

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association

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WIAA MEMBERSHIP APPROVES CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION; RULES OF ELIGIBILITY

STEVENS POINT, Wis. -- The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association membership voted to pass four amendments and make three editorial revisions to the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Eligibility at its 114th Annual Meeting held today in Stevens Point.

In his final State of the Association address, Doug Chickering thanked all those that have contributed to the success of the Association during his tenure as executive director. He will be retiring July 31 after more than 23 years as executive director.

“I’ve had a great ride, and I’m fortunate,” he said. “I leave with a sense of satisfaction, but also with a much larger appreciation and awareness of the skills and commitment of those who allowed me to be successful. Thanks to all of you. I close with a pledge that I will never say good-bye but simply say ‘see you later, friends.’”

Deputy Director Dave Anderson, who will become the executive director on Aug. 1, also addressed the membership. “I greet you as the next executive director of the WIAA when we begin the 2009 school year,” he said. “I humbly ask for your help, as well as the commitment of your greatest creative energies and your patience as we take these next steps together, in order to perpetuate the special qualities and opportunities inherent to the WIAA and school-based athletic competition.”

There was one change to the Constitution and three alterations to the Rules of Eligibility. The constitutional change creates an associate membership for charter schools that are under the auspices of a member public school. The change would create an opportunity for charter school students to participate only at the school their residency places them. Associate members would not have voting or co-op team privileges. The measure passed by a 285-21 vote.

With the Rules of Eligibility, the membership approved a proposal that reclassifies the sport of cross country from a team sport to an individual sport for the purpose of violation administration. Rationale for the change identifies a means to exclude an individual from team scoring without disqualifying an entire team or other individual competitors. The membership passed the amendment by a 281-4 vote.

By a 293-12 margin, the membership approved an amendment that eliminates language from the Waivers section of the Residence and Transfer Article in the Rules of Eligibility that reduces the chance of confusion by eliminating the “home-life betterment” text.

The membership also approved a penalty for inappropriate behavior directed toward a contest official. The amendment declares a student-athlete immediately ineligible for 90 calendar days from the date the player intentionally and aggressively contacts, or spits on, an official. In addition, the player is ineligible to compete in the first 25 percent of the next season in that same sport the altercation occurred. It passed by a 188-121 vote.

The amendment presented to the membership that would have added soccer to the list of sports that allow coaches unlimited coaching contact in the summertime was defeated by a 130-173 vote.

The membership also approved the editorial changes by a 298-9 margin. Editorial changes are only intended to clarify existing interpretations of the rules.

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Among the significant topics addressed and discussed were supplements, divisional placements, seasonal placements, out-of-season competition, interest in nine-man football, a football playoff with all schools qualifying, consolidation to one baseball season, and an update on the lawsuit with a media conglomerate and the state newspaper association over Internet streaming rights.

A total of 384 delegates from 313 schools were in attendance. The WIAA oversees interscholastic athletic programs for 503 senior high schools and 117 junior high/middle-level schools in its membership. It currently sponsors 25 championship tournament series. For more information, please contact the WIAA office at (715) 344-8580.

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