



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 12, 2024



Happy Holidays from MIAA Staff

Powers and Duties of the MIAA Board of Directors

Per affirmation by legal counsel, the MIAA Board of Directors voted unanimously to affirm the powers and duties bestowed upon them in April 2023 (as a result of the constitution revision process) with respect to the mission of administration of the Association.

The recent changes to the organizational structure of the MIAA and the MIAC (April 2023) represent a significant step toward enhancing clarity and consistency in governance. The unanimous votes from both the MIAC and the MIAA Board of Directors to revise the MIAA constitution have established clear lines of authority and defined roles, ensuring that the Board of Directors serves as the final regulatory authority in the rule change process. This restructuring not only codifies the systems and processes within the association but also reinforces the Board's ability to deliver consistent interpretations and enforcement of rules and regulations. This initiative has been met with strong support from the membership, signaling a collective commitment to the principles of fair and effective governance in interscholastic athletics.

The Constitution of the MIAA clearly delineates the authority of the Board of Directors in the following sections of the constitution under D. Board of Directors:

2. The Board of Directors shall carry out the general activities and promulgate policies of the Association.
4. The Board shall be the chief regulatory authority of the Association except for individual student eligibility determinations which it has specifically delegated such authority to the Eligibility Appeals Board (EAB).
8. The Board shall have the following powers and specific duties: (i) give interpretations of the rules relating to interscholastic athletics excluding individual student eligibility.
10. The Board shall issue rules and regulations governing interscholastic athletics and may review these from time to time.

These statements collectively affirm the Board's authority to interpret and modify rules and policies as necessary to ensure effective governance and consistent application within the Association.

MIAA Rule 40

A "candidate" is defined as:

40.7.2 A varsity or sub-varsity athlete who;

- is enrolled at the MIAA member school where the coach is employed or volunteers for the specific sport in question,
- participated in a high school program at any interscholastic level the previous year, and
- has eligibility remaining; or

40.7.3 Students in the grade immediately below the designated structure of the school, such as a sixth-grade student for a 7–12 school, a seventh-grade student for an 8–12 school, or an eighth-grade student for a 9–12 school.

Note: For private, vocational, charter, and school choice schools, all students in the grade immediately below the designated structure of the school are considered candidates.

Students who reside outside the school's established residency admission criteria are not considered candidates under rule 40.7.3. (e.g., for vocational schools that serve a specific group of towns/cities, only students that reside in those towns/cities are considered candidates).

Schedule Commitment

Pursuant to MIAA Rule 32, member schools agree that prior to the first fall season contest, each principal and athletic director [for each member school] must read entirely, understand, and abide by, and be prepared to enforce all rules, regulations, and policies contained within the MIAA Handbook.

For more than 20 years, Rule 35, *Starting and Closing Dates for Tryouts, Practices, and Contests* has been a part of the MIAA Handbook. The [Sport Limitations Sheet](#) is included annually within Rule 35 that clearly publishes the dates for Schedule Commitment Deadlines.

Whereas a number of violations pursuant to Rule 35 occurred in the 2023-2024 Winter Season, the MIAA embarked on a Schedule and Commitment Process in an attempt to prevent these incidents from occurring in the future. On May 15, 2024, the MIAA Board of Directors voted to receive and place on file the administration's recommendations regarding the Schedule and Commitment Process by a vote of 14-0-1.

Schedule Commitment Deadlines for each season are published in the [Sport Limitations Sheet](#). Schools must adhere to the maximum number of competitions allowed per week and per season in each sport and submit this information via the MIAA scheduling system by these seasonal deadlines.

Placeholder games must be entered on the schedule for regular-season contests, including tournaments, that are played before the cutoff date and for which an opponent has not been determined. The Opponent for such games must be listed as "TBA" for each of these games.



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- Leagues/conferences/regions may hold end of the regular-season tournaments, approved by the Board of Directors, as part of their committed schedules.
 - The championship game will be exempt from the maximum game limit number for each sport
 - All games prior to the cutoff day WILL COUNT in the power rankings
 - If a tournament is scheduled to run after the cutoff date, those games WILL NOT COUNT in the power rankings and these games must be completed prior to the start of the MIAA tournament.
 - Teams will not be penalized for including a placeholder TBA on the committed schedule for a contest in which they later don't qualify
 - The TBA placeholder game must be part of a tournament or other approved event.
- After the established commitment deadline, all schedules will be considered FINAL and no changes can be made.
- A school shall not participate in any contest(s) not listed on a team's schedule as of the Schedule Commitment Deadline. Any violation of this policy will result in the team receiving a forfeit loss for each unscheduled contest played.

The Schedule Commitment deadline for Winter 2025 sports, as published in the Sport Limitations Sheet, is Friday, December 20. Three days before the Schedule Commitment deadline (Tuesday, December 17), MIAA staff will produce and publish – on the Tournament Administration section of the MIAA website – schedules for each sport based on the available data for review and verification by member schools. All schedules for Basketball and Ice Hockey must be entered into Arbiter by the end of the day on December 20. After that point, no changes can be made to your opponents or the number of games/matches that can be played. After the December 20 commitment deadline, all schedules will be considered FINAL.

Success of the Statewide Tournament

The Fall 2024 postseason marked the beginning of the fourth year of the MIAA statewide tournament format. The state tournament is administered based upon objective criteria, including a power ranking formula that is consistent across all MIAA tournament sports and factors in a team's **Average Margin of Victory** (capped by sport) plus the **Average of Opponent Ratings** (Strength of Schedule).

The MIAA power ranking system continues to be the most accurate method of tournament seeding. During the Fall 2024 postseason, higher seeded teams had a cumulative success rate of 83.96 percent across the five power-ranked sports. Of the combined 27 championships awarded in those five sports, 12 were won by No. 1 overall seeds and 10 more were won by No. 2 seeds. No. 3 and No. 4 seeds won two championships apiece.

But one of the guiding principles of the MIAA statewide tournament since its inception – in all power seeded sports except Football and Rugby -- has been the inclusion of the top 32 power ranked teams in each division (regardless of overall record) plus any additional teams with a .500 record or better.

In Boys Soccer, Newton North High School finished the Fall 2024 regular season with a record of 4 wins, 9 losses and 5 ties. Under no previous MIAA tournament format would Newton North have been eligible for the tournament, but in this case a power ranking of 31 earned the school an opportunity to host a preliminary round game in the Division 1 bracket. Newton North proceeded to win six consecutive games over a span of 22 days and captured the first Boys Soccer state championship in school history.

While the MIAA power ranking system consistently allows the best teams to advance through the brackets and ultimately compete for state championships, the success of Newton North embodies another key component of the MIAA statewide tournament philosophy – to energize a wider range of athletic teams and schools, and provide more experiences and opportunities for entire communities to rally around their student-athletes.

The following shows the cumulative record of higher seeds throughout the tournament in each of the five power ranked sports:

Field Hockey:	85.7 percent (114-19)
Football:	84.2 percent (101-19)
Boys Soccer:	78.7 percent (163-44)
Girls Soccer:	86.1 percent (174-28)
Volleyball:	85.9 percent (165-27)

Top 4 seeds accounted for 51 of 54 championship game berths (94.4 percent) across all sports and divisions, and 87 of 108 state semifinal spots (80.6 percent).

Student & Coach Contest Disqualification Forms

As we begin the winter season, please make sure to use the most up-to-date version of the MIAA Student and Coach Contest Disqualification Forms. The forms 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 with 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 missing information.

Middle Level and Coop Application Deadlines

The winter 2024-25 middle level waiver and cooperative application deadline is December 20, 2024.



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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

MIAA Alignment Process

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

*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 [winter sport appeal form](#).

*Using October 2023 enrollment numbers

Institutional Membership Dues Increase

The MIAA Board of Directors during their December 11, 2024 meeting unanimously approved an institutional membership dues increase beginning in FY26.

The initial increase for a large school with 28 sports has an increase of under \$300, which is the highest increase over the 5 year period. The ultimate goal of this dues increase proposal is to raise the amount of dedicated revenue to 25% of the operational budget.

[Click here](#) for additional information.

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](#)

Basketball Shot Clock Procedure

NFHS Basketball Shot Clock Guidelines state, "An alternate-timing device or procedure shall be available when a visible shot clock malfunctions." In accordance with this rule, the MIAA Board of Directors approved the following procedure at their December 11th meeting. This procedure should be implemented in the event of a visible shot clock malfunction during the upcoming basketball season.

If **one** visible shot clock malfunctions:

- Continue play with one visible clock.

If **both** shot clocks malfunction:

- An alternate-timing device must be utilized at the scorer's table.
- Time should be announced at 10 and 5 seconds remaining.
- The shot clock operator should use a horn different from the game clock.

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.

National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study

High school injury surveillance has been collected annually for 20 years. High schools throughout the country report injury data through RIO – Reporting Information Online, which is known by many as the annual High School RIO report. Each year, certified athletic trainers from hundreds of high schools across the country participate in High School RIO. They report valuable information which allows evaluation of rates and patterns of injury across sports, types of athletic activities, and sex. If your school or athletic trainer would be interested in participating, more information can be found at this [link](#).

Sherman A. Kinney Award Nomination For outstanding contributions to the sport of high school basketball

Each year, the Sherman A. Kinney Award is presented to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the sport of basketball in the school or community, has consistently served as a positive role model for young student athletes; whose actions consistently exemplify the tenets of the MIAA Sportsmanship Philosophy; and has provided long term service in the sport of basketball in the school or community. Please [click here](#) to submit a nomination. Nominations are due January 10, 2025.

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



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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](#).

Game Officials Newsletter – Winter Edition

[Click here](#) to view the latest edition

Social Media Accounts

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.

Upcoming Events

- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit**
The 8th Annual MSAA/MIAA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit is scheduled for January 17, 2025 at Holy Cross in Worcester. This year's theme is "Leading With Courage". The event will include a variety of breakout workshop sessions and a keynote presentation. Space is limited and registration will close when capacity is reached. [Click here](#) for registration information.
- **Ambassador Winter Huddle**
The MIAA Student Ambassador Winter Huddle will be held on **Friday, January 24th**, at the MIAA Office in Franklin. This free community service focused workshop is offered to only student ambassadors who have been officially registered as MIAA Student Ambassadors for the school year by their school administration. The Huddle Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and typically fills quickly, so be sure to secure your spot early! [Click here](#) to view the flyer and register.

January Calendar

- January 8 – MIAA Board of Directors – Virtual
- January 9 – Football Committee – Virtual
- January 9 – Track Committee
- January 15 – Baseball Committee
- January 15 – Unified Sports Advisory – Virtual
- January 16 – Wrestling Committee – Virtual
- January 21 – Soccer Committee – Virtual
- January 22 – Lacrosse Committee – Virtual
- January 22 – Sportsmanship Committee – Virtual
- January 23 – TMC
- January 28 – Ice Hockey Committee – Virtual
- January 29 – Volleyball Committee – Virtual
- January 29 – Basketball Committee – Virtual
- January 29 – Student Advisory Committee

Holiday Office Hours

- December 24 – Close at Noon
- December 25, 26 & 27 – Closed
- December 31 – Close at noon
- January 1 & 2 – Closed

MIAA Sportsmanship Summit

The 30th Annual MIAA Sportsmanship Summit took place at Gillette Stadium on Thursday, November 7. Over 900 student and adult leaders from more than 100 member schools attended this year's event. Attendees participated in breakout sessions on the topic "Creating a Positive Game Day Experience" and the resulting feedback will be utilized by the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee to review policies. Eddie Slowikowski gave a keynote presentation entitled, "Being YOUR Best! YOU Are Who WE Are" and a variety of sportsmanship awards were presented. Student feedback from the event included:

"I really enjoyed breaking down into groups and talking to different people about their experiences. I also appreciated meeting different people and finding people that play the same sports as me."

"I found one important concept is how the importance of leadership impacts the team and how even if you are not a captain you can be a leader, and the way the leaders act on the team affect how the rest of the team plays and interacts with refs, coaches, and the other team."



Students from the Big Three Conference at the Sportsmanship Summit.

Thanks for your continued support.