

**RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE  
Principals' Committee on Athletics  
Monday, November 18, 2024 @ 1:30 pm  
RIIL Office  
875 Centerville Road, Building #3  
Warwick, RI 02886**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Chairman Warner; Mmes., Aull, Caluori, Craven and Ward; Messrs., Barbieri, Barr, Costa, Crowley, DeCiccio, Gibbons, Green, McCarthy, McGair, Richard and Sollitto.

**Also Present:** Michael Lunney, Executive Director; Thomas Marcello, Assistant Executive Director; Susana Borges, Administrative Assistant, Carolyn Thornton, Dir. of Communications & Student Services; Martin Crowley, RIIAAA, and Brendan McGair, *Pawtucket Times*

**Absent:** None

*The November meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was called to order at 1:30 p.m.*

*On a motion made and seconded, the Committee voted to move to Executive Session.*

**PCOA EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The following items were discussed in Executive Session: Membership; Middle School; Rules & Regulations and Website/Technology.

*On a motion made and seconded, the Committee voted to move out of Executive Session.*

**PCOA MINUTES AUGUST 19, 2024**

On a motion made and seconded, the PCOA minutes from the August 19, 2024 meeting were unanimously (16-0) approved.

**PCOA NEW APPOINTMENT**

The Committee on Athletics reviewed and discussed several applications of those administrators interested in serving on the PCOA. On a motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously (16-0) voted to approve the appointment of Mr. John Fontaine, Cranston High School West.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Lunney reported on the following:

- eSports Update – Mr. Marcello updated the Committee regarding eSports regarding the postponement of the in-person fall championships at New England Tech due to a data breach in several member schools that disrupted the fall regular season. The RIIL does not anticipate any disruptions for the winter eSports season and the ability to hold an in-person championship.
- School Resources – there are several points of emphasis that will be reported to member school athletic directors and principals for upcoming meetings in the winter season:
  1. Sportsmanship Toolkit – Bench Bad Behavior Campaign
  2. Event Security & Safety – the importance of proper event security and EAP planning.
  3. Coaches Certification – the importance of compliance with RI state regulations and RIIL coaches certification requirements for all winter coaches whether they are paid or volunteers.
  4. Transfers Online Tracking System.
- Meetings and Planning:
  1. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual RIIL/Kyle Cares – Mental Health Summit – January 10, 2025 at RI College
  2. Winter AD's Workshop – November 22, 2024 at RI College
  3. Winter Coaches Interpretation Meetings – November 19, 2024 virtually
  4. Football Championships weekend of November 22, 2024
  5. RPI Informational Meeting – November 21, 2024 virtually

**MIDDLE SCHOOLS – TED QUIGLEY**

Mr. Quigley, RIIL Middle School Coordinator gave a recap of the fall championships and a planning update for winter sports.

## **RIIL RULE REVISIONS**

### **Article 35, Drone Policy**

Mr. Lunney discussed a draft revision of the RIIL Article 35, Drone Policy. A second draft will be presented at the January 27<sup>th</sup> PCOA Meeting.

## **RIIL SPORTS MEDICINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SMAC)**

Mr. Lunney discussed the following regarding Sports Medicine:

### **Field Hockey**

NFHS Rule Change Proposal – the Maine Principals Association, the RIIL and the Vermont Principals Association are co-sponsoring a proposal that (if approved) would allow the use of wire cage masks in the sport of field hockey. Either way, we will be discussing and considering Maine's rule change that now mandates the use of a full-face mask for penalty corner situations ONLY. Currently, Rhode Island is the only state in the country to mandate eye goggles to be worn at all times during competition.

### **Football**

Potential Legislation – Soft Helmet Covers. Representative Joseph McNamara is introducing legislation that if approved by the General Assembly would mandate the use of soft helmet coverings (Guardian Cap) for all high school players in practices and games. Mr. Lunney recently went to the RI State House to meet with Rep. McNamara to discuss the Bill, the results of current research and the potential costs to schools if this became approved legislation.

**Emergency Action Planning** – continues to be a point of emphasis at all pre-season coach's interpretation and athletic director workshops. Resources are available via the RIIL website and a new Pregame Safety Card has been developed for schools to consider using prior to games to simply get Game Administrators, Officials, Coaches and Medical Staff on the same page regarding location of AEDs, availability of AT's and/or other medical personnel and procedures in the event of an emergency.

### **NFHS Athletic Trainer's Survey**

Results of NFHS Athletic Trainer's Survey of state high school associations. Out of 33 states that responded, 32 reported that Athletic Trainers are NOT mandated but highly recommended for practices and games.

### **Concussion Management Resources**

REAP Manual – Brain Injury Association of Rhode Island. The RIIL worked closely with BIARI to develop the manual as a guide for schools. The manual is posted on our website as an important concussion management tool and resource for our members.

## **REQUESTS FROM SCHOOLS**

None.

## **RULE VIOLATIONS**

None.

## **RIIAAA REPORT – MARTY CROWLEY**

Mr. Marty Crowley, President of the RIIAAA, provided updates as to issues, concerns, and recommendations on behalf of the RIIAAA

## **OFFICIALS**

Mr. Lunney reported the continued efforts to work with all officials' associations regarding recruitment and training of officials (new and current) and the RIIL will continue to work with the NFHS, RefReps and others on strategies to improve officials in all sports. All officials' agreements are completed for the next three years except for Boys' Lacrosse.

## **FALL SPORTS**

Mr. Lunney expressed thanks to all the facilities that made themselves available for our fall championships. He also expressed appreciation to the RIIL staff, sport directors, officials organizations, event staff/security personnel, athletic trainers, principals, athletic directors and our sponsors for all their support.

## **WINTER SPORTS**

Mr. Lunney reported the winter sports schedules are completed and posted online. The RIIL is working with our sport committees on winter tournament planning. The RIIL Competition Cheerleading State Championship will be moved to the Ryan Center (URI) as part of our Boys' and Girls' Basketball Championship weekend.

**SPRING SPORTS ALIGNMENTS**

Mr. Marcello presented the spring 2025 & 2026 Boys' & Girls' Lacrosse, Boys' Volleyball and Boys' Tennis alignments to the Committee on recommendations from the respective sport committees and endorsed by the RIIAAA. On a motion made and seconded, the Committee unanimously (16-0) approved the Boys' & Girls' Lacrosse, Boys' Volleyball and Boys' Tennis alignment for spring 2025 & 2026.

***The Committee then adopted the following closing motion: THAT ANY AND ALL MOTIONS, AMENDMENTS AND ACTIONS BY THE PRINCIPALS' COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS AND THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE PRINCIPALS' COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS TO THIS DATE BE REAFFIRMED AND RATIFIED.***

***The November meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 3:50 P.M.***

Signed:

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Susana Borges, RIIL Board Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_