**MINUTES OF THE IHSA OFFICIALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**April 24, 2024**

The IHSA Officials Advisory Committee met at the IHSA Office, Bloomington, Illinois, on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were: Mark DiMarzio, Springfield: Patricia Flesher, Waukegan; Rick Karhliker, Springfield; Alan McCormick, Belvidere; Jerry (Jay) Miller, Centralia; Connie Scott, Winnebago; Scott Maupin, Wilmington; Donna Mobley, Maywood; Leah Morgan, South Elgin; Patrick Nolan, Elmwood; Benny Phillips, Decatur; Summer Riordan, Palatine; Noreen P. Rodriguez, Arlington Heights; Hanah Shehaiber, Chicago Ridge; Kenneth Watkins, Maywood; Chris Frasco, (IESA); and Kurt Gibson, Associate Executive Director, (IHSA). Committee Members Nicholas Cargola, Elk Grove Village; Kelly Lucas, Mt. Zion; Lance Emery, Mokena were unable to attend

Recommendations

1. The committee approved the following uniform requirements for Flag Football Officials:

A.     Black and white vertically striped, long, or short sleeved knit shirt. The shirt shall have 1-inch stripes, black knit cuffs, and Byron collar. All officials in a given game are to wear the same type of shirt.

B.    Standard black pants with the white stripe down the leg (Note: The crew must be in the same pants); Black socks must be worn with black pants or the official [Smitty-style football short](https://purchaseofficials.com/collections/football-pants-shorts/products/smitty-football-shorts-with-white-stripe) can be worn for regular season games but shorts cannot be worn for post-season (regionals, sectionals, state).

C.    Shoes will be black with black shoelaces, or a turf style shoes or cleats that may be black with white markings and soles.

D.     Black baseball cap with white piping. The referee will wear a white cap.

E.     Black leather belt 1 1/4 to 2 inches wide.

F.     Optional Black warm-up jacket (not to be worn during game).

G.     The uniforms should fit properly and be clean and neat. Shoes should be shined before each game.

H.     Required IHSA patches must be properly worn.

I.  Crew must match in shirt and shorts/pants worn.

J.  Football officials should not wear jewelry but are allowed areferee style watch, wrist down marker, wrist bands)

**RATIONALE:** Flag Football is scheduled to become an official IHSA sport effective with the 2024-25 school year. This recommendation will establish the required uniform for officials to wear. This uniform is generally consistent with the uniform tackle football officials wear, keeping officials who may officiate both sports from having to purchase additional uniform gear.

1. The committee approved recommendation to allow dance officials to wear a solid black top when officiating.

**RATIONALE:** This recommendation would add another option for dance officials to wear. Currently, dance officials can only wear a white top when officiating. Early this year, the committee made a similar recommendation for cheer officials, which was well received. Having consistency between the sports will help officials who sometimes work both sports in the same day and allow for a professional appearance, regardless of the color worn.

Discussion Items

1. The committee reviewed the minutes from its September meeting.
2. The committee discussed the importance and requirement for schools to use only licensed officials for all interscholastic athletic contests. The committee heard a report concerning a number of instances this year of unlicensed officials officiating contests when not allowed to do so. It’s critical assigners and school administrators work together to ensure no non-licensed official works any athletic contest. Member schools are ultimately responsible (as outlined in IHSA By-law 2.080), though, for ensuring this compliance.
3. The committee heard a report from IHSA staff concerning the work of the Post-Season Assignment Sub-Committee. Included in that report was an update on the following:
   1. The development of a pilot observers’ program being utilized this spring by IHSA staff.
   2. The development and refinement of a mobile ratings feature for coaches to use.
   3. The likely recommendation by the sub-committee to create minimum ratings requirement for coaches, along with suggested penalties for coaches who fail to meet the minimum requirements.
   4. The possible creation of a pathway for local officials’ associations to provide input to IHSA staff concerning officials for post-season assignments.
4. The committee discussed the feasibility of creating a separate registration for retired/inactive officials or looking at alternative ways to keep those individuals involved in the space, even if they are no longer actively officiating.
5. The committee discussed ways the IHSA could consider increasing access to video of games from an outside provider (Hudl/NFHS Network) by possibly adding an additional fee at registration. IHSA staff indicated they could investigate whether something along these lines would be possible beginning with the 2025-26 school year.
6. The committee heard a report on plans for licensing officials for the 2024-25 school year. The portal for registration will open on May 1, 2024, and the committee heard about the association’s bold “Drive for 500” goal, a goal aimed at licensing 500 flag football officials this up-coming season.
7. The committee learned of IHSA plans to increase post-season game fees beginning next school year. It is expected all sports will see an increase along with an adjustment to the mileage paid for post-season travel.
8. The committee heard a report from IESA Associate Executive Director Chris Frasco on developments at IESA, including the formation of three new advisory committees and the anticipated adjustments to some sport season schedules beginning in the 2025-26 school year.
9. The committee thanked out-going members Mark DiMarzio, Lance Emery, Kelly Lucas, Summer Riordan, for their service to the committee.