

**POSITION PAPER OF THE
BASKETBALL OFFICIALS AND COACHES COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
(BOCCC)**



Recommendations to Bring About Improved Relations
Between Basketball Officials and Coaches
May 15, 2003
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Barriers exist between coaches and officials. They have sprung up over the years as coaches have continued to chastise officials and officials have tried to “circle the wagons” in defense. In order to improve the game of basketball, these barriers must come down.

The following position paper is a result of coaches and officials coming together to “break down the barriers”. The committee is called the Basketball Officials and Coaches Communication Committee (BOCCC). Most of the following recommendations are concerned with communication. As our committee name implies, coaches and officials must open lines of communication before improvement can take place.

It is the committee’s hope that the following recommendations, rationales and implementations of each proposal by the various groups listed below, will lead to our objective of improving the relationship between officials and coaches. This position paper supplies the what, why and how for improving relations between officials and coaches. This will improve the game of high school basketball in Michigan.

**This Position Paper has been endorsed by:
The Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan (BCAM),
The Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAAA)
and high school officials’ associations from Michigan.**

**COACHES
(BCAM – Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan)**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. BCAM will continue to stress sportsmanship to its members.**
RATIONALE: This will support the Michigan High School Athletic Association’s sportsmanship programs.
IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will incorporate new sportsmanship programs whenever possible. Input from officials’ associations will be welcome.
- 2. BCAM will encourage coaches to maintain professionalism as they execute their coaching duties during basketball contests.**
RATIONALE: This will support the MHSAA’s sportsmanship programs.
IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will develop methods to educate coaches as to “how to act as a professional”. BCAM newsletter articles directed at professionalism will be included. CAP and the New Coach Orientation Program could be used as methods to help educate coaches on professionalism (See NCOP).
- 3. BCAM will encourage coaches to be realistic about their expectations of officials during games, i.e., no game has ever been played, coached or officiated perfectly.**
RATIONALE: This will support the MHSAA’s sportsmanship programs.
IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM newsletter articles will continue to deal with this subject.
- 4. BCAM will include articles in the BCAM newsletter (*Full Court Press*) written by officials.**
RATIONALE: This will make information available to over 3500 coaches.
IMPLEMENTATION: These articles will be written from the official’s point of view and pertain to concerns about official/coach relationships. Veteran officials with a background as an assignor and/or supervisor of officials will write the articles.
- 5. BCAM will include a question-answer column in the BCAM newsletter, *Full Court Press*.**
RATIONALE: This will make information available to over 3500 coaches.
IMPLEMENTATION: Coaches will be asked to send in their questions about rules and/or concerns to BCAM. Veteran officials (to be determined by the BOCCC) will answer these questions.
- 6. BOCCC, with the help of BCAM, will design a ½-page “public service” announcement to be placed in game programs available at high school games and the MHSAA tournament. This announcement will state BOCCC’s basic position on issues we are addressing.**
RATIONALE: This will publicize and promote the goals of BOCCC to the basketball community. **IMPLEMENTATION:** Members of the BOCCC will develop a public service announcement. BCAM will be responsible for distribution to schools and the MHSAA.
- 7. BCAM will distribute their newsletter, *Full Court Press*, to each officials’ association.**

RATIONALE: This will encourage communication between BCAM and officials.

IMPLEMENTATION: Officials' associations will distribute *Full Court Press* to its members.

- 8. **BCAM will publicize the fact that many MHSAA publications are on the MHSAA website, including MHSAA's *Mentor Magazine*.**

RATIONALE: This will encourage coaches to be aware of MHSAA's rules, regulations, and guidelines

IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will use their newsletter *Full Court Press*, to notify their members.

- 9. **BCAM will encourage coaches to invite officials to speak to teams, coaches, parents, and fans in a preseason meeting.**

RATIONALE: This will open lines of communication between officials and the basketball community.

IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will promote this recommendation through its newsletter. Coaches will be encouraged to invite their local association/assignor to speak.

- 10. **BCAM will continue its efforts to register all basketball coaches as members.**

RATIONALE: BCAM exists to represent and serve basketball coaches. Their membership in BCAM will benefit the coach and his/her team.

IMPLEMENTATION: By continuing to add benefits for members and by providing needed services, BCAM will continue to increase its membership.

- 11. **BCAM will invite officials to speak at their annual fall clinic.**

RATIONALE: This will allow officials to present their perspective.

IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will ask the MHSAA to allow the BOCCC to explain their purpose at the rules meeting held in conjunction with the fall clinic in October.

- 12. **BCAM will invite officials to their Hospitality Room at the girls and boys state finals.**

RATIONALE: This will promote better relations between coaches and officials.

IMPLEMENTATION: BCAM will involve the MHSAA in communicating an invitation to officials along with an invitation to local associations.

- 13. **BCAM will work with the MHSAA to produce a Rules Meeting video to promote sportsmanship and communication between officials and coaches.**

RATIONALE: This is promote efforts to "break down barriers" between officials and coaches.

IMPLEMENTATION: BOCCC will write the script. The MHSAA will find high school video production classes to tape the presentation. BCAM will pay for production.

OFFICIALS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. **Approved officials' associations will educate new officials concerning proper conduct before, during, and after basketball contests.**

RATIONALE: This will support the efforts of the MHSAA's "Train the Trainers" program that helps to educate officials.

IMPLEMENTATION: The MHSAA and officials associations need to determine what is proper conduct. Instruction of officials should be done at officials' camps, educational meetings and through written communication.

- 2. **Officials need to expect appropriate communication with coaches during contests.**

RATIONALE: Officials need to work at being good listeners and realistic about how much communication needs to take place.

IMPLEMENTATION: Instruction as to how to communicate with coaches should be done at officials' camps, education meetings and through written communication.

- 3. **Officials and associations need to enforce all the "Points of Emphasis".**

RATIONALE: This will promote more consistent officiated contests.

IMPLEMENTATION: The MHSAA needs to encourage officials to enforce the Points of Emphasis each year. Instruction to officials should be done at officials' camps, educational meetings and through written communication.

- 4. **Officials will conduct a "pregame" before each contest.**

RATIONALE: This will encourage officials to prepare mentally for the contest.

IMPLEMENTATION: Instruction to officials should be done at officials' camps, educational meetings and through written communication.

- 5. **Local associations will develop a sportsmanship award for coaches/teams/schools in your area.**

RATIONALE: This will promote the MHSAA's sportsmanship initiatives.

IMPLEMENTATION: Local associations can develop a program for sportsmanship. Officials will determine which schools get recognition.

- 6. **All officials should be members of their local MHSAA approved association.**

RATIONALE: This will support the MHSAA's goal of having all officials belong to an approved association. Membership in these associations results in greater professionalism and improved officiating.

IMPLEMENTATION: The MHSAA is working on getting officials to join approved associations.

- 7. **Assignors and/or local associations will make themselves available to local teams for preseason presentations.**

RATIONALE: This will promote a better relationship between officials and the basketball community.

IMPLEMENTATION: Assignors and/or local associations should contact coaches in their area to let them know that the officials are willing to make a presentation at preseason meetings.

- 8. **Local associations will invite coaches to attend their meetings.**

RATIONALE: This will promote a better relationship between officials and coaches. **IMPLEMENTATION:** Assignors and/or local associations should contact coaches in their area and invite them to local meetings.

9. **Assignors and/or local associations will study and support 3-person crews for all state tournament games.**

RATIONALE: Studies show 3-person crews produce better-officiated contests that also enhances sportsmanship.

IMPLEMENTATION: Work with the MHSAA to bring about 3-person crews for all state tournament games.

10. **Assignors and/or local associations will study and support 3-person crews for regular season varsity contests.**

RATIONALE: Studies show 3-person crews produce better-officiated contests that also enhance sportsmanship.

IMPLEMENTATION: Work with athletic administrators to bring about 3-person crews for varsity contests.

MIAAA

(Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Assoc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Athletic administrators will take full responsibility for the total environment at athletic contests.**

RATIONALE: This will create a positive experience at contests. The recommendation will support the “extended classroom” philosophy.

IMPLEMENTATION: When athletic administrators educate their coaches, students, cheerleaders, athletes, parents and fans about expectations concerning sportsmanship, acceptable and unacceptable behavior the overall basketball event is enhanced. This can be implemented at pep assemblies, with handouts at games, at parent meetings and with school announcements.

2. **Athletic administrators will follow the MHSAA’s booklet: *Recommended School Responsibilities for Hosting Officials.***

RATIONALE: This will support the MHSAA’s efforts to create a positive experience for officials.

IMPLEMENTATION: The MIAAA will continue emphasizing the importance of these responsibilities to their members.

3. **Athletic administrators will encourage their coaches to invite local officials to their preseason meeting to explain new rules and points of emphasis.**

RATIONALE: This will open lines of communication between officials and coaches.

IMPLEMENTATION: Encouragement from ADs should emphasize the importance of coaches and officials communicating.

4. **Athletic administrators need to make their coaches aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable conduct toward officials.**

RATIONALE: This will support the MHSAA’s efforts to promote sportsmanship.

IMPLEMENTATION: The MIAAA could develop expectations for coaches in their conduct toward officials. Helping to educate coaches on their conduct should go a long way in improving high school basketball.