



MEMBERS PRESENT

Greg Whitmore, Chair, WIAA Executive Board Member (District 7, 2B); **Ken Roberts**, Girls Basketball Coach, Snohomish High School (District 1, 3A); **Mike Bethea**, Boys Basketball Coach, Rainier Beach High School (District 2, 3A); **Kim Eng**, Athletic Director, Forest Ridge High School (District 2, 1A); **Jackie Thomas**, Girls Basketball Coach, Curtis High School (District 3, 4A); **Rick Wells**, Athletic Director, Puyallup School District (District 3, 4A); **Jeff Johnson**, Athletic Director, W. F. West High School (District 4, 2A); **Bryan Johnson**, Athletic Director, Ephrata High School (District 6, 2A); **Ryan Peplinski**, Athletic Director, Saint George's High School (District 7, 2B); **John Barrington**, Athletic Director, Mead High School (District 8, 4A) and **Doug LaMunyan**, Principal, Pomeroy High School (District 9, 1B.)

Doug Burge, Superintendent, Zillah School District (District 5, 1A) and **BJ Kuntz**, WIAA District 6 Director, were unable to attend due to impassable roads.

WIAA STAFF PRESENT

Assistant Executive Directors **Cindy Adsit** and **Andy Barnes**; Sports Information Director **Casey Johnson**; and **Andy Knapp**, Director of Marketing, Promotions and Corporate Partners

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Greg Whitmore welcomed the group and thanked them for their time, dedication and efforts to promote the Rated Percentage Index (RPI) as a fair way to seed teams for the state basketball tournaments. He added that this new means to seed teams will create a lot of interest leading up to and through the state tournaments. Each member introduced him/herself, shared their coaching and administrative experiences, and his/her appreciation for serving on this committee.

PURPOSE OF RPI COMMITTEE

During the meeting, the committee reviewed the current RPI for basketball as approved by the WIAA Executive Board, developed tie-breaking criteria, and determined what information should be included and how the RPI ranking page should look.

During a subsequent meeting(s), the committee will review the RPI for basketball to determine if changes are needed, and will explore implementing a ranking system for other teams sports (football, volleyball, soccer, baseball and softball) to be implemented as early as the 2017-18 school year. The makeup of the committee and terms for the members will continue to be reviewed.

COMMITTEE GROUND RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Greg Whitmore covered, and the committee agreed to the following conditions:

1. Assume goodwill.
2. Be open minded and considerate of the opinions of others.
3. Arrive at conclusions after considering all aspects of an issue.
4. Base decisions on what is best for the majority of stakeholders.
5. Be united when committee work is concluded, even if there is disagreement on a particular aspect.
6. Be an advocate for the committee and accept responsibility for the decisions made.

7. Refers complaints as well as media requests for comments/interviews regarding the state basketball tournament format or RPI to the committee chair or WIAA staff.

TIMELINE OF ACTION THAT LED TO THE APPROVAL OF THE RPI, THE RPI FORMULA AND THE RPI COMMITTEE

Greg Whitmore summarized the timeline that led to the approval of the RPI and the RPI formula (Attachment #1.) He added that the District Directors had the opportunity to submit the names of three individuals for the RPI committee. The committee was selected with the following parameters taken into consideration: diversity, all districts represented, all classifications represented, both public and private schools represented, all stakeholders represented (superintendent, principal, athletic director, and coach), with specific coaching and administrative experience with each of the team sports under WIAA jurisdiction.

BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT FORMAT

Greg Whitmore reported that, based upon the survey that was sent out to all stakeholders last August, a change in the state basketball tournament format was supported, and the option that received the majority vote was approved by the WIAA Executive Board in September. A copy of the state basketball tournament bracket was provided (Attachment #2.) The 16 teams that qualify through the district tournaments will be seeded 1 – 16 based on RPI, with 1-8 in double elimination and 9-16 in loser out. Although the original bracket posted on the WIAA Website was based on strict ratings, the quarterfinal bracket has been altered in order to avoid rematches of the regional round. He acknowledged that it would be possible for a team to lose in the first round, yet remain in the tournament and potentially win a state championship, but felt that gave credit to teams that had done well all season and just had a bad day at regionals.

Cindy Adsit shared that prospective regional sites will be approved by the WIAA Executive Board during the January meeting. Teams 1-4 and 9-12 will be assigned to play at the closest selected regional site, while teams 5-8 and 13-16 will travel. When possible, girls and boys teams from the same school will be assigned to play at the same site, or will play on different days.

2016-17 RPI FOR BASKETBALL: 25% (WP) + 50% (OWP) + 25% (OOWP)

Greg Whitmore reported the same survey also indicated overwhelming approval to implement a ranking system for basketball beginning with this 2016-17 season. As a result, the ranking systems used by other states were studied by the staff and chairs of the special basketball committee. While many states incorporate several factors, the chairs felt that transparency and simplicity were paramount, and selected a formula that is used by other state associations as well as the NCAA, knowing that the formula might be adjusted after the first year and in subsequent years as well. In order to honor and recognize the multi-classification leagues, the classifications of the teams involved has no bearing on the RPI. Due to the discrepancy in the league and district tournaments, where teams could play as few as two games or as many as ten games prior to regionals, and the significant "weight" of those games, in order to provide parity for all teams, only the 20 regular season games will apply to the RPI. Games played against junior varsity (JV) teams would not apply, out-of-state and out-of-country teams would default to .500. Teams must qualify through their respective District tournaments, and then the RPI will be applied to determine the seeding for regionals.

- The initial ranking will be published the first week in January on the WIAA Website, then updated daily

- The committee recommended that the RPI page on the WIAA Website include the ranking, formula percentages carried out to three places, team record, strength of schedule and links to the team's schedule and league standings page for all schools in that classification.
- Although it was anticipated that any ties could be broken by the first step, the committee approved a four-step tie-breaking criteria:
 - 1st – RPI score/ranking, taking the value out to as many places as needed (versus only three places)
 - 2nd – results of head to head competition (including postseason)
 - 3rd – winning percentage (WP)
 - 4th – strength of schedule

Ryan Peplinski shared that he did a test run in comparing the Washington formula with others that take into account several factors, and found that the results were very close.

ISSUES/CONCERNS WITH CURRENT FORMULA AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR BASKETBALL RPI

Committee members were asked to share concerns heard about the RPI, realizing that changes would not be appropriate at this time, but that all issues merited discussion now, review through the season, with the potential for changes to be made for 2017-18.

- **RPI effect on scheduling**
The number of non-league games can affect a team's strength of schedule and could, potentially, over inflate its RPI. The number of non-league games is driven by the number of teams in the league (which can vary from as few as five to as many as 13). Leagues that traditionally schedule home-and-home games may instead play league opponents only once in order to schedule more non-league games. Teams are considered to be "weak" (with a low RPI) will find it difficult to schedule non-league games, and could even be rejected for league membership. Since league schedules were already set for 2016-17 by the time the RPI formula was adopted, however, teams had no opportunity to control their RPI.
- **Missing players due to football playoffs**
The win percentage of 24 teams (four in each classification) may be directly impacted by the football playoffs when students participate in both football and basketball. A potential solution would be to incorporate a "crossover" factor for those schools.
- **Coaches encouraging specialization in basketball**
Since the early season games are considered to be significant in terms of RPI, coaches may encourage students to play fall basketball, rather than football, in order for the team to be at full strength at the beginning of the season.
- **Out-of-state and out-of-country opponents**
In order to prevent Washington schools from having to track down the season records for these opponents, out-of-state and out-of-country opponents will default to .500. It was mentioned that the Washington schools close to either the Oregon or Idaho border, that typically play a significant number of games against schools in those states, and schools that traditionally play in a high caliber tournament over the winter break, will be

disadvantaged by the current formula. One committee member reported that his school cancelled one of its out-of-state games and scheduled an in-state school for its non-league game in order to obtain a higher RPI, but at the cost of significantly greater travel and cost. It was suggested that, in future years, any Washington school that play an out-of-state school be required to submit that school's schedule and results. The majority of games with out-of-country teams involve the Australian touring teams and those games would continue to default to .500.

- **RPI effect on league and district qualifying events**
Because the sample RPI that was included on the survey included a factor for league and District finish, many people that voted for the RPI assumed that postseason games would be included in the calculations. The District basketball games serve as a primary revenue source for the WIAA Districts, and those monies fund many other District qualifying events and District programs. Not counting postseason games does not give credence to those teams that start slow, yet really come on at the end of the season. While the committee acknowledged the variance in the number of schools in each league and in each District, that Districts may combine for qualifying purposes, and that different qualifying formats are implemented, the District games need to be valued and taken into account.
- **RPI formula**
75% of a team's RPI is based on who its opponents are and what they do to each other. A formula that places more emphasis on the team's win percentage may be more appropriate.
- **Point differential**
Not factoring in the winning margin does encourage coaches to provide playing time for more of the players on the team.
- **Travel not a factor**
With the previous draw criteria, travel across the mountains was limited. By utilizing the RPI, travel will no longer be a consideration, so there is the potential that more teams will travel farther and/or across the mountains.
- **Teams from same league could be seeded to play in regional round**
It is possible that teams from the same league or same District would be seeded to play one another in the regional round. Both were prevented with the previous draw criteria except when a District had five or more allocations.
- **Schedule or score reporting inaccuracies**
Scheduled games or scores that are duplicated or reported inaccurately can affect a team's RPI. Coaches and athletic directors are recommended to routinely review the data on the MaxPreps site for accuracy and make corrections immediately if needed and to utilize the MaxPreps app which is free and the most convenient means to verify data.

- Teams ranked in top 16 all season that don't qualify
It is possible that a team will be ranked within the top 16 in its classification through the entire season, but will not qualify through the District tournament. Teams ranked much lower could potentially qualify instead.
- League comparisons
Comparing leagues will be difficult because there is such discrepancy in the number of teams involved, caliber of play, and other factors.
- Adding the human element
Rather than strictly utilizing win percentage, there was discussion about adding the "human factor" in having a committee review the data as well as the team's status (number of players involved in football playoffs, injuries, home versus away wins, win margin, etc.) to determine a team's ranking.

CONSIDERING RPI FOR OTHER SPORTS

Committee members were encouraged to talk with their constituents to determine the level of support for the RPI to be applied to other sports as early as the 2017-18 school year. Based upon the uniqueness of each sport, the number of regular season contests, and typically playoff structure, it is entirely likely that a different formula could be applied to each team sport.

COMMITTEE TIMELINE 2016-18

The committee will meet sometime in the spring to review the basketball RPI, and to initiate the formula and the process to implement the RPI to other sports in the 2017-18 school year, and then again on a comparable schedule during the 2017-18 school year.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

Due to the work schedules of the committee members, a Sunday meeting time works best. In order to prevent multiple trips to the WIAA office, however, Greg Whitmore and staff will determine if there is any way to combine upcoming meetings (potentially combine the next RPI meeting with the March 18-19, 2017, WIAA Executive Board meeting.)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Greg Whitmore, Chair

Cindy Adsit, Recorder



ATTACHMENT #1

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association

TIMELINE FOR BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT FORMAT AND RPI DECISIONS

RPI Committee Meeting

December 4, 2016

May 2014	5 – 1A superintendents begin discussion about return to 16-team tournament
June 2014	Meeting with the WIAA Executive Board to present superintendents' ideas
November 2014	Interest survey to superintendents and school leaders
March 2015	Meeting with WIAA Executive Board to share survey results
April 2015	Development of State Basketball Tournament Format Committee
June 2015	1 st committee meeting
September 2015	2 nd committee meeting
October 2015	Committee proposal adopted
December 2015	Talking points sent to superintendents and school leaders
January 2016	Superintendent and school leader survey
January 2016	Meeting with WIAA Executive Board to present the committee's proposal and present survey data
March 2016	WIAA Executive Board approves a special basketball committee to evaluate data
April 2016	Breakout sessions are held at WSSAAA Conference to gather feedback regarding RPI
May 2016	Special committee meets and develops proposals regarding the state basketball tournament format and RPI implementation for basketball for WIAA Executive Board review
June 2016	The three state basketball tournament formats and RPI information were posted on the WIAA Website; the WIAA Executive Board authorized a survey to be sent in August to superintendents, principals, athletic directors, head and assistant boys and girls basketball coaches
August 2016	Survey emailed to all groups on August 15; in person reminders during WIAA fall workshops (every school is required to send a representative) in Mt Vernon, Renton, Tacoma, Longview, Tumwater, Kennewick, Wenatchee, Spokane and Pomeroy
September 2016	Survey reminder sent on September 6; Survey closed on September 16; Survey results are reviewed; WIAA Executive Board approves 12-team state basketball tournament format and RPI implementation for basketball beginning with 2016-17 season



ATTACHMENT #2
 Washington Interscholastic Activities Association
APPROVED 2017 STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT FORMAT
 RPI Committee Meeting
 December 4, 2016

