

July 3, 2008

Dear Mr. Peters, Mr. Neal and Board of Directors:

At our recently held meeting of June 22, 2008, it was unanimously passed by all Boards (13) in Massachusetts that we, MSBOA, continue to lobby against officials observance of the PGHS and that we continue in our support of a pre-game handshake.

We, hereby request that the MIAA and its' MIAC and the Board of Directors respectfully reconsider their vote of November 2007, wherein they voted to require, commencing with the Fall 2008, officials remain after the conclusion of the contest to observe the PGHS in all team sports.

This request is of particular interest to the game of basketball, wherein the official's safety is of great concern. This was evidenced by the unsportsmanlike display by spectators at last winter's tournament whereby 8 separate incidents throughout the State were documented by officials.

Even though special safety precautions were in place during the Tournament. Many of these special safety measures will not be in place during the upcoming regular season, therefore providing a less than healthy/safe surroundings for the game officials.

We fully understand that the MIAA has provided the officials with an opt out if they feel there is a safety issue, but many times, as evidenced by the incidents documented above, the officials are not aware of a potential problem until such time as it becomes a problem; many times there are no warning signs.

In addition, we also strongly oppose a measure to make this a recommendation as it was during the past 2007-2008 season. This led to a serious disruption in all schools, whereby participants, including the Athletic Director/Site Administrator and game officials, were put in an undesirable position, with complete lack of consistency.

We at MSBOA, implore upon you to take this reconsideration under advisement and vote for a pre-game hand shake. In October 2007, your Basketball Committee voted 16-0-1 for the following:

- a pre-game hand shake with all participants
- endorsement/support of sportsmanship
- officials not to remain to observe the post game hand shake

Please take this, the Basketball Committee's endorsement, under consideration. They are the committee that is closest to the issues when basketball is concerned. In addition, we officials are also very close to the issues, as well.

Regards,
Robert Grady, President MSBOA