

Interscholastic



Eligibility Committee

The next and final meeting for the Eligibility Committee will be on Tuesday, March 8, 2016. Any school wishing to request a waiver for a student for spring sports should call Patty Newman at the MPA immediately to schedule a hearing on that date.

Cooperative Individuals Participating At Regional/State Championships

Schools with athletes participating as cooperative individuals (sending schools) at other schools (receiving schools) that compete in different classes are asked to verify where their athletes will be competing at the upcoming regional and state championships. This information may be found on the bottom portion of the Cooperative Individual Agreement that was submitted to the MPA office prior to the start of the season.

If an athlete from the sending school is competing at the same venue as that of the receiving school, then the coach from that school may serve as the athlete's coach at the championship. If the athlete is competing at a different venue, the sending school is reminded that the athlete must be accompanied by an eligible coach at the regional or state championship. If a school has a question about where an athlete is competing, contact the MPA office.

Baseball Rules Meeting

Due to the low number of rule changes in 2016 there will not be mandatory rule clinics for coaches this spring. The rule changes that have been made will be outlined in the 2016 MPA Baseball Bulletin. Prior to the start of the season each school will be provided with a short quiz on the baseball rules to help coaches with commonly misinterpreted rules.

MPA Hall of Excellence

Nominations are currently being accepted for the 2016 class of inductees into the *MPA Hall of Excellence*. If you have had a student, an athlete, a coach, or an administrator that has had a significant impact on school based activities in Maine, please consider nominating that individual. Also, consider outstanding officials, adjudicators, media, or health care providers that may have had a similar type of impact.

Click [HERE](#) to access the *MPA Hall of Excellence* materials.

Notes and Updates

Cooperative Team Policy — Schools with **individual students** wishing to participate as individuals with another school in the spring sports of tennis and outdoor track must apply on a form that can be found by clicking [HERE](#) and must be filed prior to the first countable contest (April 14, 2016). Participation is defined as attending practices and contests with the school team. Schools with **cooperative teams** in sports such as football and ice hockey are reminded that these teams are approved for no more than a two-year period. Schools may reapply to the executive director for the continuation of the cooperative team. Schools wishing to start **cooperative teams** must apply six months in advance of the starting date of the applicable sport season.

The deadline for applying for a cooperative team in the fall is March 4, 2016. Regulations for cooperative individuals or cooperative teams may be found on page 27 of the MPA handbook.

Team Benches—As tournament time arrives for winter sports, schools are reminded that there are restrictions as to who can sit on team benches or, in the case of wrestling, swimming, skiing, and indoor track, who can be in the areas restricted to teams. Only certified coaches who are on a school's certified coaching list may be on the bench or in the team area. In addition, managers or other non-playing student personnel must be high school students.

Middle School/High School Competition—A reminder to schools (with the exception of those with 60 or fewer students per gender) that middle school students are not allowed to practice with or compete against high school teams. This would include freshman and JV teams. A school may request a waiver in order to fill a sub-varsity schedule and to schedule a game with the middle school within the district.

Skimeister—A reminder that with the separation of Nordic and Alpine ski that the skimeister competition will no longer take place. If an athlete would like to compete in both sports it would be considered dual participation and the decision to allow that to take place would be a local decision.

Performing Arts Students Develop Skills Needed for Life and Work

By Treva Dayton on December 21, 2015

Participation in education-based high school activities helps students develop important life skills such as dedication, perseverance, commitment, teamwork, and a sense of fair play. Performing arts activities provide students opportunities to develop skills needed to be successful both in life and at work. Music, theatre, and speech and debate activities are ideal for developing what has been called the Four Cs of 21st century skills—critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), a non-profit group that links college career placement offices with employers, conducted a survey in 2014 asking hiring managers to prioritize skills they consider important when recruiting new employees. Those at the top of their list included leadership, along with the ability to work in a team structure, to make decisions and solve problems, to communicate effectively with people inside and outside the organization, and to plan, organize, and prioritize work.

Being a team player in a performing arts group means students must accept different roles for different situations. At times, a student may be a cheerleader to help and

encourage those who are frustrated and struggling to master their part. It could require mentoring of new members who are learning the culture of the group. Sometimes it means becoming a peacemaker when tensions flare between members. And other times it means stepping up and becoming a leader, even if they have not been given that title. Group projects do not end with high school, and the ability to work with diverse people in a variety of circumstances is a skill that will serve these students well.

It is not surprising, of course, that students in performing arts become better communicators, but not just from the self-confidence and fluency they gain through performance or public speaking. Successful performers are good listeners as well. They don't just hear, but learn to listen to nuances, to silences, to choice of words as part of the message. Effective communication is a two-way process, and learning to truly listen is essential.

Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." Offering opportunities for students to participate in performing arts activities is an excellent way to do so.

Undergrad Tournaments

This is a reminder that following the winter season (February 20), the Sport Season Policy does not allow an MPA member school's team or individuals to play or practice outside the sports season, use school equipment or facilities, be transported by the school or a school-affiliated organization, or use the school name.

Under the Sport Season Policy, coaches or advisors employed by the school system are prohibited from coaching or giving instruction about a sport to members of a school team individually or collectively outside of their normal sport season.

Coaches may be present at games in which athletes from their school are participating as long as it is taking place in a public facility and no coaching and/or instruction is taking place.

Sportsmanship Awards

One of the mandates that the Maine Principals' Association's Sportsmanship Committee received when it was formed five years ago was to find ways to improve sportsmanship in MPA sponsored activities. It seems that incidents of poor sportsmanship have increased nationwide and that these incidents get a lot of publicity in the local and national press. In order to combat this trend, the Sportsmanship Committee sponsors sportsmanship awards for Maine students. The awards will honor up to four students, or groups of students, for an outstanding display of sportsmanship during the 2015-16 school year and will be awarded in June to the winners. MPA member schools may nominate their own student(s) or a student(s) of any opponent. The deadline for nominations is May 10, 2016. The award's criteria and a nomination form may be found at www.mpa.cc/id_sportsmanshipaward.html. The Sportsmanship Committee will choose the winners from among the nominees in late May, and the awards will be made by a member of the Sportsmanship Committee at the spring banquet or class day ceremonies at the winner's school. Member schools are encouraged to help the MPA improve the level of sportsmanship throughout the state by nominating worthy students. Questions concerning this program may be directed to Gerry Durgin at the MPA office (622-0217, Ext 41).

Softball Certified Bats

The Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA)/USA Softball, in working with Easton Baseball/Softball Inc. (Easton), recently announced that Easton is voluntarily removing the following softball bat models from the ASA/USA list of certified bats: SCN1, SCN11BH, SCN1B, SCN2B, SCN3, SCN4B, SCN5, SCN5B, SCN6B, SCN7, SCN7B, SCN8, SCN8B, SCN9, SCX14, SCX14B, SCX24B, and SCX3.

The NFHS Softball Rules Book specifically states that the bat must contain the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification mark and NOT be on the ASA non-approved

bat list. Therefore, these bats are no longer permitted in NFHS contests. NFHS Rule 1-5-1d is listed below for your convenience.

Rule 1-5-1d

The bat shall:

d. Meet the 2004 ASA Bat Performance Standard, bear either the 2000 or 2004 certification mark and not be listed on the ASA non-approved bat list as found on <http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball.aspx>. Bat barrels made entirely of wood are permitted and need not bear an ASA mark, but shall not exceed 2¼ inches in diameter.

NFHS Network

This winter the following championship games will be broadcast through the NFHS Network:

- Cheering**—State Championships, February 6, 2016
- Basketball**—Quarterfinal Games, February 10–16, 2016
- Girls' Ice Hockey**—State Championship, February 13, 2016
- Wrestling**—All Championship Matches, February 13, 2016
- Swim**—State Championships, February 13–16, 2016
- Indoor Track**—State Championships: Class A, February 15 and Class B, February 13, 2016
- Boys' Ice Hockey**—State Championships, March 5, 2016

Private School Law

Those students that attend a recognized private school, or an approved private school with an enrollment of 60 or fewer students, and reside in your community may request approval to participate in co-curricular activities at your school. Denial to participate may occur if the school does not feel they have the “capacity” to provide the student with the opportunity to participate in the activity. If approval is withheld a written explanation must be provided to the student’s parent or guardian stating the reason or reasons for the decision to withhold approval. For an updated list of approved and recognized private schools in Maine please click [HERE](#).

Baseball and Softball Pitcher/Catcher Conditioning Week Modified

At the Interscholastic Business Meeting at the MPA Fall Conference a modification to the week of pitcher and catcher arm conditioning was approved. The purpose of the additional week of arm conditioning for pitchers and catchers in both baseball and softball remains in place to allow those athletes to begin a conditioning program that will help to begin to build a base and reduce early season arm injuries. This change now allows for a school to determine who those pitchers and catchers may be, not setting a limit of 8 pitchers and 2 catchers in baseball, and any combination of 10 in softball, while clearly identifying what may and may not occur during this week of conditioning.

The week prior to the start of the preseason should be a comprehensive program that involves the following components. It is important to note that it is recommended that all athletes be involved in some type of a conditioning program prior to the start of any organized practices.

Stretching – Proper stretching of the entire body, allowing for preparation of proper mechanics, is crucial. Flexibility and balance are important components of the program.

Strengthening – A throwing program should be progressive and should begin to build a base that athletes will develop throughout the season.

Cardio – Aerobic training designed to build full body endurance to prevent fatigue and overuse injuries is an important component. Recommendation include 20–40 minutes (biking, elliptical, treadmill) three times during the week.

Recovery – Pitchers should be throwing no more than 3–4 times during the week and should be provided the proper amount of rest that allows the arm to recover.

This week of arm conditioning is not intended to be an additional week of preseason practice. Below is a list that includes, but may not be limited to, activities that are prohibited during the week.

- No bats, including fungo bats
- No defensive drills related to positional play
- No pick off drills
- No blocking drills
- No base coverage drills
- No footwork drills, other than proper mechanics for pitchers and catchers
- No live stand-in batters
- No simulations