



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

October 17, 2024

MIAA Board of Directors Update

On October 9, 2024 the MIAA Board of Directors received and placed on file the following rule clarification:

Rule 40.7.2 – Any student who is eligible to attend your school, whether through residency or an application process. This applies to all schools, including public, private, vocational, charter and school choice.
Note: This applies to those students covered in rule 40.7.5.

The definition of a Candidate reads as follows:

40.7.3 A varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in a high school program at some interscholastic level the previous year and has eligibility remaining; or
40.7.4 A middle school student "selected" to participate in an out-of-season program.
40.7.5 A sixth grade student in a 7-12 high school or an eighth-grade student in a 9-12 high school.

Student and Coach Contest Disqualification Forms

Please make sure to use the most up-to-date version of the MIAA Student and Coach Contest Disqualification Forms. These forms were updated in August 2023 and are available in the ["Officials" section](#) of the MIAA website. When a student or coach is disqualified from a contest, the required form must be completed by the game official and submitted to the athletic director in charge of the contest **before leaving the site**. Below are links to each form:

[Student Contest Disqualification Form](#)

[Coach Contest Disqualification Form](#)

Please note - All fields within the form are required to be completed by the game official, as well as a description of the disqualification **including the violation called**. Forms submitted with incomplete information may be returned to the host school/game official to provide any missing details.

Student Eligibility Waiver Deadlines

As a reminder, below are the seasonal deadlines for student eligibility waiver submissions as outlined in MIAA rule 87.1. These are firm deadlines and late waivers will not be accepted.

- Winter – December 15, 2024
- Spring – April 1, 2025

Middle Level and Coop Application Deadlines

The winter 2024-25 middle level waiver and cooperative application deadline is December 12, 2024.

The Building Principal as CEO

Any public or private secondary school in Massachusetts that has been approved by the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) receives all the rights, privileges and benefits of the Association. This is achieved through an annual agreement signed by the school principal, headmaster, or director, pledging to adhere to the Association's rules governing athletic activities.

In order to participate in interscholastic athletics under the MIAA, each principal and athletic director must read, understand, and be prepared to enforce all rules, regulations, and policies contained within the MIAA Handbook. Additionally, coaches are expected to have a thorough understanding of these requirements and ensure compliance among their team members.

This commitment to understanding and enforcing the MIAA guidelines serves to ensure that everyone involved in the athletic program, is fully aware of their responsibilities and obligations. Accountability and adherence to the deadlines and protocols set forth by the MIAA membership must be consistently applied in order to provide a means of equitable competition for the entire membership of the Association. It is the ultimate responsibility of the building principal to ensure that all those under their direction conduct the core functions and duties of their responsibilities with fidelity. The building principal has oversight of interscholastic athletics in a secondary school.

The administration of an interscholastic contest or meeting is the responsibility of the school principal or their authorized staff representative, who also acts as the manager of the team or group representing the school. No school can engage in any interscholastic activity without the principal's approval, emphasizing their pivotal role in overseeing the athletic program.

The principal's responsibility extends to the eligibility of each contestant. They are personally accountable for attesting to the eligibility of each participant. The school community takes the matter of allowing an ineligible player to participate in a contest seriously, emphasizing the need for principals to give personal attention to this issue. The building principal may designate and/or delegate certain responsibilities to athletic directors and coaches in their schools, however, ultimately the building principal is the CEO of Interscholastic athletics.

State Tournament Director Vacancy

The MIAA is seeking candidates for Ice Hockey State Tournament Director and Indoor Track Tournament Director. Candidates should send letter of interest and resume:

Ice Hockey - Richard Pearson, rpearson@miaa.net

Indoor Track – Keith Brouillard, kbrouillard@miaa.net

Deadline for applications is November 8, 2024. For more information, [Click here](#).



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Fall Tournament Seeding Guidelines and Schedule

As we enter Year 4 of the Statewide Tournament format, the MIAA – including tournament directors and seeding committees -- will continue to follow the guidelines developed in Fall 2022 in an effort to streamline the process of producing the final power rankings, and create a smoother process of building and releasing the tournament brackets. [Click here](#) for the guidelines and seeding/bracketing schedule for each of the five Fall 2024 power ranked sports, as published in the tournament formats.

2024-25 Schedule Commitment Deadline & Process

Three days before the Schedule Commitment deadline, MIAA staff will produce and publish schedules for each sport based on the available data for review and verification by member schools. Below is the breakdown for the rest of the 2024-25 school year:

- WINTER 2024-2025
 - First contest date: Thursday, December 12
 - Schedule data published for review: Tuesday, December 17
 - Schedule Commitment deadline: Friday, December 20
- SPRING 2025
 - First contest date: Thursday, March 27
 - Schedule data published for review: Tuesday, April 1
 - Schedule Commitment deadline: Friday, April 4

Please be sure to check the [MIAA Sport Limitations Information Sheet](#) for the maximum number of competitions allowed per week and per season in each sport.

Fall Tournament Dates/Locations:

Cross Country – Divisionals – November 9

Northfield Mountain
Fort Devens
Wrentham Development Center

Cross County – State – November 16

Fort Devens

Field Hockey – November 15-16

Worcester State

Football – December 4, 5 & 6

Gillette Stadium

Golf – State – October 21

D1- The Haven Country Club
D2 – Berkshire Hills County Club
D3 – Foxboro Country Club

Soccer – State – November 23

Swim & Dive – Sectional – November 3

MIT

Swim & Dive – State – November 10

Boston University

Volleyball – State – November 15-16

Worcester North HS and Billerica HS

Unified Basketball – November 7-22

Various Sites

Fall Individual Tournament Deadlines:

- **Cross Country** – November 4th. No late entries will be accepted after this date.
- **Swimming & Diving**
 - Sectional Meet – Monday, October 28th 5:00pm
 - State Meet – Monday, November 4th – 5:00pm

Tournament Entry – Opt-in vs Opt-out

Beginning with the Fall 2024 season schools will not be required to submit a tournament entry. Schools will be required to submit communication if choosing to opt out of tournament play. This new process is only for sports that utilize the MIAA power ranking system. Hybrid sports will continue to require a tournament entry process. [Click here](#) to complete the "Opt-Out" Form.

Soccer Game Day Form/Reporting Infractions Friendly reminder from the MIAA Soccer Committee regarding Soccer Game Day Form/Reporting Infraction process. Athletic Directors must visit the Soccer page on our MIAA website for more information. Good luck with your seasons! <https://www.miaa.net/soccer>

Football Helmet Reconditioning Label Notification The National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association (NAERA) has sent notice to the NFHS addressing issues with the exterior football helmet warning labels that were applied to football helmets that were reconditioned in 2024. [Please reference the notice from NAERA here.](#)

Football Handshake Lines – IMPORTANT

Many of our schools and teams are aware of a disappointing and challenging trend starting to appear in football handshake lines. The acronym BTA is being used as they proceed through the handshake line and slap the opponents. Additionally, there have been some reports of "we whipped you" and then a losing team being struck with belts. Please consider getting ahead of this and inform coaches and players about the sportsmanship expectations for all students. The handshake line has been an important part of Educational Athletics, and it serves one purpose only: to celebrate the effort and value of competition. Please ask coaches to address their team about these expectations and by under no means should any player strike or aggressively place hands on another player of the opposing team during the handshake line. Actions such as this must be mentioned in advance and addressed swiftly should they occur. Let's all be aware of how to help our students navigate the social media bluster that can cause severe challenges for players and teams.

Please be aware of fake social media accounts impersonating the MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association). The official MIAA account is @miaa033. Any other accounts claiming to be the MIAA may contain scam links or misleading information. Always verify the account before clicking on any links or engaging with content.



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Field Hockey Protective Equipment Reminder

The MIAA follows NFHS Rules for Field Hockey. We would like to remind you of the following rule regarding player equipment: NFHS Rule 1, Section 6, Article 5 states: "Goggles may be worn by all field players. A face mask may be worn by field players throughout the game. The face mask shall be smooth, rounded, preferably transparent or single-colored and fit flush with the face. It shall not be attached to any hard, unyielding headgear (even if padded)."

Additional Important Points:

- Goggles are optional for field players, not mandatory.
- Face masks are permitted for all players during the entire game.
- Face masks must be smooth, follow the contours of the face, and be a single color or transparent.
- Steel or cage-type face masks are not allowed.
- Players wearing face masks must not conduct themselves in a manner that increases risk to other players.

Please ensure that all coaches, players, and officials are aware of these equipment guidelines. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact the MIAA office.

Swimming Software - Hy-Tek Team Manager

All Swimming programs must use Hy-Tek Team Manager beginning in the 2024-25 school year. Team Manager Lite **cannot** be used anymore. There are three versions of the software which can be accessed at this link: [Team Manager pricing and selection](#). Any version, bronze, silver or gold can be used for MIAA Tournament Entry.

Additional information can be found at the links below:

- [Team Manager software overview](#)
- [Hy-Tek support page](#)
- [Hy-Tek Swimming main page](#)

MIAA Alignment Process

The TMC alignment process calendar for the 2023-25 alignment cycle is as follows:

*Fall Alignments for 2025-26 & 2026-27	
Proposed alignments released	September 1, 2024
Deadline to appeal	October 1, 2024
Appeal hearings	Throughout October 2024
Final alignments released	November 1, 2024
*Winter Alignments for 2025-26 & 2026-27	
Proposed alignments released	December 1, 2024
Deadline to appeal	January 1, 2025
Appeal hearings	Throughout January 2025
Final alignments released	February 1, 2025
*Spring Alignments for 2025-26 & 2026-27	
Proposed alignments released	April 1, 2025
Deadline to appeal	May 1, 2025
Appeal hearings	Throughout May 2025
Final alignments released	June 1, 2025

All schools wishing to request to move up or down in the

alignments should complete the [appeal form](#).

*Using October 2023 enrollment numbers

Neck Laceration Protectors for Ice Hockey Required 2024-25

In the spring of 2024, the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Committee added neck laceration protectors to the required ice hockey equipment. All high school ice hockey players will now be required to wear a neck laceration protector – in its original manufactured state and as intended by the manufacturer – during all MIAA interscholastic contests, scrimmages and practices.

FY25 MIAA Membership Directory

The FY25 MIAA Membership Directory is now available in the members only area of our website. The Directory contains the names and contact details, as currently contained in our master database, of member school

Principals, Assistant Principals, Athletic Directors, Assistant Athletic Directors, Athletic Administrative Assistants, and Principals' Administrative Assistants. We ask that you review your school's information carefully to ensure accuracy. We would like to have a work phone number and email address for every person listed. In addition, the cell phone number of Athletic Directors is requested, if not already included. Please check for any items that may need to be added, modified, or deleted. Changes should be sent to Jan Martin at jmartin@miaa.net. Thank you.

Student Ambassador Information

Registration for the 2024-2025 MIAA Student Ambassador Program is now open! 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 being 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](#).

NFHS Rulebooks for Schools

You may recall reading in the June 13th Executive Director's Update that the MIAA is providing an opportunity to purchase NFHS rulebooks for you and your coaches for the 2024-25 school year. Each book is offered at the discounted price of \$6.00 per book for paper copies only.

Please complete the order form as soon as possible since the Fall season is already here! Once the ordered rulebooks arrive in our office, we will ship them to your school at no additional cost. The NFHS shipping timeline is outlined below:

December 1 – Spring sport rulebooks



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Webinar for School Leaders: Combatting Hate in Massachusetts Schools

October 22, 2024 - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

School leaders: Please join us for presentation by Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell and her staff on the latest updates to state guidance on preventing and responding to hate and bias incidents in schools. The webinar will review the newly released [Guidance on Schools' Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents](#). The audience for this webinar is superintendents, principals, other district and school leaders, and school district attorneys.

MSAA Professional Development Workshops

MIAA's sister organization, the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA), is hosting several tremendous [professional development opportunities](#) this academic year. These PD offerings are geared toward all educators and would benefit your staff. Please forward this

link to your staff throughout your district and encourage them to attend. 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.

MIAA Committee Highlights

In adhering to committee protocols, it is stated that the secretary of each committee shall keep the records of the meeting and shall send copies of these records to the Executive Director. [Click here](#) to view the records of the meetings that were received by the Executive Director.

MIAA Orientation Workshop for Principals & Athletic Directors – November 21, 2024

The MIAA is excited to announce that the next MIAA Orientation Workshop for Principals & Athletic Directors will be offered on Thursday, November 21, 2024 from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM at the MIAA office. This is an in-person workshop with no virtual option. This workshop fulfills the MIAA mandatory attendance requirement for new Principals and Athletic Directors per MIAA Handbook Rule 32.1. For more information and to register, [Click here](#).

Congratulations to the 2024-2025 MIAA Distinguished Award Recipients

- Glenn Doulette, AD, West Springfield HS
- Martha Jamieson, Retired AD, Silver Lake RHS
- Mary Lou Thimas, Game Official
- John Young Award: Scott Paine, AD, Scituate HS

These recipients will be recognized at the MIAA Awards Banquet on December 11th.

Call for Nominations: MIAA MA Women in Athletics Distinguished Service Award

The MIAA Women in Leadership Committee yearly recognizes women who have worked with distinction on

behalf of the girls' sports in their communities with the Massachusetts Women in Athletics Distinguished Service Award (MWADSA). This award celebrates the efforts of those whose contributions have had a lasting and profound effect on female student athletes. [Click here](#) for nomination form – due November 15, 2024.

Sportsmanship Summit Registration Open

Registration is open for the 30th Annual MIAA Sportsmanship Summit at Gillette Stadium on Thursday, November 7, 2024. This event will include student breakout sessions, an adult breakout session, award presentations and a keynote presentation by Eddie Slowikowski. Schools may register a maximum of 10 participants for this event. The registration deadline is November 1. If capacity is reached prior to the deadline, a waiting list will be established. [Click here](#) to register.

Upcoming Events

- November 7 – [Sportsmanship Summit at Gillette](#)
- November 21 – Rule/Orientation Workshop
- December 11 – MIAA Awards Banquet at DoubleTree Hotel, Milford
- January 17 - MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit at Holy Cross

October & November Calendar

- October 21 – Tennis Committee
- October 21 – Softball Committee
- October 22 – Basketball Committee
- October 23 – Baseball Committee
- October 23 – TMC (Virtual)
- October 24 – Rugby Committee
- October 24 – Media Day
- October 30 – Track Committee
- November 11 – Urban AD Meeting (Virtual)
- November 12 – DAC Chairs (Virtual)
- November 13 – Board of Directors (Virtual)
- November 14 – TMC

Thanks for your continued support.

Robert Baldwin

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