

NYSPPHSAA Officials Structure

NYSPPHSAA/Officials Mission Statement

- Why do we all do what we do? Student Athletes!!!!
 - School Mission Statement
 - Officials Mission Statement

Rationale for a examining the current NYSPPHSAA Officials Structure:

- Officials are an essential component to Interscholastic Athletics
- The current structure is not consistent across the state, with local chapters having the autonomy to certify officials, train, and govern themselves.
- The current structure has created friction between local chapters and sections/schools.
- Certification of new officials is very cumbersome. Communicating with potential new officials is very layered from the top down approach.
- Contract talks and disputes have become very adversarial. Some local chapters have used withholding of services as a tool to force the issue, even though the NYSPPHSAA Contract has a mechanism to handle grievances and contract impasse. Using a consistent method to address official's payment fees and increase would eliminate many obstacles in the negotiating process.
- We have found that some State Officials organizations do not have the authority to enforce the NYSPPHSAA Contract with their local chapters or find it difficult to discipline the local chapters or their members.
- NYS is the only state association in the country that does not register their officials at the state association level. Using a consistent platform across the state, for registration, assigning and paying officials.
- Behavior of athletes, coaches, and spectators towards officials. Schools not supporting or protecting officials from abuse both verbal and physical.
- Recruitment and Retention of Officials.
- Inconsistent assignor fees.

OCF

- Purpose, and Focus (insert current mission statement)
- Communication between NYSPPHSAA, Sections, Schools, State Officials Organizations, Local Chapters, and Members
- Possible Expansion of OCF??????

NYSPPHSAA Officials Contract

- NYSPPHSAA will not renew the Officials Contract at the end of the _____ school year.
- NYS Officials Associations and local chapters would become professional organizations.

- Each Sport would have a State Organization with the goal of increasing the importance of professional growth and development. Member Benefits would include:
 - Professional Development
 - Orientation for New Officials
 - Award Programs
 - Legislative Action
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - Conference – All Sports
- The Structure would be like the current structure with the exception that local chapters could be based on Sections instead of territorial rights.
- Instead of a dues structure there would be a membership fee paid by each member.
- There could also be a national connection to an organization like NASO, IAABO, etc.

Registration of Officials

- All Officials will register to become a certified official through NYSPHSAA using the Arbiter platform. There will be a fee for registration. Registration will include a sport specific rulebook.
- All Officials will sign an agreement with NYSPHSAA, as an independent contractor, to service all NYSPHSAA member schools.
- New Officials will take a digital course (rules – mechanics) approved by NYSPHSAA.
- All Officials will take a sport specific exam (current exam or governing sport exam).
- New Officials will be directed to get fingerprinted. (People’s Choice – Arbiter)
- New officials will be eligible to work modified games.

Assignments of Officials

- Sections or their designees will be responsible for assigning officials. Schools would be responsible for paying all assigning fees.
- There will be no territorial rights. Officials can agree to work anywhere in NYS.
- Training of Assignors. Rating system of Officials.

Official Mentors/Evaluators

- Sections will hire experienced officials to mentor/evaluators to work with new officials.
 - Any official with two or less years of experience will be assigned a mentor/evaluator.
 - Any official with 5 or more years of experience in a sport may apply to become a mentor /evaluator.

- The Section office will review applications and select individuals to become mentor/evaluators.
- No individual will have more than 5 new officials per season to work with.
- Schools will pay the mentor/evaluator fee for each game.
 - Each mentor will be paid \$40 for the evaluation only and \$30 on top of their game fee if they work on the game and are evaluated.
- Mentors and evaluators will be required to attend games or work with new officials and send in a report to the Sections.
 - The mentor/evaluator will be required to do the following tasks:
 - Meet with their mentee before the game, at halftime, and after the game.
 - Complete a one-page report/evaluation on what they observed and talked about with their mentee and submit the report to the Section Office.
 - A mentor/evaluator will be assigned a minimum of 3 times during the season and a maximum of 5 times during the season.
 - The mentor/evaluator can receive input from other officials that have worked with their mentee.
 - Possible video use for evaluating mentees.
- Sections and mentors/evaluators will review reports on new officials at the end of the new year and determine the level the individual will work the following season.
 - Mentees will be informed of their status for the next interscholastic season.
 - A final overview of the mentee will be created by the evaluator and sent to the mentee. The final overview will include:
 - Strengths of the official.
 - Areas of improvement needed by the official.
 - Determination of the level of work for the following season.
 - Possible Evaluations of long time officials.

Rules Interpretations – Continuing Education

- NYSPHSAA will hire sport specific rules Interpreters (stipend).
 - Rules Interpreters will work with NYSPHSAA staff and committees on sports specific rules.
 - Rules interpreters will work directly with governing sport governing body and conduct annual rules interpretation webinars for the entire state. All officials will be required to view annual rules interpretation webinars.
 - Rules interpreters will attend NYSPHSAA Championships.
 - Sections may designate local officials as Section rules interpreters.
 - Local Officials will be hired to conduct continuing education classes through BOCES.

- **Official Fees/Mileage**
 - The current fee at the start of this new structure will be used for all officials (mod/JV/Varsity).
 - Each official will get a 1% - 2% raise each year. Economic factor to increase pay.
 - The fee will cover mileage up to 50 round trip miles. Any mile above 50 would be paid using the current IRS mileage rate per mile. The distance would be calculated from the official's home address to the school's address. Concerns: Distance variations, manpower, Possible flat fee by mileage range. Calculations of the mileage.

- **NYSPPHSAA and Sectional Tournaments**
 - NYSPPHSAA will use current NYSPPHSAA Fees and Policies for the NYSPPHSAA Championships.
 - Sections will determine the selection and assignments of officials.
 - The current fees at the start of this new structure will be used for the Sectional Tournaments. A 1% - 2% raise will be applied to tournament fees per year.

- **Official/Section/School Issues**
 - Each Section will create or continue an Officials Committee made up of officials and school representatives. This committee will address issues from either schools or officials.
 - Any issue that cannot be resolved will be taken to the OCF for a resolution.
 - Any decision made by the OCF could be appealed to the NYSPPHSAA appeals committee.

- **Advantages & Challenges**
 - Advantages**
 - NYSPPHSAA will maintain a comprehensive and accurate database of all certified sport officials.
 - New officials will be able to initiate their training immediately upon registration.
 - School-based officials will benefit from a more efficient and streamlined onboarding and assignment process.
 - Officials will have the opportunity to expand their geographic areas of assignment, increasing flexibility and coverage.
 - Experienced officials will have opportunities for additional compensation through mentoring and evaluating newly certified officials, while providing increased assignment opportunities for new officials.

- Uniform and consistent rules interpretations will be established and maintained statewide.
- Officials will have opportunities to receive compensation for delivering continuing education and professional development sessions.
- The new structure will reduce contention and disputes between local officials' chapters and Sections, particularly during contract negotiations and related contractual matters.
- A standardized and consistent framework for official pay increases and mileage reimbursements will be established.
- NYSPHSAA will serve as the central point of contact for resolving all issues involving officials and member schools.
- The Officials Coordinating Federation (OCF) will play a larger role in addressing and resolving issues in a consistent manner across the state.
- The appeal process for officials will align with NYSPHSAA's existing appeal structure, promoting consistency and transparency.

Challenges

- State-level officials' organizations and local chapters may transition into professional support organizations, potentially resulting in a loss of authoritative control and formal representation for sport officials.
- Certain sports may require modifications to the standard certification process to accommodate their specific needs.
- The elimination or restructuring of local chapters may negatively affect camaraderie and networking opportunities among officials.
- The status and terms of existing Section-level officials' contracts would need to be reviewed and potentially renegotiated.
- NYSPHSAA would likely need to hire additional staff to manage the expanded responsibilities and administrative workload.
- School budgets for officiating may increase due to higher mileage reimbursements and the introduction of fees for mentoring and evaluating officials.