

MIAA Ice Hockey Committee

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Minutes

1. Call to Order

2. [Minutes from January 28, 2026](#)

- Motion to approved (Bob W, 2nd by Tim H)- Approved 13-0

3. 2026 Ice Hockey Tournament

- **Review by Bob Ware**

- Noted the challenges posed by a major snowstorm at the start of the tournament and thanked Athletic Directors for their efforts in managing those conditions.
- Expressed appreciation for Site Managers, recognizing them as invaluable contributors who consistently do outstanding work.
- Thanked officials assignor Rich Holmberg, along with Tim Hooton, and emphasized the importance of the four-official system.
- Recognized Dan Brothers for his exceptional work and passion.
- Thanked Phil and Jim for their daily communication and weekly meetings.
- Acknowledged the MIAA accounting team, Deb and Debbie, for their support.

- **Bob shared tournament review packet**

- Reported that the overtime procedure is working effectively, with only one shootout occurring during the entire tournament.
- Noted concerns regarding confusion between predetermined sites and neutral sites, clarifying that ice hockey venues from the Round of 8 onward are predetermined.
- Highlighted TD Garden as a major success, including one overtime game.

- **Concerns/Issues**

- **Players & fans jumping on glass**
 - John Brown raised concern about players jumping on the glass during games, which encourages fans to gather in those areas. He suggested establishing an enforceable penalty, such as a bench minor, to address this behavior.
 - NFHS rule change proposal was submitted to NFHS to address this issue.
 - If not approved, committee wants to submit MIAA Rule change to institute the penalty.
- **Fan behavior**
 - Crowd control, alcohol use, and fights remained ongoing concerns throughout the tournament.
 - Phil followed up with school leadership to ensure awareness of these issues and to implement plans to prevent future incidents.
 - Scott P emphasized the need to require schools to bring additional administrators to help manage their student sections, particularly for ice hockey events held off campus.
 - John agreed, adding that pregame meetings should consistently take place in the Round of 32 and Round of 16.
 - Phil noted that these meetings are occurring from the Round of 8 onward and confirmed observing them at every game attended.
 - Dan – Committee has ability to call in school administrators if we think there are ongoing concerns about their fan behavior.

4. TMC Updates

- **1A/All-State Tournament – Approved for 2027-28**
 - Jack Owens reported that the subcommittee met 10–12 times to develop the proposal and refine the steps needed for approval.
 - The group met twice with the TMC—once in March for the initial presentation and again in April for the final vote—resulting in approval of the 1A/Statewide proposal and format.
 - All games will be held at predetermined sites, allowing the MIAA to effectively manage high-attendance events that home rinks may not be equipped to support.

- The same predetermined sites used for other divisions will also be utilized for the 1A tournament.
 - While the total number of games will decrease, the number of games played at predetermined sites will increase.
 - It was determined that if two 0–2 teams are scheduled to play in the final game of pool play, the game will not be played since both teams are already eliminated, reducing potential issues.
 - With the margin of victory (MOV) changing from 3 to 2 next season, the tiebreaker differential has been adjusted accordingly from a maximum of 3 to 2.
 - There will be no opt-out option.
 - Dan noted that, after five years, this outcome demonstrates that the process is effective.
- **Divisional alignments**
 - Boys to go from 4 divisions to 3 due to total number of teams, plus 1A tournament
 - Jack questioned whether there is more movement in alignment appeals in ice hockey compared to other sports.
 - Scott expressed concerns that the appeals process may be creating imbalances across divisions.
 - Suggested the TMC consider a two-phase alignment process: first, a two-week window for schools to opt up, followed by a rebalancing of alignments, and then the remaining appeals process.
 - Girls to go from 2 divisions to 1 (same as above)
 - It was noted that, in girls' hockey this year, if a 1A and a single division format had been in place, 49 of the 82 teams would have qualified—8 for 1A and 41 for the Division 1 postseason. Well in line with qualifying percentages of other sports.
- **Margin of Victory-** Approved by TMC to go from 3 goals to 2 goals. This is for next season (2026-27 school year)

5. Coaches Input

- **Courtney –**

- Expressed appreciation for the work of Mike F. on margin of victory (MOV) and the 1A proposal, noting that he ensured coaches' voices were heard.
- Raised a concern that, under a single-division format, the bottom 10 teams may never qualify for postseason play. Although she supports moving to one division.
- Noted ongoing concerns in girls' hockey about top players leaving public schools for academies, with participation numbers trending downward.
- Mike added that prep programs are recruiting aggressively at the 6th and 7th grade levels, and mentioned exploring middle-level participation to create more consistent rules.
- Brad questioned whether there is value in restricting participation of capable 7th and 8th graders.
- Brad also noted declining enrollment overall, citing his school's decrease from approximately 1,500 students in the 1990s to about half that number today.
- Scott P shared that of seven incoming 8th-grade hockey players, six chose private schools, leaving only one in the public system.

- **Mike-**

- **Game Protocol:** Emphasized the need to speed up games by limiting post-intermission skate-arounds and eliminating extended bench meetings. Teams should be ready to start promptly, with the expectation of a five-minute warm-up followed by puck drop. This aligns with NFHS rules and should be highlighted in preseason communications.
- Dan noted that officials can assist in enforcing this protocol.
- Tim added that no other level, including the NHL, permits skate-arounds between periods.

- Announced the upcoming banquet, where Jim Duran will be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

6. Officials Input

- **Tim-** The tournament was successful overall. Rich Holmberg did an excellent job, and the overall quality of officiating continues to improve. There were nine first-year officials

working at TD Garden, which was noted as a positive development. The state of officiating is currently as strong as it has been since the speaker began their involvement.

7. Other

- Sportsmanship Expectations: [Sportsmanship Committee draft of update expectations](#)
 - Review by ice hockey committee. Any suggested changes will be shared with Phil.
- [MIAA Rule Change Proposal Form](#) – due June 1, 2026
 - Submitting a rule change on behalf of the Ice Hockey Committee to revise Rule 72.3, recommending that teams dress two goaltenders (no longer required), while maintaining a maximum of 20 skaters (forwards and defense) eligible to be dressed.
 - Proposal will read - *During the regular season and MIAA tournament, the National Federation player limitations will be amended to allow a maximum of 22 players to be dressed and on the bench. During the MIAA tournament, **this roster shall include a maximum of 20 skaters (defined as forwards and defensemen)**, while it is **recommended** that teams dress two goaltenders.*

8. Adjournment