

## MIAA RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS FOR 2021-2023

The following reflects Rule Change Proposals that have been submitted as permitted in the Procedure for Requesting a Rule Change, Rule 89, pages 94 and 95 of the current MIAA Handbook. **Please note: Rule Change Proposals list Current Rule (listed in 2019-21 handbook), Proposal, and Rationale.** All responding groups should review the proposals and forward their recommendations, using the attached form, to MIAA Assistant Executive Director, Phil Napolitano. Although changes should not be made on the original proposals, any group may make amendments, which will be included in the report passed on to the next group in the process.

The MSSADA and all MIAA Administrative Committees are welcome to act on each rule change proposal. In the section on Sport Specific Rules (rule change proposals 25-37 within this packet) MIAA sport committees should only act on general rules (rules 1-24 and 38-46) and rules specific to their own sport.

Each of the below named groups, when reviewing a rule change proposal, may take one of the two following actions:

- Record votes in favor and opposed to each proposal.
- Recommend an amendment to the proposal with votes recorded in favor and opposed.

### **REVIEWING BODY ACTIONS MUST REFLECT THE ACTUAL VOTE**

1. MIAA Sport Committees and MIAA Administrative Committees votes are due to the MIAA by December 1, 2020.
2. The Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) votes are due to the MIAA by February 1, 2021. The MSSADA should not act until they have the packet that includes all earlier votes.
3. The MIAA District Athletic Committees (DAC) votes are due to the MIAA by March 1, 2021. The DAC's should not act until they have the packet that includes all earlier votes.
4. The MIAA Board of Directors will act upon proposals by May 15, 2021.
5. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council will act upon all proposals by June 1, 2021 and their decision(s) are final.

1. **Page 13**

**Coaches Code of Ethics**

**By: Lisa Dunderdale, Michael Hartnett, Gretchen Hartnett, Theresa Lee, Anupama Sehgal – Northborough and Southborough Parents**

**Current Rule:**

Each high school coach is first a TEACHER. The student-athlete is participating within the school's activity program because he or she desires to do so. Consequently, that student is often more attentive to a coach's lessons than to those offered by teachers in required courses.

The function of a interscholastic coach is to educate students in "LIFE LESSONS," through their participation in educational athletics. Every student-athlete should be treated as though they were the coach's own children. Their welfare must be uppermost at all times. The following abridged guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFICA Board of Directors.

1. The coach must be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, either for good or bad, in the education of the student-athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
2. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
3. The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse, and under no circumstances should authorize their use.
4. The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
5. The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with the contest rules and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
6. Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship in the broadest possible manner.
7. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct, which will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
8. A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration

**Proposal:**

Add another guidelines for the Coaches' Code of Ethics

9. A coach shall promote and advocate for the health and safety of the student athletes at all times, above all other factors.

**Rationale:**

Coaches play a very important role in the safety and prevention of injuries for student-athletes. This addition will clearly state their role in promoting and advocating for the health and safety of the student athletes, allowing coaches to raise concerns to administrators and officials on student-athlete safety issues.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	3-10-0 Denied
Basketball Committee	12-6-0 Approved
Cross Country & Track Committee	7-7-1
Field Hockey Committee	6-8-0 Denied
Football Committee	5-10-0 Denied
Game Officials Committee	6-5-0 Approved
Gymnastics Committee	3-5-0 Denied

Ice Hockey Committee	3-12-1	Denied
Lacrosse Boys Committee	5-6-0	Denied
Lacrosse Girls Committee	2-8-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	4-7-0	Denied
Ski Committee	5-4-0	Approved
Soccer Committee	8-7-1	Approved
Softball Committee	9-7-0	Approved
Sports Medicine Committee	12-7-1	Approved
Sportsmanship Committee	6-7-1	Denied
Swimming & Diving Committee	7-6-0	Approved
Tennis Committee	7-10-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	8-5-0	Approved
Wrestling Committee	6-2-4	Approved

2. **Page 18**

**Part I, Icon I: Game Officials Committee**

**By: Richard Pearson, MIAA Associate Executive Director & Game Officials Committee Liaison**

**Current Rule:**

*I* Game Officials' Committee Membership of the Game Officials Committee (GOC) consists of five school committee members, five school superintendents, five principals, and five athletic directors. Game officials representing each sport which has elected to enroll with the MIAA serve as non-voting advisors to the GOC.

**Proposal:**

Membership of the Game Officials Committee (GOC) will consist of:

- A. One principal and one athletic director from each of the nine athletic districts. Principals and athletic directors are appointed by their respective District Athletic Committees. ("Principal" may be either a principal or assistant principal who spends at least 50% of his/her time in duties related to the general administration of the school.) If a district is unable to provide both a principal and an athletic director to serve as representative, the District Chair may appoint a second principal or athletic director to serve for a one-year term only.
- B. Two school committee members appointed by MASC from school systems having one or more schools that are institutional members of MIAA.
- C. Two superintendents appointed by MASS from school systems having one or more schools that are institutional members of MIAA.
- D. Game officials representing each sport sponsored by the MIAA may serve as non-voting advisors to the GOC.

**Rationale:**

Each sport committee of the MIAA is represented by 2 school leaders, principals and athletic directors, from each district and region of the state as well as other appointments. This model has been a valuable opportunity for information to be received from and pushed out to Association members in all regions of the state. The input of regional leaders is a key component of governance and thorough decision-making of the MIAA. Athletic Directors and principals are very much involved in the budgetary discussions of their schools districts and can add a vital voice to the work of the GOC

A major responsibility of the GOC is to set recommended regular season fees as well as tournament fees. The GOC takes this responsibility seriously but has also recognized that during deliberations, all regions of the state may not be represented due in large part to the previous structure of the committee.

The current Game Officials' Committee has maintained an original structure from many years ago that has met with questions from membership as to representation from all regions of the state. This proposal affords regional representation from all areas of the state but also adding an extra superintendent and

Lacrosse Girls Committee	3-7-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	8-2-1	Approved
Ski Committee	8-1-0	Approved
Soccer Committee	16-0-0	Approved
Softball Committee	15-1-0	Approved
Sports Medicine Committee	16-4-0	Approved
Sportsmanship Committee	14-0-0	Approved
Swimming & Diving Committee	11-2-0	Approved
Tennis Committee	7-10-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	10-3-0	Approved
Wrestling Committee	7-4-1	Approved

4. **Page 30**

**Part II, Definitions and Policies – Add Rule 32 to this section**

**By: Lisa Dunderdale, Michael Hartnett, Gretchen Hartnett, Theresa Lee, Anupama Sehgal – Northborough and Southborough Parents**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

*New Rule 32 - Providing a Safe Environment for Regular Season Contests*

32.1- The Athletic Director is responsible for site safety during the regular season contests: determining the safety of the site for home and visiting student-athletes and fans; preparing the site for competition; ensuring emergency procedures are reviewed with visiting coaches and officials prior to the start of a contest; must have an AED on-site (and accessible) or with their medical provider for all athletic events; report any unusual incidences and all injuries.

32.2- Postponements

32.2.1 The host school administrator or athletic director (not an involved coach) must be depended upon to advise regarding local weather conditions, or to determine if a contest will be postponed.

32.2.2 The following must be the considerations for postponing a regular season contest: Health and welfare of the student-athletes; conditions of the field/court or location of the athletic contest; comfort and safety of the fans; travel conditions for participants and fans.

32.2.3 Directors must notify the Association/Arbiter Sports immediately about postponements which will then be reported to scheduled officials and on the MIAA Web page.

32.2.4 The Officials have charge of the game from the opening whistle on, and have the responsibility to determine the safety of the field/court/or location of athletic contest - and have the authority to postpone the game, or delay the contest until such time as the location is considered safe for play. Officials will be guided by the National Federation rules for the year in determining whether or not the game should be stopped. (Example: Playing conditions are unfair or dangerous for players, darkness, etc.) Referees would notify both head coaches of the decision, and their decisions would not be subject to negotiation.

**Rationale:**

The MIAA handbook clearly strives to include the student-athlete’s personal safety as a high priority, including sections on “Thunder/Lightning”, “Blood Borne Pathogens”, “Medical Emergency Response”, “Missing/Damaged organs”, “Concussions”, and “Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco” but doesn’t have a policy for site safety guidelines and protocols to help mitigate the risk of injuries for the student-athletes during the regular season. By creating this section with guidance from existing MIAA policies for Tournaments, the

adults responsible for conducting secondary school sports will be aware of each other's roles in making decisions and working together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the student athletes.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	3-10-0	Denied
Basketball Committee	2-13-3	Denied
Cross Country & Track Committee	3-11-1	Denied
Field Hockey Committee	2-12-0	Denied
Football Committee	2-11-2	Denied
Game Officials Committee	3-8-0	Denied
Gymnastics Committee	1-7-0	Denied
Ice Hockey Committee	3-12-1	Denied
Lacrosse Boys Committee	0-10-1	Denied
Lacrosse Girls Committee	1-9-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	3-8-0	Denied
Ski Committee	2-6-1	Denied
Soccer Committee	2-14-0	Denied
Softball Committee	4-12-0	Denied
Sports Medicine Committee	3-13-4	Denied
Sportsmanship Committee	7-4-3	Approved
Swimming & Diving Committee	2-11-0	Denied
Tennis Committee	2-15-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	4-8-1	Denied
Wrestling Committee	5-5-2	

**5. Page 34**

**Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School**

**By: Sherry Bryant, MIAA Associate Executive Director & Field Hockey Committee Liaison**

*\*Supported by the MIAA Field Hockey Committee*

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

Under Fall Sports insert:

<u>Fall Sports</u>	<u>Maximum # of Competitions</u>	
	<u>Per Season</u>	<u>Per Week</u>
Boys' Field Hockey	18	3

7 v 7 format which operates under the current Field Hockey Committee and follows NFHS rules, modified by the MIAA Field Hockey Committee for 7's.

**Rationale:**

We understanding the timing for this rule is less than ideal given the challenges related to the pandemic that have come to exist for member schools. We respectfully request support for the sanctioning of boys' field hockey in order to allow the structure of this pathway for boys to be created and available for individual schools and co-op programs as they look to move forward. We recognize that in the absence of viable gender specific programs that all high school players may participate in the current High School Field Hockey programs, providing equity for all, while gender specific programs are grown.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	8-5-0	Approved
Basketball Committee	14-4-0	Approved
Cross Country & Track Committee	10-5-0	Approved
Field Hockey Committee	14-0-0	Approved
Football Committee	8-7-0	Approved
Game Officials Committee	8-3-0	Approved

Volleyball Committee 5-6-0 Denied  
Wrestling Committee 3-8-0 Denied

44. **Page 101**

**Part VIII, Rule 92: Game Officials – Policies and Procedure**

**By: Lisa Dunderdale, Michael Hartnett, Gretchen Hartnett, Theresa Lee, Anupama Sehgal – Northborough and Southborough Parents**

**Current Rule:**

92.17 The Game Officials Committee shall establish official's fees for MIAA sponsored tournament competition.

**Proposal:**

92.17 The Officials have charge of the game from the opening whistle on, and have the responsibility to determine the safety of the field/court/or location of athletic contest - and have the authority to postpone the game, or delay the contest until such time as the location is considered safe for play. Officials will be guided by the National Federation rules for the year in determining whether or not the game should be stopped. (Example: Playing conditions are unfair or dangerous for players, darkness, etc.) Referees would notify both head coaches of the decision, and their decisions would not be subject to negotiation.

**Rationale:**

This specifically states officials have the authority after the start of a contest to determine if a contest needs to be postponed, delayed, or stopped due to unsafe conditions and it would be logical for it to follow rule 92.16 Postponement and Forfeiture. The added rule identifies the role of officials and allows for all responsible adults who conduct secondary school sports to work together for the safety of the student-athlete.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	3-9-1	Denied
Basketball Committee	6-10-1	Denied
Cross Country & Track Committee	2-13-0	Denied
Field Hockey Committee	1-12-0	Denied
Football Committee	4-12-0	Denied
Game Officials Committee	4-6-1	Denied
Gymnastics Committee	1-8-0	Denied
Ice Hockey Committee	3-10-0	Denied
Lacrosse Boys Committee	0-10-0	Denied
Lacrosse Girls Committee	2-8-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	2-9-0	Denied
Ski Committee	1-7-1	Denied
Soccer Committee	3-13-0	Denied
Softball Committee	2-15-0	Denied
Sports Medicine Committee	2-15-2	Denied
Sportsmanship Committee	6-6-2	
Swimming & Diving Committee	2-8-1	Denied
Tennis Committee	1-17-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	5-6-0	Denied
Wrestling Committee	3-8-0	Denied

45. **Page 113**

**Part IX, Rule 96: Divisional Enrollment: Co-operative Teams**

**By: Merrimack Valley Conference – Athletic Administrators**

**Current Rule:**

96 For all sports that establish divisions by enrollment, all approved cooperative teams will use the enrollment of largest school in the co-op for Divisional Alignments. Each school participating in an

approved co-operative program must register that sport by indicating “co-op” on the membership registration form. Tournament alignments are presently done for four year cycles (presently 2017-18 to 2020- 2021) using enrollment from grades 9-12 (10/1/15) as submitted to DESE, two years before the start of a cycle.

**At the end of the current alignment cycle: 2020–2021, Tournament alignments will be established every 2 years beginning with the 2021–2022 school year.**

**Proposal:**

Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, Tournament Alignments will be established every four years.

**Rationale:**

For many years, MIAA association policies established alignment every four years. Aligning schools every four years allowed for proper planning and attention to what is a complex and detailed process. Aligning every two years will create an endless cycle of obtaining October school enrollments, setting up committees and subcommittees to evaluate sports specific alignment and presenting proposed alignment to the TMC. This every two-year process is unnecessary.

Many schools do not change substantially in a two-year window. This has been the case for many years of MIAA governance. Although some schools on the edges of alignment cutoff sizes (largest and smallest) would desire change in division, these changes are not extensive across the membership of 375+ member schools.

A two-year alignment process that requires extra time and effort from sport committees and busy school leaders does not seem necessary for most schools. This proposal would return the alignment process to what was a functional and more manageable four-year window.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	5-7-1	Denied
Basketball Committee	4-12-1	Denied
Cross Country & Track Committee	3-12-0	Denied
Field Hockey Committee	3-10-0	Denied
Football Committee	4-12-0	Denied
Game Officials Committee	2-9-0	Denied
Gymnastics Committee	1-8-0	Denied
Ice Hockey Committee	4-9-0	Denied
Lacrosse Boys Committee	0-10-0	Denied
Lacrosse Girls Committee	1-9-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	2-8-1	Denied
Ski Committee	4-4-1	
Soccer Committee	1-15-0	Denied
Softball Committee	1-15-1	Denied
Sports Medicine Committee	0-15-4	Denied
Sportsmanship Committee	5-8-1	Denied
Swimming & Diving Committee	2-9-0	Denied
Tennis Committee	2-16-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	4-7-0	Denied
Wrestling Committee	5-6-0	Denied

**46. Page 113**

**Part IX, Rule 99: Tournament Administration and Accountability**

**By: Lisa Dunderdale, Michael Hartnett, Gretchen Hartnett, Theresa Lee, Anupama Sehgal – Northborough and Southborough Parents**

**Current Rule:**

99.8.2 The following must be the considerations for postponing a tournament activity: Health and welfare of the student-athletes; comfort and safety of the fans; travel conditions for participants and fans; alternative scheduling options; and financial implications.

**Proposal:**

99.8.2 The following must be the considerations for postponing a tournament activity: Health and welfare of the student-athletes; **conditions of the field/court or location of the athletic contest**; comfort and safety of the fans; travel conditions for participants and fans; alternative scheduling options; and financial implications.

**Rationale:**

The condition of a field /court and location safety is a consideration for postponing a tournament and regular season contest.

**REVIEWING BODY ACTION:**

Baseball Committee	2-10-1	Denied
Basketball Committee	3-13-1	Denied
Cross Country & Track Committee	2-13-0	Denied
Field Hockey Committee	1-12-0	Denied
Football Committee	5-11-0	Denied
Game Officials Committee	3-8-0	Denied
Gymnastics Committee	2-7-0	Denied
Ice Hockey Committee	0-13-0	Denied
Lacrosse Boys Committee	2-8-0	Denied
Lacrosse Girls Committee	2-8-0	Denied
Rugby Committee	1-10-0	Denied
Ski Committee	2-6-1	Denied
Soccer Committee	3-13-0	Denied
Softball Committee	1-15-0	Denied
Sports Medicine Committee	5-12-2	Denied
Sportsmanship Committee	1-12-1	Denied
Swimming & Diving Committee	0-11-0	Denied
Tennis Committee	3-15-0	Denied
Volleyball Committee	2-9-0	Denied
Wrestling Committee	1-9-1	Denied