

FISCAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE
December 8, 2008
Conference Call

ATTENDANCE: Jen Simmons (1), Fred Gula (2), Dawn Field (3), Julie Maney (4), Rick Admunson (5), Mark Ward (6), Karen Lopez (7), Mike Mahoney (8), Pat Calnon (10), Ed Cinelli (11), Bob Munn (Budget & Finance Committee), Pat Pizzarelli (NYSPHSAA President) and Nina Van Erk (NYSPHSAA Executive Director).

MINUTES:

President Pizzarelli welcomed the group and thanked the committee for their willingness to serve and assist the Association in working toward reducing the fiscal impact interscholastic athletic programs will have on the NYSPHSAA, Sections and member schools. He announced Julie Maney, Executive Committee member from Section IV, will serve in the capacity of committee chair.

President Pat began the meeting by asking each committee member to review their suggestions and concerns.

Jen Simmons (1) – Section I recently changed the number of contests that will be held in the Westchester County Center opting to use the high seed for the semifinals of the Section I basketball tournament.

Fred Gula (2) – Expressed the need to look at quality and not quantity in the NYSPHSAA Championship events. He offered the following suggestions:

1. Reduce the number of teams that go to the Championships. Possibly restructure brackets so in team sports only 2 teams in each class go to the Championships.
 - ◆ Quality: Only the elite should be going to the Championships. Emphasis should be on the Sectional Championships. This would cut down on expenses for the Association and the Sections.
2. Utilize the conference phone more for all meetings.
3. Can we cut down on the amount of travel by the Executive Director and Asst. Directors and the additional expenses associated with it? How many do we send to the National conferences?
4. Individual Sports: Eliminate competitor t-shirts for track and cross country and use numbers. (This would be a savings for the sections and/or school districts.)
5. Wrestling: The competitors could use the singlet from their own school. (This would be a big savings to the sections and/or school districts.)
6. Lodging: Since the Holiday Inn is a corporate sponsor, we should be seeing a better rate for the rooms. Would also like the price of the room to include

breakfast. (This would again be a savings to the sections and/or school districts.)

7. Individual Sports: Should they be truly individual sports? Some of them are team and individual. Can look at large school/small school, but if you can ski, swim, wrestle, run, does it really matter what size school you are from in an individual sport?
8. Increase in # of Officials: The Safety Committee should be utilized more and weigh in on this issue with supportive evidence. Just because college level has more officials, doesn't necessarily mean we need them at the high school level.
9. Before things are added, thought should be given to how does this affect the Sections. Is the expense just being passed down to the Sections, schools, etc?

Dawn Field (3) – Reviewed the list of suggestions offered by her and John Rathbun. She also highlighted the use of the Chief School Officer Committee at the Section level. This promoted understanding and assistance in making difficult decisions regarding spending for interscholastic athletics. Section III offered the following suggestions.

1. Increase use of telephone conferencing.
2. Video conferencing for appeals? Possibly through BOCES?
3. Approve Cheerleading as a sport (revenue generator).
4. Rescind the open Sectional policy - Back to 40% rule
5. Reviewing contracts with sites and officials
6. Create more neutral sites for Section play - Closer sites to the playing schools
7. Review Sectional Championship Sites - Alternatives

Future Suggestions for the Section to consider:

1. Eliminate split class tournaments
2. Reduce competition by 80%
3. Look to eliminate cross boarding with officials
4. Travel cap for Sections - No school will travel over 100 miles to participate in a Sectional event
5. Create policies and practices regarding sponsorships
6. Out of state travel
7. Review leagues modified schedules - Recommendations only
8. Sharing bus opportunities
9. Mandates
 - Fingerprinting
 - Coaching requirements
10. Review rules and mandates for future financial impact to schools, leagues and Section

Julie Maney (4) – Brought forth the issue of territorial rights for sport officials. There are areas in Section IV that are forced to use sport officials that come from the far away causing travel cost to be the highest possible when closer officials from a neighboring chapter could be used.

Rick Admunson (5) – Suggested that the direction for reductions come from the top down so that the NYSPHSAA take a leadership role and works to assist school districts in trimming costs. He suggested looking at reducing staff at the NYSPHSAA office.

Mark Ward (6) – Highlighted the need for the Association to assist school districts in making changes and reducing their athletic budgets. He suggested that the changes would need to have a significant impact.

Karen Lopez (7) – Offered the following suggestions:

1. Eliminate neutral officials for all regional games by using host section officials.
2. Place a moratorium on all mandated meetings and expansion of state tournaments.
3. Centralized locations for state championships to reduce costs to sections
4. Streamline Central Committee meeting to a two day meeting. Do sport coordinators have to do an annual report or can it be processed through Championship Advisory Committee?

Mike Mahoney (8) – Urged the committee to seek solutions for the school level. The projected tax cap will have a significant affect on local schools and that is where the hard choices will need to be made.

1. Limit the number of scrimmages per team, per season to a maximum of 3.
2. Mandate that districts eliminate one non-league game per varsity and Junior varsity team per season.
3. Consider a reduction of maximum number of games per sport for a defined period.

Pat Calnon (10) informed the committee the budget reserve was based on 50% of the operating expenses but now that the operating expenses exceed two million dollars the \$600,000 actually represents approximately one third of the operating expenses.

Ed Cinelli (11) – Provided the following feedback for consideration.

1. Reduce the number of classes in NYSPHSAA Championships by one.
2. Reduce the number of participants in Individual sports, strict qualifying procedures.
3. Centralized sites for NYSPHSAA Championships – travel is very expensive.

Bob Munn (Budget & Finance) - Suggested requesting congress for a bail out. Should consider the re-evaluation of the budget reserve to possibility reduce it from the current \$600,000. He submitted the following as suggestions:

1. Adopt a moratorium on state championships for the next two fiscal years, stipulating that no proposed changes or additions to the championships will receive consideration.
2. Ask the Executive Director to review the Associations budget and offer reductions totaling the \$65,000 to offset the loss of dues revenues.
3. Utilize telephone conference calls and web camera meetings more extensively to save on travel costs.
4. Direct sports committees to review all championship venues and budgets to see where reductions in expenses can be gained without compromising a quality experience for the participants.
5. Review fund balance philosophy, potentially reducing the amount to ease the financial pressure for a couple of years.

DISCUSSION:

During the discussion Executive Director Nina Van Erk compiled a list of suggestions that were raised by at least two of the representatives. After considerable discussion on the merits and feasibility of each of the suggestions the members of the committee unanimously reached consensus on the following items for consideration by the NYSPHSAA Executive Committee:

1. Supporting the use of telephone conference calls and video conferencing for NYSPHSAA meetings to reduce the travel reimbursement costs for the NYSPHSAA and Sections.
2. Support the use of officials from the host section at all NYSPHSAA regional contests. Officials at semi final and final contests will be reviewed in the future.
3. Support a moratorium on the expansion of NYSPHSAA tournaments as it pertains to participation.
4. Support the use of centralized sites for all NYSPHSAA Championship competition.
5. Support the reduction of the maximum number of contests permitted during the regular season. Sports with 24 contests be reduced to 20, sports with 20 contests be reduced to 18 and sports with 18 contests be reduced to 16. Wrestling would be reduced to 19 points (5 tournaments) and football would be reduced by one contest. Junior Varsity and Freshmen programs would be reduced by two (2) additional contests and the modified program would be reduced by two contests.
6. Support the reduction of the number of classes and divisions in team and individual NYSPHSAA championship competition.
7. Support the reduction of participants in NYSPHSAA Championships in individual and combination (team/individual) sports.

8. Support the reduction of tournaments (multi school competition) for team and individual sports.
9. Support the establishment of a maximum number of scrimmages permitted by a team to: Varsity, JV and freshman – 2 scrimmages and Modified – 1 scrimmage.
10. Support the reduction of Central/Executive Committee meetings to three per year. (Constitutional change)
11. Support the establishment of a team travel restriction for all member schools limiting out of state team travel to competition with bordering states only.
12. Support the establishment of a moratorium on the following NYSPHSAA (mandated) workshops such as Safety, Life of an Athlete, Sportsmanship and Chemical Health workshops.
13. Support eliminating participation in the NFHS Student Leadership Conference.

2009 – 2010 NYSPHSAA BUDGET

The committee supported the establishment of a significantly reduced budget. The committee encouraged Nina Van Erk to include many of her ideas that will reduce the operating expenses for the NYSPHSAA.

NEXT STEPS

The committee members will seek input from their local Sections regarding the 13 suggested items to reduce expenditures. Ideas were shared to assist in the distribution of information included:

- ◆ Provide a separate list of supported suggestions so that Section Executive Directors and committee members can distribute the list to their members.
- ◆ Provide an interim report to update the membership of the recommendations of the Fiscal Concerns Committee.
- ◆ Create a separate NYSPHSAA Albany Office Report to outline the suggestions raised by the Fiscal Concerns Committee.
- ◆ Forward minutes and Albany Office Report to all Principals and Chief School Officers with the assistance of Executive Directors and Central Committee members.

The committee also recommended gathering the following information to assist in making informed decisions:

- ◆ Develop a data base indicating the Sections that have or will adopt the suggestions set forth by the Fiscal Concerns Committee.
- ◆ Provide the projected estimated cost savings for each of the 13 recommended measures.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the NYSPHSAA Fiscal Concerns Committee is scheduled for January 20, 2009 at 9:00 AM. The meeting will be held by conference call.