

VPA ACTIVITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Thurs./Fri. February 4/5, 2016
Golden Eagle Resort, Stowe, VT

Members Present: Bill Lawson, Bob Davis, Bob Hingston, Frank Pecora, Amy Molina, Lisa Atwood, Joe Harrington, Joe DeBonis, Rob Reardon, Mark Mooney, Jay Hartman, Bob Johnson, Ed Hockenbury

Minutes:

- motion by Jay, second by Rob, to approve minutes of 11/6/15. Vote- approved unanimously.
- correspondence – Bob J. presented letter given to Burr & Burton Academy in regards to a recruitment allegation. No action necessary.

Update on Lamoille/Stowe Boy's Hockey update – no action necessary.

Update on FIRST competitions. Bob J. will be attending event on 2/27/16.

Update on Title 26 and “appropriate medical personnel” issue. Bob J. has talked with VSBIT and Agency of Education. No progress to report. No action necessary.

- presentation on Football Game Day competition. Lissa MacDonald, South Burlington HS and Cara Gauvin, Rutland HS present along with Rutland Cheerleaders.

Game Day is a recent addition to the cheerleading program. It is conducted in the Fall and is designed to have schools only do events that they currently do at the game, so no additional preparation is necessary. The VPA Cheerleading Committee is hopeful that this competition might increase the number of teams that compete in cheerleading events. This is to be a Fall 2016 activity.

Motion by Rob, second by Lisa, to approve Game Day as a Fall 2016 sport under a 2 year exhibition status. Vote – approved unanimously (9-0).

- Bob J. mention that H795 which would allow students from independent Schools to participate on local public school teams, was just introduced to the Legislature. This was the same bill that was introduced last year. VPA has opposed the bill because we feel the current policy on independent students is appropriate. Biggest change with the new bill, is that schools would not have an option and would be required to do this, while the current VPA policy says a public schools participation is voluntary. Bob J. will be sending out an e-mail to AD's about this bill. No further action.

- Hardship request by Winooski HS (presented by Dennis Barcomb, Winooski AD).

Motion by Amy, second by Joe D., to grant Bishau Khatiwada an age waiver for the 2016-17 school year. Vote – approved unanimously (10-0)

- presentation by David Capman (Poultney HS AD) and Marty McDonough (MSJ AD) on proposed cooperative team in football. Both schools have agreed to this. There are a few logistics to work out. VIFL has been notified. Agreement would be for 2 years.

Motion by Rob, second by Amy, to approve the Poultney/MSJ Cooperative Football team for 2 years. Vote – Yes-9, No-0 Abstention-1 Motion approved.

- Bob J. presented a request from Mill River HS to allow a Mill River student to Play on the Mt. St. Joseph baseball team. Student's father coaches at MSJ and there are transportation issues (the student lives in Rutland Town and is a tuition student). MSJ would support this. Concern expressed that this would be setting a precedent if granted.

Motion by Amy, second by Joe D., to approve the request from Mill River that would allow a Mill River student to play on the MSJ baseball team.

Vote – Yes-0, No-10 Motion defeated.

- brief discussion on current 8th grade policy. Joe D. is concerned that all schools may not be interpreting it correctly and allowing 8th graders to participate when there is no need for the student to be on the team. Bob J. mentioned that schools are suppose to notify the VPA and show why they need the 8th graders. VPA has to take the information given at face value. There are several situations where 8th graders probably were not needed, but the school requested it anyway. Some schools have forgotten that 8th graders can only be used in the sports of baseball, softball, soccer and basketball (sports with 4 divisions). No further action taken.
- at NFHS Winter meeting, USA Baseball presented a new course on Pitching Smart. This course encourages high school athletes to play different sports and not specialize. Course will be on the NFHS website soon and is free. Bob J. will make the AD's aware of this.
- Bob H. gave an update on progress with middle school activities. Bob is Currently finalizing plans to have a middle school course done at the upcoming VSADA conference. In addition, he has held several regional meetings with MS AD's and is reinforcing the middle school regulations. In mid-March, a meeting will also be held at the VPA office concerning MS football. Bob has been getting many questions from MS AD's.

- Bob D. gave an update as the VPA's representative to the NFHS Football Committee meeting in January. Noted that heat illness/exhaustion is a major issue in New England and is largely preventable.

Reported that concussion rates are down as many states are looking at ways to limit contact during preseason and practices. Girl's soccer is the #1 sport in terms of incidents of concussions with football being #2.

Some states are looking at flag football for students in middle school grades. Should the VPA require its member schools to play flag football until grade 9 (some VT schools like Middlebury UHS already do this). Should the VPA consider establishing a committee to look at the issue of youth football and the possible options. People such as Mickey Heiniken (former Middlebury College football coach) would be good. Ed Hockenbury is very interested in this as South Burlington is facing this issue right now. Issue will be addressed at upcoming MS football meeting.

- Bob J. handed out PSA's from NFHS. Question as to if they can be linked to a schools website. Bob will try and check on this.
- Rob R. presented draft policy on recruitment policy. Discussion. Some of the issues considered by the committee included a) impact of public school choice, b) issues with recruitment of 8th graders by public/private, c) foreign students and d) impact of groups within a school. Draft policy will be presented at next VSADA meeting and come back to ASC in May for consideration. ASC members will let Bob J. know if they have specific recommendations for wording. No further action.
- Hardship request from St. Johnsbury Academy (presented by David McGinn, St. J. AD with Jessica Benjamin, student).

Motion by Joe D., second by Rob, to approve an age waiver for Jessica Benjamin from St. Johnsbury Academy for the 2016 Spring season. Vote – approved unanimously (10-0)

- discussion on issue of allowing practices at neutral sites during the regular season and tournament. Consensus that procedures and philosophy/rationale should be developed. Bob J. will have draft for May meeting. No further action.
- review of new index point system. Some minor issues in Winter but they were resolved quickly. New system is addressing the issue of strength of schedule. AD's are supportive of changes that have been made.
- Adjourned – next Meeting, Friday, May 13th – Capitol Plaza – 10:00

