

## **1. Call to Order & Introductions**

- Members introduced themselves and identified their organizations

## **2. Fall Sports Health & Safety Updates**

- Fall sports season has officially begun.
- The Health and Safety webpage has been updated with current guidance and resources.
- Highlights from the recent NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) meeting in Salt Lake City included:
  - Growing concerns regarding peptide use in athletics.
  - New recommendations to reduce risk during football contact drills.
- Arizona plans to incorporate the new football contact drill guidance into AIA bylaws at the upcoming Board meeting.

## **3. Sports Safety Measures**

### **Football**

- Dr. McCoy presented findings from a four-year Arizona State University study.
- Research indicated delayed concussion diagnoses following significant head impacts.
- Findings support eliminating certain high-risk football drills to improve athlete safety.

### **Baseball/Softball**

- Dr Dean reported that NFHS Baseball Rules Committee changed the recommendation related to a double-first base to include a larger first base option. AIA staff will discuss with the Executive Board to make a final determination for this year's baseball season.

## **4. Athletic Trainer Recruitment**

### **Access to Training Modules**

- Dr. Dean will work with the AIA programming team to investigate opportunities to provide athletic trainers access to AIA online educational modules once current programming projects are completed.

### **Recruitment Challenges**

Key concerns included:

- Increasing difficulty recruiting athletic trainers.
- More athletic trainers are choosing employment in industrial settings and corporate/office environments.
- Rural schools continue to experience the greatest staffing shortages.
- Financial stability has become a primary factor influencing employment decisions for new graduates.

## **5. Athletic Trainer Compensation**

### **Compensation Trends**

- Athletic trainer graduates are seeking higher salaries and improved work-life balance
- High school and collegiate positions remain difficult to fill due to compensation challenges.
- Compared the issue to historic teacher salary concerns.
- Members agreed school districts need greater awareness of the value of athletic trainers and competitive compensation needs.
  - Suggested engaging school superintendents in future discussions regarding appropriate salary ranges.

## **6. Athletic Trainer Education & Retention**

### **Educational Preparation**

- Concerns expressed that master's-level athletic training graduates may have less overall clinical experience because programs are exclusively focused on athletic training coursework which may contribute to higher turnover among new professionals.

### **Additional Perspectives**

- Current master's programs provide:
  - More immersive clinical experiences
  - Greater athletic training-specific preparation than previous bachelor's degree programs.

### **School-Based Athletic Training Support**

- Discussion included the growing trend of hospital systems funding athletic trainers in schools which may create disparities in access among school districts.

## **7. Announcements**

### **Barrow Concussion Network Kickoff**

- **Date:** August 8
- **Format:** Zoom

### **NFHS RIO Data Collection**

- NFHS has requested each state recruit **10 additional certified athletic trainers** to participate in RIO injury surveillance data collection.

### **Qualified Medical Professionals**

- Conversations revisited and affirmed those categories listed as GMP

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting: August 27