

Minnesota State High School League  
Board of Directors Meeting  
December 5, 2013

Meeting Synopsis

**Action Items**

- The football playoff schedule for 2015 was approved. The two-day Prep Bowl will be played Nov. 13 and 14 at TCF Bank Stadium. Semifinals will be played Nov. 6-8. Quarterfinals will be played Oct. 29-31. The semifinals and quarterfinals will be played at sites yet to be determined. The Board deferred the more difficult decision of when to start the season in order to obtain further information. Based on discussion, there is a consensus to try to maintain an eight-game regular season schedule and still allow eight teams to compete in each section tournament. A number of options prompted considerable discussion, including starting the 2015 season on Aug. 3. Additional opinions will be solicited from principals of the League Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the League Athletic Directors Advisory Committee and presented to the Board at its January meeting. With the scheduled demolition of the Metrodome following the current Minnesota Vikings season, League staff has been exploring options of where and when to conduct future state football tournaments. At its October meeting, the Board voted to conduct the two-day 2014 Prep Bowl on Nov. 21 and 22, also at TCF Bank Stadium. It will require no further adjustment of the football season. The new football stadium for the Vikings and for which the League has guaranteed dates for the football and soccer tournaments, is supposed to open in the fall of 2016.
- The Board approved schedules for 2014 and 2015 for the state soccer tournament. The 2014 quarterfinals will be played Wed.-Fri., Oct. 22-24, with semifinals, third-place and championship games played Tues.-Thur., Oct. 28-30. The 2015 quarterfinals will be played Tues.-Thur., Oct. 27-29, with semifinals, third-place and championship games played Tues.-Thur., Nov. 3-5. Husky Stadium on the St. Cloud State University campus will be the host site for semifinals and championships, with third-place games staged at nearby Selke Field.
- A committee, and in one case an additional hearing in front of an independent hearing officer, resulted in Board placement of two member schools into new conferences. The new conference for St. Thomas Academy of Mendota Heights is the Metro East Conference. The other members of this new conference are Hastings, Henry Sibley of Mendota Heights, Hill-Murray of Maplewood, Mahtomedi, North of North St. Paul, Simley of Inver Grove Heights, South St. Paul and Tartan of Oakdale. The new conference for Benilde-St. Margaret's of St. Louis Park is the Metro West Conference. The other members of this new conference are Bloomington Jefferson, Bloomington Kennedy, Chanhassen, Chaska, Richfield, Robbinsdale Cooper and St. Louis Park. Prior to Board action, Executive Director Dave Stead explained in detail the entire process of what happens when a member school cannot find a conference on its own.
- An increase in the official squad size for baseball teams from 18 to 20 was approved by the Board. The primary reason revolves around having enough players to pitch, allowing for depth of the roster for substitutions. Pitchers cannot pitch more than 14 innings on any given day or in three consecutive days.

- The Board approved a partnership with the Minnesota High School Press Association to assist the organization in expanding its programs to more League member schools. Media Specialist John Millea will work as the League liaison with the MHSPA.

### **Discussion Items**

- The development of a plan to schedule regular-season football games is another step closer to reality. Associate Director Kevin Merkle, who has spearheaded numerous meetings with members of the football community for several years, presented additional details about what he is calling district scheduling. The plan calls for the Board to divide member schools into districts of 16 or more, using geographic proximity and like enrollments as the placement criteria. The member schools within each district would then establish their own protocol for scheduling eight regular season games. Merkle reminded the Board that the status quo is no longer acceptable, adding that an estimated 20 percent of member schools have had difficulty filling an eight-game regular season schedule. In order to best present the plan to all member schools, webinars will be scheduled for member school personnel that will outline the dilemma and the proposed solution, and to solicit feedback. The goal is for the Board to take action on a plan at its January meeting.
- Expansion of the state girls' fast-pitch softball tournament from three to four classes was also discussed. The proposal from the sport's advisory committee would still allow the state tournament to be conducted over just two days and still allow for consolation play. Concerns about treating individual four-class tournaments differently in terms of structure were raised by some Board members. Several staff members also indicated that other sport advisory groups interested in adding a class are awaiting the Board's decision, including girls' volleyball and baseball.

### **Board Committee Reports**

- *Executive Committee*  
The committee voted to allow St. Louis Park to continue to play girls' hockey in Class A. The committee will also be drafting a bylaw amendment for Representative Assembly action pertaining to deadlines for establishing cooperative sponsorship agreements.
- *Eligibility Committee*  
The Board adopted 12 separate eligibility recommendations for violations of various bylaws, including accepting several corrective action plans and the censure of three different head coaches.
- *Audit/Finance Committee*  
The Board approved the financial statements for the months of September and October. The committee was also informed that the annual financial review by the state auditor's office is complete with the exception of the final report expected later this month.
- *Communications and Marketing Committee*  
The committee reported that League member schools have now received the questionnaire for a Listening to Students survey for which a minimum of 10 percent of the student body should complete it. Staff also reviewed a public relations opportunity afforded the League by a Wells Fargo buy of airtime during Fox Sports North broadcasts of Minnesota Timberwolves and Minnesota Wild games. During game breaks, broadcast talent presents information about League activities and thus far has focused on the fall state tournaments.

Future segments will delve into other League programs such as officiating, fine arts programs and winter state tournaments.

- *Technology/Coaches and Officials Education Committee*  
Staff offered updates on the coaches education program and an annual Midwest Officials Summit.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the League Board of Directors is Thursday, January 23, 2014, at the League office.