

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

The Sixty-Fourth Annual Meeting

June 2016

2015-2016 Annual Report

CIAC BOARD OF CONTROL

Submitted by Paul Newton, Chair

The 2015-16 school year was a very busy one for the CIAC Board of Control. This year the board undertook actions in the following areas.

- The CIAC Board of Control charged staff with streamlining the “Blue Book” with the goal of producing a shorter version of the current handbook with fewer redundancies. This project has been completed. A special sub-committee of athletic directors and building principals is looking to create a more user-friendly, abridged edition of the handbook that may be titled a “desktop version.” This version will serve as a quick reference for users looking for information about rules most frequently brought into question.
- The board sought input from various constituents regarding its rules that pertain to coaching out of season. The results from a survey administered last summer indicate little support for a change of the rules that are currently in place.
- At its September meeting, the CIAC Board of Control gave permission to three sports committees to fill their tournament brackets with teams who have a winning percentage below 40%. Previously, ice hockey piloted this as a practice and it met with success. The waiver of the 40% win mandate will now be in place in baseball, girls’ basketball, and boys’ basketball for a two-year trial period. This allowance will eliminate all byes in these tournaments.
- The Board of Control has banned the use of drones during all CIAC-sponsored athletic events. High schools are urged to follow town and/or district policy during the regular season.

Tournament Play - This year, the first two tournament seasons have been very successful. Weather certainly cooperated during most fall and the winter contests. Mild weather brought out some excellent crowds for football, field hockey and soccer. The absence of snow allowed tournaments to proceed without interruption and the ice hockey, boys and girls indoor track, and basketball championships drew many fans. The Mohegan Sun Arena hosted our basketball teams’ “Run to the Sun” and Ingalls Rink (at Yale) provided a great venue for our ice hockey finals.

Special Investigations: The CIAC completed one special Investigation pertaining to our athletic residency policy. It was alleged that students from Berlin High School were in violation of this policy. It was determined that 4 ineligible players were used in 7 games and that they were recruited to live and play football at Berlin High School. (November 18th special meeting). Sanctions were levied against Berlin High School.

Capital Prep requested an investigation be conducted regarding a Bloomfield High School football player. The investigation has been underway but it has been delayed due to concerns about facts presented in the investigation. The hope is that the investigation can be formally concluded soon as thus far no evidence has been found to sanction any schools.

New Proposals approved by the Board of Control. **One new policy has been formally approved by the CIAC Board of Control:**

In cross country, athletes may run a road race during the season if certain conditions are met. The coach must first approve the athlete’s participation and then the athletic director and principal must also approve the request. The race must be of 5 kilometers or less (high school race distance), and the athlete must participate as an “unattached

athlete" (as defined in the CIAC Handbook). Since weekly limitations must be followed, this new rule places a great deal of control with the coaches and allows greater flexibility for them and athletes. A survey indicated that this rule change was supported by approximately 75% of member coaches and it also has strong support by the CT Association of Athletic Directors.

A one year trial for a football-related practice (not a by-law) is in effect starting in the fall of 2016.

In football, a policy has been established allowing a "running clock" to enforce score management when contests are "lopsided." This one-year trial will allow a suspension of the "50 point rule." That rule disqualified a coach when the score differential in any football game exceeded 50 points. The new rule addresses the need to "speed up" a game so that a superior team does not have to use substitute players to help offset a score. New limitations on the number of quarters football athletes can play greatly restricts programs that must continually utilize reserves who are sub-varsity players, thus using up their eligibility during a varsity game instead of a scheduled sub-varsity contest. The plan was widely approved by coaches, athletic directors, principals and the CT Sports Medical Society. The board will re-visit the proposal after the one-year trial.

Hall of Honor - In October, the first-ever Hall of Honor Induction Ceremony took place at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. We inducted 9 members into the Hall this year. Their names have been inscribed on a plaque in a special room at Rentschler Field. More than 250 people attended this inaugural event. The second annual induction ceremony will take place on October 29, 2016.

Another Change of Practice:

The Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD) forwarded a proposal to the Sportsmanship Committee to change the current sportsmanship ratings and provide schools more "ownership" of the process. The proposal, which was also reviewed by the CIAC board, was approved by the committee and recommended for implementation next year. The new sportsmanship standards promote exemplary behavior at all regular and post-season athletic contests in the state. Schools who choose to follow the standards will be recognized by the CIAC as "Class Act Schools." A school would voluntarily request to join the program. The school would form a student-based council (student leaders, captains, etc.) who would assist the athletic department in overseeing the implementation of the CIAC Sportsmanship Standards (to be included in next year's handbook). A certificate or other "tangible" item would be sent to the school for recognition of having adhered to the standards. Guidelines have been established which involve parents, fans, coaches, players, staff and all stakeholders in athletic programs.