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Visualizing Transfers

January 30, 2018

There are two visual aids to bring to the discussion of the transfer rule serving school sports in Michigan.

One visual is of a continuum, of a line drawn across a page, with 50 dots representing the transfer rules of the 50 states, with the more liberal or lenient rules to the left and the more conservative or strict rules to the right.

The dot for Michigan's rule would be well to the left of center. The basic rule calls for an approximately one-semester wait for eligibility after a transfer, but with immediate eligibility if one of the 15 stated exceptions applies to the student's circumstances.

The majority of states have a longer period of ineligibility and fewer built-in exceptions.

The second visual is of a playground teeter totter.

Sitting at one end are the majority of school administrators of Michigan (about two-thirds) who want a tougher and tighter transfer rule, with a longer period of ineligibility and fewer exceptions.

At the other end of the teeter totter is parents of school-age children, some unmeasured portion of which believe there should be no limitations in how or where they educate their children, whom they believe should have full and immediate access to all school programs at any school they choose for their children.

In the center, at the teeter totter's fulcrum, is the Michigan High School Athletic Association, helping parents hear school administrators, and vice versa.

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About the Author



Jack Roberts has been at the helm of the MHSAA as its Executive Director since 1986, implementing programs and overseeing tournament administration and regulations for the Association which boasts 1,500 member schools, 10,000 registered officials and 13,000 head coaches.

During the last 45 years, Roberts has spoken to educator and athletic groups, business leaders and civic groups in almost every state and five Canadian provinces. He is one of the nation's most articulate advocates for educational athletics.

Roberts has served on the board of directors of the [National Association of Sports Officials](#) (NASO), is in his second term on the board of the [National Federation of State High School Associations](#), and is the first chairman of the [NFHS Network](#) board of directors. He has been board president for the [Refugee Development Center](#) for nine years, and is a past-chair of the board of directors of the [Michigan Society of Association Executives](#). He is chair of the board of trustees for the [Capital Region Community Foundation](#) for 2018.

He is a 1970 graduate of Dartmouth College, where he played defensive safety for the Ivy League's winningest football team during that span, and he sang in Dartmouth's close harmony vocal group.

His wife, Peggy, has retired from a 30-year career in social services, and is serving as president of the board of the Fenner Nature Conservancy in Lansing.

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