



Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 16, 2018
TO: Principals of TSSAA Member Schools
FROM: Bernard Childress, Executive Director
RE: 2018 Regional Meetings

This is to remind you that our annual meetings held to discuss TSSAA business are scheduled for November 5, 7, and 8. We will conduct three Regional Meetings, one in each of the three Grand Divisions of the state. All proposals submitted to the state office by October 15, 2018, will be discussed and voted on by the member school administrators in attendance. Those Board of Control and Legislative Council positions that expire this year will be filled during these meetings. We will also recognize our A. F. Bridges Award winning schools and Individual Award recipients in each Athletic District.

The TSSAA Board of Control voted in March 2016 to make the Regional Meetings mandatory for all member high schools. They voted to require the staff to publish and make available to them the names of the schools that do not attend their Regional Meeting each year along with the overall attendance percentages. If a school does not attend the meeting for two consecutive years, the Board has assessed a \$100.00 fine. Please note that it is not required for member middle schools to attend the Regional Meetings.

Listed below is the Regional Meeting schedule along with Board of Control and Legislative Council positions that expire. We have also included the proposals for changes in the TSSAA Constitution and TSSAA Bylaws that will be considered. Please see that this information is circulated among your staff. We strongly encourage an administrator be present to represent your school.

Mon., Nov. 5, 2018	1:00 p.m.	Knoxville – Hardin Valley Academy
Wed., Nov. 7, 2018	10:00 a.m.	Jackson – University School of Jackson
Thurs., Nov. 8, 2018	10:00 a.m.	Nashville – Hillwood High School

Board of Control Terms that Expire: 3rd, 4th, 5th (2 year term), & 9th Athletic Districts; West Independent

Legislative Council Terms that Expire: 1st, 5th, & 7th Athletic Districts; Middle Independent

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AGENDA
2018 REGIONAL MEETINGS

Mon., Nov. 5, 2018	1:00 p.m.	Knoxville – Hardin Valley Academy
Wed., Nov. 7, 2018	10:00 a.m.	Jackson – University School of Jackson
Thurs., Nov. 8, 2018	10:00 a.m.	Nashville – Hillwood High School

1. Call to order by Chairman: Hardin Valley Academy (Knoxville) – Mike Reed
USJ (Jackson) – Greg Scott
Hillwood High School (Nashville) – Bryan True
2. Presentation of A. F. Bridges Awards
3. Election of Board of Control and Legislative Council Members
 - a. Board of Control members will be elected from the 3rd, 4th, 5th (2 year term), and 9th Athletic Districts, and an independent school representative will be elected from West Tennessee.
 - b. Legislative Council members will be elected from the 1st, 5th, and 7th Athletic Districts, and an independent school representative will be elected from Middle Tennessee.
4. Proposals for Changes in TSSAA/TMSAA Constitution and Bylaws
 - a. Proposed Change to Article II, Section 9 (Age Limit) of the TSSAA Bylaws:

This proposal is to amend the bylaws in a manner that would allow for individual consideration of junior varsity eligibility for students to participate in athletics if they have reached the age of 19 on August 1st, so long as the student falls within qualified Individuals with Disabilities Act and has not exhausted eight semesters of high school eligibility.

Rationale:

This would not remove the age requirement, but would create a waiver option so students with appropriate documentation could be allowed to participate on the junior varsity level up to eight semesters.

Submitted by Dobyns-Bennett High School
 - b. Proposed Changes to Article II, Sections 12 and 13 (Eligible and Ineligible Transfer Students) of the TSSAA Bylaws:

This proposal is to replace Article II, Section 12 b (currently the bona fide change of residence rule) with:

Except as otherwise provided in Section 13 below, the following transfer students are eligible:

b. The student transfers to a new school that is outside the twenty (20) mile radius of the previous school, so long as the principal of the former school attests in writing that the move was not for athletic or disciplinary reasons (including bona fide change of residence).

This proposal also adds an item to Article II, Section 12. The new Article II, Section 12 k would read:

k. Other than reasons listed above within Section 12, a student with an athletic record may transfer **with no penalty** as long as the transfer is to a receiving school that is in a different classification or division from the departing school. The student must transfer before the departing school's 1st day of classes in order to be eligible in the receiving school's TSSAA sanctioned sports for the upcoming school year. If the transfer occurs during the school year, the student will be ineligible for the current school year in all sports in which he or she has an athletic record. A student may transfer under this rule one (1) time during his/her high school years.

Finally, this proposal removes Article II, Section 13 a-c (items currently dealing with students without a bona fide change of residence). The proposed Article II, Section 13 a would read:

The following transfer students are ineligible at the varsity level for a period of twelve months from the student's last participation date:

a. A student who transfers to any school within a twenty (20) mile radius of the athlete's current school.

The proposal replaces any other reference to a bona fide change of residence with the concept of moving outside the twenty (20) mile radius of the athlete's previous school.

Rationale:

There is widespread abuse of the current transfer loopholes (particularly involving "bona fide change of residence"). Even if a student has a "bona fide change of residence" that is within the twenty (20) mile radius, a maximum of twenty (20) miles is not an unreasonable burden for transportation. Precedence has already been established (with non-public schools) that a twenty (20) mile distance constitutes "territory." This would eliminate manipulation of the current system and simplify eligibility. Additionally, a student with an athletic record may have one "penalty free" transfer during high school – due to the variety of reasons that students transfer. Many times, this is accomplished with falsified documentation. It is common practice for a student to transfer multiple times using the current change of residence rule. This new proposal would allow one legal "fresh start" over the course of a high school career. *However*, this one allowance must be to a school competing in a different classification or division and be done prior to the school year for full eligibility.

While some may argue that the current transfer policy is only an isolated problem in a few areas of the state and in certain sports, the policy does have an impact on the entire state once post season play begins. Those schools with multiple

transfers are often the same schools competing for state championships year after year.

Nebraska has a bylaw that supports each student-athlete a one-time transfer without a domicile change as long as the transfer is to a different division. Arizona considered a rule in 2013 that would have ruled student-athletes ineligible for one year if they transferred to a school within a 50-mile radius of their previous school.

Submitted by Collierville High School

- c. Proposal to Remove Article IV, Section 2 (Contests with Out-of-State Teams) from the TSSAA/TMSAA Bylaws:

Current Rule:

Only one out-of-state trip involving travel in excess of 600 miles round-trip by a team of a member school will be permitted during any one season, provided the trip has been approved in writing by the state office.

Proposed Change:

Eliminate Article IV, Section 2.

Rationale:

It has become increasingly difficult to find local competition in a growing number of sports. Given that it is 331 miles from Chattanooga to Memphis, it is less travel time for our teams to travel out of state for non-region games/matches than to travel to some parts of Tennessee.

This rule, while most certainly well thought out and preferable, now impacts schools very differently given the lack of scheduling opportunities in certain sports and the location of schools within our state.

We ask that such decisions on travel be the responsibility of the individual school and/or school district administrations.

Submitted by McCallie School

- d. Proposed Change to Article II, Section 21 (Independent-Game Participation) of the TSSAA/TMSAA Bylaws:

The proposed change reads:

Once a student's name is listed on the school eligibility report, a student may not participate in a competition **or practice** on a non-school team in the same sport after the first contest date allowed and before the season has closed or his/her name has been removed from the eligibility report at the request of the school principal. Violation of this rule shall render the student ineligible at the varsity level for 25% of the number of contests allowed in that sport by the sports calendar or for the remainder of the season in that sport, whichever number is the least. Violation of this rule a second time in the same sport in the same

season will render the student ineligible in that sport for the remainder of the season. Participation on a non-school team during the school season does not impact junior varsity eligibility.

A student's name may be removed from the school's eligibility list upon written request of the principal prior to the first official contest date allowed in that sport without penalty. After the first official contest allowed, a student's name may be removed from the school's eligibility list upon written request of the principal, and he/she may then participate in a non-school **practice** or competition without penalty. If the principal requests the state office to remove a student's name after the first official contest date allowed in that sport, such student may not again be certified during the season of that sport. This rule does not apply to bowling, golf, and tennis.

Rationale:

This proposal makes the Independent Game Rule stricter by including both practice and competition on non-school teams.

Submitted by Hendersonville High School

- e. Proposal to Remove Article II, Section 21 (Independent-Game Participation) of the TSSAA/TMSAA Bylaws:

This proposal is to remove Article II, Section 21 (Independent-Game Participation) from the bylaws.

Rationale:

The current Independent Game Participation Rule creates a number of situations where TSSAA staff is charged with interpreting what constitutes an organized game which results in a violation of this rule. The interpretations look very different when comparing one sport to another. In some sports, scrimmage situations in a practice setting constitute a violation, while in other sports they do not. The interpretations were created and have evolved to mirror what the administration and coaches in the individual sports have requested. However, this creates significant confusion and inconsistency when a school is charged with keeping up with all the variations in all the sports. If removed, each school administration can then take each sport and evaluate the need to restrict outside participation as they see fit to meet the individual school's needs. Both this proposal and the Hendersonville proposal would help clean up the inconsistencies. The TSSAA staff would simply like to see which direction the membership would like to go.

Submitted by TSSAA Staff

- f. Proposed Changes to Article III, Section 2 (Board of Control) and Article IV, Section 2 (Legislative Council) of the TSSAA/TMSAA Constitution:

This proposal would change the individuals that are eligible for election to the Board of Control and Legislative Council. The proposal reads:

All members of the Board of Control/Legislative Council must be full time employees (minimum of 100 school days) who are principals, assistant principals (who devote full-time duties to administration), heads of school, school-level athletic directors (who have achieved a minimum CAA recognition through the NIAAA), district-level athletic directors (who have achieved a minimum CAA recognition through the NIAAA), or directors of schools. District-level athletic directors and directors of schools of no more than one four-year high school or senior high school shall be eligible to serve. No individual can serve as a member of the Legislative Council and Board of Control at the same time.

Rationale:

The role of Athletic Directors has evolved over time into full-time administrative duties. Schools that have assigned individuals as full-time Athletic Directors, yet without the additional title or duties of an Assistant Principal, have done so because of the level of involvement and additional responsibilities on today's Athletic Director. These individuals would be well-suited to represent their school, school district, and athletic district on the TSSAA governing bodies and bring similar experiences, expertise, and perspectives that school administrators add to the organization in today's school environment. Adding the language that requires CAA (at minimum) from the NIAAA only solidifies that individual's commitment to the administrative side of Athletic Director and gives the title more credibility.

Submitted by Milan High School

- g. Proposed Addition to Article III, Section 11 (Unsportsmanlike Conduct - Appeals) of the TSSAA/TMSAA Bylaws:

Appeals for unsportsmanlike conduct may only be reviewed for severity of punishment. Criteria for consideration include impact on others, severity of violation, and regard for safety. The cost of review is a nonrefundable \$100.00 regardless of finding.

Rationale:

The one size fits all punishment for what is a judgement call by an official does not consider any of the different ways this ruling can be interpreted, applied, or for that fact abused. The inconsistencies can be minimized by reviewing and applying differentiated punishments where needed when it is appealed. Appeal in this case must be requested and opens the door to a range of punishments from punishment already served, to a stricter application of punishment where necessary.

Submitted by Camden Central High School

- h. Proposed Addition to the TSSAA Sports Calendar:

This proposal is requesting that TSSAA sanction the sport of Lacrosse for Boys and Girls beginning with the next classification cycle. This would be effective at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year.

Rationale:

Boys and Girls Lacrosse has existed in the state of Tennessee since the late 1980s. Lacrosse has grown over the past 2 decades from a handful of teams to close to 50 teams each for both boys and girls, and there are far more middle school and youth teams that are feeding players into established programs and new programs alike. US Lacrosse registered players in TN are currently: Boys HS: 920, Boys Youth: 1848, Girls HS: 664, Girls Youth: 863. The numbers overwhelmingly support the continued growth at the high school level. Over 23 states nationwide have sanctioned lacrosse including Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Illinois, and Missouri (girls only) which border Tennessee. The growth in the past ten years has been exponential at the youth level creating a surge in the number of programs at the high school level.

The current schools playing lacrosse are split into public and private school divisions on the boys side. The girls are considering a similar split for the state playoffs into private/public schools for the spring 2019. There are currently 20 teams in the boys private school division and 27 teams playing in the public school division. On the girls side, there are 21 private schools and 26 public schools. There are teams from all areas of the state from Chattanooga, Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, and four new teams in the Tri-cities. The current governing bodies of the boys (TSLA) and girls (TGLA) league are made up of all volunteers and as the sport continues to grow becomes harder and harder to manage. Lacrosse has been following NFHS rules and aligning their respective leagues to mirror what the TSSAA would potentially classify them as. As there has been much growth in the past few years and much growth to occur, we feel the time is right for the safety and fairness of the players, coaches, fans, and administrators to adopt Lacrosse into the TSSAA.

First practice date is Monday of NFHS Week 33. Start of regular season is Monday of NFHS Week 35. End of regular season is Friday of NFHS Week 44. The maximum number of games is 18.

Submitted by University School of Nashville

- i. Proposed Change to Article II, Section 7 (Repeating Rule) of the TSSAA Bylaws:

This proposal is to include the 6th grade in the Repeating Rule. The rule would read:

A student who repeats the **sixth**, seventh, or eighth grade and participates in school athletics while repeating shall be ineligible in all sports at all levels in the ninth grade.

Rationale:

The Repeating Rule was instituted years ago when the grade configuration of most middle schools included just the 7th and 8th grade. Most TMSAA member middle schools now include the 6th grade as part of their normal grade configuration.

The intent of the rule was to prevent middle school athletes from gaining an extra year of participation during their middle school years prior to their high school

careers. Under the current rule students repeating the 6th grade can receive an extra year of participation.

Submitted by TSSAA Staff

- j. Proposed Change to Article II, Section 14 (Practice Rules) of the TSSAA/TMSAA Bylaws:

This proposal is to remove the following paragraph from Section 14:

A student who engages in three or more days of off-season practice in football and basketball with a school in which the student is enrolled shall be ineligible in that sport the following season if the student enrolls in another school without a corresponding change in the residence of the student's parents.

Rationale:

There are a number of sports other than Football and Basketball where off-season practice does not affect the eligibility of transfer students. Removing this portion of the practice rule would eliminate that inconsistency and treat all sports the same. Additionally, we have found that most school administrators have difficulty determining if a student participated in off-season practice at a previous school and, if so, the exact number of days the student participated.

Submitted by TSSAA Staff



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 18, 2018
TO: Principals and Athletic Directors of TSSAA Member Schools
FROM: Bernard Childress, Executive Director
RE: 2018 Regional Meetings – Additional Item

This is to inform you that the TSSAA Legislative Council asked the staff to poll the membership on whether or not we want to continue allowing “Spring Practice” in football. Some members believe it is no longer necessary and many schools do not have Spring Practice. Please discuss this with your football coaching staff prior to the Regional Meeting. Each school present will be asked to vote on whether they want to keep or eliminate football Spring Practice.

If you have questions concerning this, please feel free to contact our office.

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