

**Representative Assembly Process
Addition of a Sport to the list of MSHSL Sports**

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Proposed Amendment to Bylaw 520 -Volleyball – Girls Becomes **Volleyball – Boys’ & Girls’**
BYLAW 520.00 VOLLEYBALL – BOYS & GIRLS’
(Adding Boys Volleyball to the list of available sports at the MSHSL level)

Rational for this proposal:

In asking for sanction in this third year, it is important for the Regions to understand that this proposal has strong support from communities across the seven county metro, as well as from outstate schools from Austin to Rochester, and schools as far north as Proctor, Cloquet and the entire Duluth area. In the first year over 400 boys played for 22 high schools, and in the second year, over 50 schools had boys’ programs with 800+ players involved.

1. The interest in Boys’ volleyball is sweeping the nation. It currently is one of the fastest growing sports for boys. There are currently 24 states with high school programs, the most recent sanction coming from Colorado, who will add it for the 2019-2020 Spring Season. Ohio will follow soon.

Of the 24 states, 22 have sanctioned a Spring season. The major reason for this is that the NCAA and NAIA college seasons for men are in the spring and thus states offering boys high school volleyball have followed that lead.

2. In the 2018-2019 school year there were 50 Minnesota high schools involved in the spring high school club volleyball season. Most of the boys playing were not involved in other spring sports. In other words, we know the sport is viable as a spring season and will provide opportunity to athletes not currently taking part in the schools other athletic spring offerings.

3. The only way a Minnesota High School boys’ volleyball season will work realistically is if it is held in the spring. Almost all of the people involved, from directors, to coaches, to officials, are people who are involved with girls’ volleyball in the fall season. They all love volleyball and are excited to help develop the boys game and the boys season, but if the sport was offered in the fall instead of the spring, none of those people would be available. As an example, in talking with several athletic directors this fall, they have said that there is presently a huge shortage of officials for the girls’ schedule. Imagine that issue if the boys season was also in the fall. Again, it has already been shown that the spring works, both in number of athletes who want to play, as well as available people to fill all the roles necessary for the sport to succeed.

4. Having the boys play in the spring and the girls' play in the fall also assures a cooperative environment in our high schools. In that scenario, boys will support the girls in their season and the girls will support the boys in theirs. Already in the past two seasons, we have noticed that there are more male spectators at the girls fall matches, as well as boys serving as line judges, student managers, etc., for the girls teams. The same was true for girl's involvement in the spring. Putting the boys in the fall would create a competitive culture between the two sports in terms of media coverage, gym use, and a myriad of other issues.

5. Gym use in the spring season is difficult in March, we know, due to the pressure from outdoor sports. However, the 50 schools now involved were able to make it work for the past two seasons. The boys are very willing to practice late during the time that inclement weather causes outdoor sports to be inside. In the past two club seasons this has involved about two to three weeks in March. Once programs are outside, gym use should no longer be an issue in any Minnesota school, and there should be no further gym conflicts in the competitive weeks of the Boys' season.

Though the High School club season is enjoying a huge expansion since its inception, it is no surprise that the boys playing and families involved want it to be part of the MSHSL's sanctioned sports along with the girls' equivalent.

How does your proposal impact:

~Other sports in the same season:

*Outdoor spring sports use indoor facilities in early spring, so there would be added pressure for facilities until outdoor sports are outside. However, the pressure would be mitigated by a late March starting date for Boys' Volleyball with matches not beginning until early April.

*Coaches of other spring sports are concerned they will lose participants, but of the 800 boys that played in 2019, most were not out for another spring sport. Many schools today, especially the large schools, are looking for ways to increase opportunity for students. There will certainly be schools where the population will make fielding a team difficult, but those schools need not field teams even if the MSHSL sanctions the sport. The opportunity should be given to boys in those schools who can field teams.

~What are the facilities needed to accommodate your recommendation:

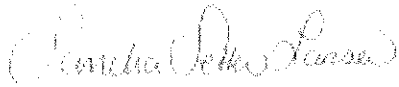
*Indoor court space

~Other items which should be considered regarding the above-stated proposal:

* Schools will need ensure equal participation opportunities for boys and girls.

*With the level of interest in boys volleyball increasing dramatically, there is a high degree of upside and almost no downside to the MSHSL sanctioning boys volleyball as a high school sport.

I support the above proposed amendment to Bylaw 520, Volleyball-Girls



Sandra Setter-Larsen

Athletic Director

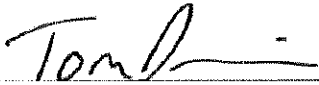
Eagan High School



Matt Hanson

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Shakopee High School



Tom Dasovich

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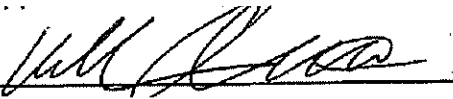
Lakeville South



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