RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE
Principals’ Committee on Athletics
Monday, April 6, 2020 @ 1:30 pm
RIIL Office
875 Centerville Road, Building #3
Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Kelly; Mmes., Gribbin, Henneman, Keegan, Ponte and Wallace. Messrs., Barbieri, Cobain, Coleman, DiMuccio, Habershaw, Kavanagh, Sollitto, and Whaley

Also Present: Thomas Mezzanotte, Executive Director; Michael Lunney, Assistant Executive Director, Susana Borges, Administrative Assistant, Donna Kane, Business Manager, Carolyn Thornton, Director of Multimedia Content, Brendan McGair, Pawtucket Times, and Bill Koch, Providence Journal

Absent: Messrs., Barr, Buchanan and Warner

The April meeting of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

On a motion made and seconded, the Committee voted to move to Executive Session.

PCOA EXECUTIVE SESSION
The following items were discussed in Executive Session: 2020-2022 alignments, school start time request and rule violations.

On a motion made and seconded, the Committee voted to move out of Executive Session.

PCOA MINUTES JANUARY 13, 2020 AND SPECIAL MEETING FEBRUARY 26, 2020
On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA minutes from the January 13 and special meeting on February 26, 2020 meeting were unanimously (14-0) approved.

RIIL FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
Stuart Peterson of Janney, Montgomery, Scott, provided the PCOA with an investment update. Mr. Mezzanotte presented a summation of COVID-19 impact on winter playoffs. It was also noted Donna Kane, Business Manager, is in the process of applying for a stimulus small business grant. Mr. Mezzanotte reported due to reserve funds, the RIIL will be able to make up (winter and potential spring sports) deficits from the 2019-2020 school year to maintain current staff and services to schools.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Mr. Mezzanotte reported on the following:

- The RIIL received a letter regarding school start times.
- RIIL Press Release – Appointment of Michael Lunney, Executive Director
- NFHS Releases “Beyond the Scoreboard” video resource for Adult Fan Behavior at Events
- Congratulations to Cailin Martin from Rogers High School the recipient of the 2020 NFHS Heart of the Arts Winner: “The National High School Heart of the Arts Award was created by the NFHS to recognize those individuals who exemplify the ideals of the positive heart of the arts that represent the core mission of education-based activities.”

2020-2021 SPORTS ALIGNMENTS
On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) voted to approve a one-year extension of the 2018-2020 sports alignments for the fall, winter and spring seasons. This extension will be in effect for the 2020-2021 school year only.
RIIL RULE VIOLATIONS
Block Island School – Article 6., Penalties, Section 10, Cancellation/Forfeits of Game (Girls Basketball)
The RIIL was notified by the Block Island principal that the Block Island Girls’ Basketball team forfeited their playoff game on February 27, 2020. On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) voted to put the Block Island Girls Basketball team on probation for one year. The RIIL thanks the BI principal for self-reporting this rules violation.

Juanita Sanchez Complex – Article 6., Penalties, Section 6, Use of an Ineligible Athlete (Girls Basketball)
The RIIL was notified by the Juanita Sanchez athletic director that the Juanita Sanchez Girls’ Basketball coach used an ineligible athlete in a non-league game vs Mt. Pleasant HS. On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) voted to place the Juanita Sanchez Girls Basketball coach on probation for one year. Juanita Sanchez forfeited the game versus Mt. Pleasant HS. The RIIL thanks the JS athletic director for self-reporting this rules violation.

Central High School – Article 7., Limitation of Seasons, Section 7, Coaching Students in the Off Season During the Academic Year
The RIIL was notified by the Central HS athletic director that their assistant football coached players from Central playing in a flag football league in MA. On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) voted to issue a warning to Central HS.

Hope High School – Article 6., Penalties, Section 10, Cancellation/Forfeits of Game (Girls Basketball)
The RIIL was notified by the Hope HS principal that the Hope High School Girls’ Basketball team forfeited their league game vs Lincoln HS on February 18, 2020 due to a lack of players. On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) voted not to penalize Hope High School. The RIIL thanks the Hope HS principal for self-reporting this rules violation.

RIIIAAA REPORT – CHRIS COBAIN
Mr. Cobain, President of the RIIAAA, reported the RIIAAA Awards banquet originally slated for March 30 has been rescheduled to May 18, but will need to be rescheduled again. Mr. Cobain commended Classical Athletic Director Robert Palazzo on receiving the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award. The RIIAAA is in full support of whatever opportunity the RIIL and PCOA can provide for spring sport athletes.

WINTER SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS
On a motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously (14-0) approved the following 2020 winter sports championships: Boys’ and Girls’ Indoor Track, Boys’ and Girls’ Swimming, Gymnastics, Wrestling and Boys’ Freshman Basketball. In light of the disrupted school year caused by the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis, on a motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously (14-0) approved the following 2020 winter sports championships:

Cheer Championships:
State Champions – West Warwick High School
Co-ed Division – West Warwick High School
Super (Division I) – Coventry High School
Large (Division II) – North Providence High School
Medium (Division III) – Ponaganset High School
Small (Division IV) – North Smithfield High School
Game Day – Coventry High School

Boys’ Hockey:
Division I – La Salle and Mt. St. Charles Academy – State Co-Champions
Division II – East Greenwich and South Kingstown High School – Co-Champions
Division III – West Warwick/EWG Co-op

Girls’ Hockey:
La Salle Academy
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Girls’ Basketball:
Division I – South Kingstown High School (recognized as State Champions)
Division II – Scituate High School
Division III – Mt. Pleasant High School

Boys’ Basketball:
Division I – Bishop Hendricken High School (recognized as State Champions)
Division II – Portsmouth High School
Division III – Lincoln High School

SPRING SPORTS
In light of the disrupted school year caused by the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis, on a motion made and seconded, the PCOA discussed and unanimously (14-0) approved the following:

- A modification to Article 7, Section 3: Limitation of Seasons. The start date of the 2020 RIIL spring sports season was delayed until May 4, contingent upon students returning to regular in-class instruction on that date and in accordance with all R.I. Department of Health and public safety guidelines. Teams will play a modified schedule with games beginning no earlier than May 11. The spring sports season ending date is extended to June 27. Please note this timeline will be reevaluated and modified accordingly based on any new announcements or changes made by Governor Gina Raimondo and RIDOH.

Also, the following rule waivers which will apply for the 2020 spring sports season only:

- Article 3, Section 4: Academic Eligibility – The PCOA unanimously (14-0) approved a waiver of the current academic eligibility standard to allow each schools’ principal to determine student eligibility for the 2020 spring sports season only. This waiver is to acknowledge the unusual circumstances in grading during this time of distance learning.

- Article 3, Section 6: Transfer Students – In acknowledgement of a shortened spring sports season, the PCOA unanimously (14-0) approved a waiver of the 50-percent ineligibility period for all spring sport transfer students, as long as a completed transfer affidavit form has been filed by the school principal/athletic director at the RIIL office.

The Committee then adopted the following closing motion: THAT ANY AND ALL MOTIONS, AMENDMENTS AND ACTIONS BY THE PRINCIPALS’ COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS AND THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE PRINCIPALS’ COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS TO THIS DATE BE REAFFIRMED AND RATIFIED.

The April meeting of the Principals’ Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 3:30 P.M.

Signed:

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Susana Borges, RIIL Board Secretary