



MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



MIAA Statement on Game Officials Fees

As many of our members know, there has been much discussion surrounding the fees associated with game officials, specifically ice hockey officials and the upcoming season. All officials are valued and an integral part of every MIAA competition and event. They are vital to the success of interscholastic competition.

Each member school has a process for addressing budgetary needs, many of these processes involve school committee and town voting. Thus, it is unfair to announce or support an increase in fees that impact our members' budgets that does not adhere to a budgetary cycle. The current fees recommended by the Game Officials Committee have been announced and agreed upon to exist in a two-year cycle for that purpose.

In an effort at full transparency and understanding, the budgetary process is conducted well in advance, as outlined below:

A school district's budget process begins in the fall (the FY25 Budget began in the fall of 2023). This process begins with the development of departmental and school budgets, which are then submitted and presented to the district administration (school business manager, assistant superintendent, and superintendent) for their review. The district administration determines the final preliminary draft budget figure to be presented to the school committee for consideration immediately after the new year.

The school committee is required by law to have a posted and separate open budget hearing for all school and community stakeholders. At the conclusion of this process, the school committee votes to certify one budget figure for the school department, to be presented with all the backup and detail from each school and department to various entities (Select Boards, Finance Committees, City Councils, etc.). In the spring, the municipality's governing body (town meeting, city council) votes to approve one final budget figure for the school department. This is typically conducted before June 30.

In pursuing its collective purpose, the MIAA fosters cooperation among the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.), the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA), the Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA), coaches, game officials, and other professional organizations interested in attaining our common goals.

Specifically, the MIAA Board of Directors is comprised of nine (9) members elected by the MSAA, four (4) elected by the MASC, four (4) elected by M.A.S.S., and nine (9) elected by the MSSADA. The Board is comprised of a cross-section of peer colleagues throughout the Commonwealth. The Finance Committee, a sub-committee of the Board, advises and confers with the Executive Director on fiscal matters and advises the Board of Directors, committees, and members on financial policies and matters. All decisions must be respectful and considerate of the ramifications of each of these stakeholder organizations.

Any additional expenditures added to a school department after the completion of the budget process would have negative ramifications for that school district, school, and/or athletic department. That is why each of the stakeholders mentioned above (MASC, M.A.S.S., MSAA, MSSADA) has formally supported the following:

Before any increases recommended by an MIAA committee would be addressed, it would follow a normal school budget cycle. Whereas the MIAA is made up of school committee members, school superintendents, school principals, and athletic directors, it is imperative the MIAA respect its members and not add -- mid-budget cycle -- any expenditures that would impact a school budget after it has been certified and approved by a municipality's governing body.

To remain in lockstep with the will of the leadership of the MIAA, while understanding that game officials are the lifeblood of the success of an interscholastic athletic experience, the MIAA Finance Committee supports the following course of action moving forward.

ALL game officials deserve competitive compensation across the board. It is the intent of the Finance Committee of the MIAA to entertain and review the recommendations set forth by the Game Officials Committee to address this concern. However, this process must be conducted within a normal school budget cycle. Whereas a school district's budget process begins in the fall (the FY26 budget begins in the fall of 2024), the timing is right for this process to occur now for FY26.

