



PIAA Supports Return to Play

May 21, 2020 – Mechanicsburg, PA

“We want kids to be kids and play sports and be representatives of their school and community.”

This was the overwhelming sentiment of the PIAA Board of Directors’ meeting yesterday, Wednesday, May 20th, that was hosted via Zoom videoconferencing with an audience of over 30 statewide media members. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of the return of play for summer activities on school campuses, acknowledging reopening will only happen in accordance with the Governor’s directives on permissible activities.

PIAA Board member and PIAA District XI Chairman, Robert Hartman, stated, “We have to follow what the Governor says, but many of us on the board are parents and grandparents and in my personal opinion, if student-athletes are allowed to participate as per the guidelines that are set forth, I personally don’t care what the date is.” Previously, the Board issued a statement following the Governor’s directive that no athletic activity could be hosted upon school campuses until the end of the school year.

PIAA Executive Director, Dr. Robert Lombardi, said, “You saw and heard how committed they are to get kids back to doing what they love to do and that’s play sports. That’s why this whole scenario of the last eight weeks has been so gut-wrenching for all of us. This is difficult. I was really happy the board stood up and told people that this is important to us.”

With the Governor’s development of the red; yellow and green phases of opening counties across the Commonwealth, the Board is committed to permitting activities in those areas of the state that may be opened under the Governor’s orders. If permitted, PIAA is no longer holding to a common date of July 1 for out of season activities.

Additional action items by the Board were the passing of qualifiers and brackets for all sports on a second reading basis, except for basketball: the upholding of the Executive Staff’s decisions on four appeals of the competition formula; an adjustment of registration fees for spring sports officials due to the non-printing of rules books; the cancellation of this year’s Officials’ Convention due to COVID-19; a change in the mandatory sit-out period for a flagrant disqualification.

The Board also referred two items to the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee for their review, the proposed 13 wrestling weight classes and a modification of sub-varsity game procedures in football. Finally, the elected executive officers for the 2020-21 school year; were announced as President Frank Majikes, District II Chairman; Vice-President Robert Hartman, District XI Chairman; and Treasurer Paul Leonard, District V Chairman.

About Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association

Beginning in Pittsburgh, on December 29, 1913, PIAA was given the privilege of serving its member schools and registered officials by establishing policies and adopting contest rules that emphasize the educational values of interscholastic athletics, promote safe and sportsmanlike competition and provide uniform standards for all interscholastic levels of competition.