



April 29, 2019

## IHSAA Executive Committee approves Football Mercy Rule

Board of Directors Modifies Tournament Success Factor, Fan Ejections result in Suspension

In its monthly gathering following the annual Board of Directors meeting this morning in Indianapolis, the IHSAA Executive Committee unanimously approved a new football mercy rule.

The rule, which goes into effect this fall, was a joint effort with the Indiana Football Coaches Association to expedite the conclusion of football contests when a certain point differential is reached. With Monday's vote, when the point differential reaches 35 points in the second half, the game clock will convert to a running clock with the exception of timeouts, scores, and/or injuries. Once implemented, the clock may not revert back to standard timing regardless of the score and coaches will not have the ability to override the implementation of the mercy rule. The 40 second play clock will remain in effect throughout the contest.

The Board of Directors approved 18 rules proposals, three failed to receive support, and two were tabled for further study during its annual review of the By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation.

All proposals are considered in the order that the rule appears within the current by-laws. The Board of Directors has four options on each proposal: affirm, deny, table or amend. A simple majority is necessary to act on any measure. A copy of today's agenda is [available here](#) and the current by-laws [here](#). All approved measures become effective immediately unless otherwise noted.

The group approved by an 18-1 vote a modification to Rule 2.5, also known as the Tournament Success Factor. The result lowers the number of points needed (from 3 points to 2 points) by a school already playing in a higher classification to continue playing in that same class for another two years. Schools that win a regional championship in a single season or a sectional championship in back-to-back seasons would remain in that same higher class. The rule up to this point had required three points (two sectional titles and a regional title) to continue in that class.

The following additional items of note were approved during today's Board of Directors meeting and the ensuing Executive Committee meeting.

- Seven amendments were formally ratified having been approved as temporary regulations since last year's Board meeting. Most notably among those was the conduct of fans which was added to the same sportsmanship guidelines applicable to the conduct of contestants, coaches, etc. When a fan is ejected from a contest, he/she, too, will be suspended – in their case from attending the school's next home contest. A second ejection will result in suspension from the next two home contests. Also, the addition of Unified Flag Football as a sponsored sport, its playing rules and season contest information were officially affirmed.
- Approved 19-0 an amendment of the district section of the by-laws to better equalize the size of the three districts by moving Adams and Wells counties from District II to District I and moving Wayne County from District II to District III.

- Approved 17-2 two new sub-sections to Rule 2-2 (Number of Schools in Classes) that when two or more schools with equal enrollment fall at a classification break, each school would be placed in the higher class in all team sports other than football. In football, the school with the larger freshmen class would be placed in the larger enrollment class.
- The elections for next year’s leadership of the Board and Executive Committee also were held. Hebron athletic director **John Steinhilber** was voted president of the 2019-20 Board of Directors and Delta principal **Chris Conley** was elected vice president. Knightstown athletic director **Matt Martin** was named chairman of the 2019-20 Executive Committee and Jimtown athletic director **Nathan Dean** was confirmed as vice chairman.

Two proposals were tabled by the Board:

- A proposed amendment to expand the definition of “Territory” by Roncalli principal Chuck Weisenbach as it relates to private schools, their established boundaries and out-of-state transfers, was tabled for further study.
- The commissioner submitted a proposal on behalf of the members of the Pocket Athletic Conference which would eliminate the 600 mile round trip limitation with regard to the Out-of-State Contest rule. After some discussion, the group opted to table the proposal.

The following agenda items failed to receive enough support:

- A proposal to reduce the percentage of member schools that must be participating in a sport before a state tournament series be provided from 50% to 30% failed 1-18. The proposal had been authored by Dave Worland, principal at Cathedral High School and Mark Preston, principal at Lafayette Jefferson High School.
- A proposal made by the commissioner on behalf of the Porter County Conference that would introduce a 1.65 multiplier to the official enrollment of each private school and charter school to determine classifications also failed 1-18.
- The Board rejected 2-17 an amendment to Rule 19-6.1 authored by South Knox principal David Couchenour that would have permitted full eligibility following a transfer by a student without a corresponding change of residence by the parent/guardian when the transfer occurs before the student’s sophomore year.

### 2018-19 IHSAA Board of Directors

The IHSAA is governed by its legislative body, the Board of Directors. Composed of 19 individuals elected by member school principals from three legislative districts, they serve staggered three-year terms. Twelve board seats are filled by any qualified individual (open seats), and seven board seats are filled by two qualified female representatives, two qualified minority representatives, two qualified urban school representatives and one qualified private school representative. The Board of Directors meets annually with the responsibility of establishing the Association’s By-Laws and regulations.

District, Seat	Board Member	Term Ends
District I, Class A	David Amor, LaCrosse	June 2020
District I, Class AA	John Steinhilber, Hebron	June 2021
District I, Class AAA	Nathan Dean, Jimtown**	June 2020
District I, Class AAAA	Ed Gilliland, LaPorte	June 2021

District II, Class A	Martin Brown, North Vermillion	June 2021
District II, Class AA	Matt Martin, Knightstown	June 2020
District II, Class AAA	Chris Conley, Delta	June 2021
District II, Class AAAA	Jim Brown, Fishers*	June 2020
District III, Class A	Jeff Doyle, Barr-Reeve	June 2020
District III, Class AA	Tim Grove, South Knox School Corporation	June 2021
District III, Class AAA	Mike Whitten, Boonville	June 2020
District III, Class AAAA	Brent Duncan, Connersville	June 2021
North District, Female	Patti McCormack, Lowell	June 2019
North District, Minority	Stacy Adams, Griffith	June 2019
North District, Urban	Brian Strong, Logansport	June 2019
South District, Female	Rae Woolpy, Richmond	June 2019
South District, Minority	Victor Bush, MSD Lawrence Township	June 2019
South District, Urban	Chad Gilbert, Charlestown	June 2019
Private School	Dave Worland, Indianapolis Cathedral	June 2019

\* President

\*\* Vice-President

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**About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)**

*The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association's mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its 410 member high schools - public, institutional, parochial and private - pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association's tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 22 sports, 10 for girls, 10 for boys and two co-ed (unified flag football and unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.*