race and the discus throw. The League Sports Medicine Advisory Committee will be consulted while staff works to confirm details of wheelchair division competition. Six events will be offered at the 2012 State Track and Field Meet.
- The seeding of Class AA teams, plus the singles competitors of both classes was approved for state tennis tournaments, effective with the 2012-13 school year. The top four Class AA teams will be determined by electronic voting of all of the qualified team coaches, with their opponents determined by random draw. Class A teams will not be seeded. All 16 singles competitors in each class are eligible to earn votes from the coaches in a similar electronic voting process. After the top four seeds are determined, with seeds 1 and 4 placed in one half of the bracket and seeds 2 and 3 placed in the other half, the remaining section champions will then be randomly drawn and placed in the open bracket positions from top to bottom, followed by the runners-up in the same fashion. Adjustments may be made to ensure that champions and runners-up from the same section are placed in opposite halves of the bracket. The seeding impacts both girls’ and boys’ tennis.
- The 2012 football season will feature an additional class, the largest 32 schools by enrollment, and will be designated Class AAAAAA. An adjustment to the format approved earlier was recommended by staff. The Board approved playing four semifinal games on the Thursday prior to Thanksgiving, with five games to be played on each of the following Friday and Saturday. The exact configuration of the schedule of which classes will play on each day is still under review. The Prep Bowl will still feature four games on the Friday

following Thanksgiving and a third game will be added to the Saturday schedule the next day.

- The 2012 State Lacrosse Tournament dates were readjusted to June 5-8. The tentative 2013 dates are June 11-14 and June 10-13 for 2014.
- The Board approved Blaine High School as the site for the 2013 and 2014 State Speech Tournaments. Assistant Director Chris Franson explained that the school will be closed to its students on the Fridays of the tournament week which will allow competition to begin in the morning and conclude in late afternoon.
- The Board accepted a hearing officer's recommendation to place Melrose Area High School back into the West Central Conference, effective with the 2012-13 sports season. The school had been a member for 20+ years and was recently involuntarily excluded. Following required procedure, Melrose Area applied to three conferences and was denied by each. A committee was created to review the school's conference placement dilemma and recommended the West Central Conference, which requested the administrative hearing review.

Discussion Items

- Tournament format adjustments permeated a number of recommendations from various activity advisory committees. For basketball, the proposal is to seed teams 1 through 8 in all classes of boys' basketball and the same for Classes AAA and AAAA of girls' basketball. A second basketball proposal calls for the section seeding of all 64 teams in Class AAAA for both genders in an effort to get the best eight teams to the state tournament. The seeding would be done by a committee and will add competitive balance to geographic representation during the establishment of the sections prior to seeding. The Lacrosse Advisory Committee is proposing expanding from four to eight sections for both genders, even though neither gender quite makes the 64-team minimum of Board policy. The hockey committee is asking for unlimited scrimmages during the first two weeks of the season, as opposed to current policy limiting teams to three calendar dates per season. The Baseball and Girls' Softball Advisory Committees are requesting a return to allowing double-elimination section competition when the final eight teams are decided. Current policy limits double elimination to the final four teams. Feedback from League administrative regions will be sought prior to Board action at the next regular meeting.
- Associate Director Kevin Merkle updated the Board on the use of QRF for section seeding for football, soccer and girls' volleyball this past fall. The Quality Results Formula was used by 40 of 48 football sections and by far fewer sections in soccer and girls' volleyball. Overall, Merkle said it worked well. There were a few instances that revealed that some tweaking of the formula may be required.
- There was brief discussion about expanding continuing education requirements to all coaches at all levels. Associate Director Jody Redman indicated that the Technology/Coaches and Officials Education Committee is making that recommendation and it will be included as an action item at the next regular Board meeting.
- The Executive Committee presented a policy proposal related to comprehensive review of Board policies. The current policy requires that be done minimally every five years. The proposal changes to wording to state that such a review "will be conducted as often as necessary."

Board Committee Reports

Eligibility Committee

The Board adopted eight separate eligibility recommendations from the committee, the bulk of which recommended censure of coaches or school administrators. The committee also discussed policies related to open enrollment options, online student eligibility, and transfer and residence policies for seventh- and eighth-grade students.

Audit/Finance Committee

The Board approved the financial statements for the months of September and October. The committee recommended and the Board approved an \$18,000 payment to Administrative Region 4A to assist in offsetting its section tournament expenses. The committee recommended and the Board granted Finance Director Rich Matter authority to work with RBC Wealth Management to handle cash reserve investments according to Board policy. Chair Luanne Wagner reported that the state auditor's office gave the League its highest opinion after review of League finances.

Marketing Committee

Staff updated the committee on implementation of the 2011-12 communications plan, particularly as it relates to the centennial celebration of state basketball tournaments in March 2012. Staff reported that contracts with current ball and puck manufacturers will be extended for one more year.

Technology/Coaches and Officials Education Committee

In addition to its recommendation to expand coaching education requirements, the committee reviewed statistics about use of the League website, and Technology Director Chris Franson reported that he is working on programming that will tailor League website information for more user-friendly display and retrieval on mobile devices.

Extra Points

- League Lobbyist Roger Aaronson reported that Executive Director Dave Stead and Board President Mindy Sparby testified before the legislative committee reviewing a new stadium for the Minnesota Vikings. He noted that President Sparby stated that thousands of Minnesota students have enjoyed competition inside the Metrodome over the years and urged that if a new stadium is supported that it be required to have a roof to continue to accommodate League competition.
- Executive Director Stead reported that the League Foundation met recently and authorized \$350,000 worth of grants to 223 member schools. He added that a similar amount will be available for another round of grants when the Foundation Board meets again in March 2012.
- Executive Director Stead also announced that he had received word from Perham AD Fred Sailer that Zach Gabbard, the basketball player who collapsed but was revived with CPR and an AED after sudden cardiac arrest, has been cleared by his cardiologist to return to physical education class and basketball practice, but no competition just yet.
- The League office will be closed at noon on Thursday, Dec. 22, and staff will return to work after the holidays the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 3.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the League Board of Directors is Thursday, Feb. 2, 2012, at the League office.