



## Board Meeting Briefs: June 10, 2019

### Officiating opened to high schoolers for sub-varsity contests; scrimmage travel loosened

**BOONE, Iowa** - In an effort to increase the potential pool of registered officials and better include interested students, the Iowa High School Athletic Association will begin allowing high school students to serve as officials for sub-varsity high school contests in 2019-20. Current policies allow high schoolers to officiate seventh- and eighth-grade events or sub-varsity soccer matches. The change proposed with the officials' advisory committee and approved Monday by the IHSAA's Board of Control aims to help an active group of young officials gain invaluable experience and education, and allow school administrators to more easily schedule and staff sub-varsity contests.

"The officials' shortage is a nationwide issue that we're seeing up close here in Iowa," IHSAA executive director Alan Beste said. "We have students trying out officiating and wanting more opportunities, and at the same time, their school's administrators and coaches are desperate to find referees for freshmen, sophomore, or junior varsity events.

"These sub-varsity contests should be a learning experience for all involved, and we're excited about the opportunities this could create at the local level."

The student exception for soccer officiating was added when the IHSAA first sanctioned the sport in 1993, with the intention of lifting a low number of soccer officials. However, soccer has added registered officials despite the overall number of IHSAA registered officials decreasing by 10 percent between 2007-08 and 2017-18.

The advisory committee agreed the sport has benefited by having interested high school students available to assist and member schools have expressed interest in hiring those students. Besides the testing, rules meetings, and clinic attendance required for registered officials, the IHSAA will explore adding educational components for the high school-aged officials.

"This is a great chance to open up officiating for high school-aged officials and for school athletic administrators," IHSAA director of officials Lewie Curtis said.

### Scrimmage travel limitation lifted

The 100-mile travel cap for IHSAA sanctioned scrimmages has been removed for all sports ahead of the 2019-20 school year. The Board of Control approved a proposal to allow scrimmages to be played anywhere in Iowa, bordering states, and Kansas, similar to the IHSAA's interstate policies for regular season contests.

"Our school administrators have reached out over the restrictions placed on their programs because of our mileage limit," Beste said.

"Allowing them to determine their scrimmage schedules, just as they typically decide their regular season schedules, can help them address their own geographic or competitive considerations."

### Junior high policy changes approved

Four recommendations from the annual junior high advisory committee meeting passed Monday, loosening longtime regulations in multiple sports. The approved policy changes: 1. Allowing awards to be presented in wrestling; 2. Schools hosting track and field meets may invite as many teams as they want; 3. Extending the soccer season by allowing up to seven matches; 4. Allowing junior highs to begin fall practice on the Monday of Week 8 in the NFHS calendar, or the first day of school.

### Final board meeting for Beste, Keating to begin July 1

Executive director Alan Beste addressed the Board of Control for the final time Monday as he prepares to retire at the end of June after 30 years of service to the IHSAA. The office's next executive director, Tom Keating, will take over the role on July 1. Keating's first full day in the Boone office is slated to be July 8. View the original release on Beste's retirement [HERE](#).

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### CONTACTS

Executive director Alan Beste, [abeste@iahxaa.org](mailto:abeste@iahxaa.org); director of officials Lewie Curtis, [lcurtis@iahxaa.org](mailto:lcurtis@iahxaa.org);

communications director Chris Cuellar, [ccuellar@iahxaa.org](mailto:ccuellar@iahxaa.org).