

2011-12 TMSAA Handbook

TENNESSEE SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

Article I

Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of the corporation shall be the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, and hereafter shall be referred to as TSSAA.

Section 2. The purposes of the corporation shall be as stated in the Charter of Incorporation and, in addition, to stimulate and regulate interscholastic athletic competition among the member schools in accordance with the standards established by those schools in the TSSAA Bylaws.

Section 3. The mission of the TSSAA is to serve its members by providing leadership and coordination for the administration of interscholastic athletics, which will enhance the educational experiences of students. The TSSAA will promote participation and sportsmanship to develop good citizens through interscholastic athletics, which provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals.

Section 4. The Middle School Athletic Association is an affiliate of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. All expenses associated with the formation and operation of the Middle School Athletic Association shall be borne by the member schools of such Association. Failure to meet the financial obligations of the Middle School Athletic Association will result in the immediate dissolution of the Middle School Athletic Association.

Article II

Athletic Districts

Section 1. For the purpose of administration only, the state shall be divided by counties into the following athletic districts:

First Athletic District: Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Washington.

Second Athletic District: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Monroe, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Union.

Third Athletic District: Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie.

Fourth Athletic District: Bedford, Cannon, Clay, Coffee, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Marshall, Moore, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Rutherford, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, White, Wilson.

Fifth Athletic District: Davidson, Macon, Montgomery, Robertson, Stewart, Sumner, Trousdale.

Sixth Athletic District: Cheatham, Dickson, Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Giles, Lawrence, Lewis, Maury, Perry, Wayne, Williamson.

Seventh Athletic District: Benton, Carroll, Chester, Decatur, Fayette, Hardeman, Hardin, Henderson, Henry, Madison, McNairy.

Eighth Athletic District: Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Haywood, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, Tipton, Weakley.

Ninth Athletic District: Shelby.

Athletic Districts 1, 2 and 3 shall comprise the Grand Division of East Tennessee; Athletic Districts 4, 5 and 6 shall comprise the Grand Division of Middle Tennessee, and Athletic Districts 7, 8 and 9 shall comprise the Grand Division of West Tennessee.

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Article III

Board of Control

Section 1. Administration: The administrative authority of the TSSAA shall be vested in a Board of Control composed of nine members. This Board of Control shall be composed of one representative from each Athletic District, who shall be elected to serve for a period of three years. The terms of office of three of the members of the Board of Control, one from each Grand Division of the state, shall expire each year.

Section 2. Elections: The election of members of the Board of Control shall take place in an annual meeting of the schools of each Grand Division. Nominations shall come from within the district of the member whose term is expiring, and only the members of that Athletic District may vote for their representative on the Board of Control. Each member school of the Athletic District that is represented at the meeting by the principal, or other faculty member, shall be entitled to one vote. In the event of a tie vote, the tie will be broken by a vote of the schools in that Grand Division of the state attending the regional meeting.

The term of office for members of the Board of Control shall begin December 1 following their election.

All members of the Board of Control must be full-time employees (minimum of 100 school days) who are principals or superintendents. (An assistant principal who devotes full time to administrative duties shall be eligible to serve.) County and city superintendents of systems of no more than one four-year high school or senior high school shall be eligible for membership. A principal or superintendent cannot serve as a member of the Legislative Council and the Board of Control at the same time.

Section 3. Officers: The officers of the Board of Control shall be a president and a vice president. These officers shall be elected annually by the members of the Board of Control and each shall perform the duties usually required of the office. The President and Vice-President of the Board of Control shall serve as President and Vice-President of the TSSAA. The President of the Board of Control shall also attend all meetings of the Legislative Council. The Executive Director shall act as Secretary of the Board of Control.

Section 4. Vacancies: Withdrawal from the teaching profession, suspension or lapse of membership of the school represented, or removal from the Athletic District represented shall immediately terminate membership on the Board of Control, and the vacancy shall be filled as provided below.

Vacancies on the Board of Control shall be filled by the members of the Board of Control representing the Grand Division wherein the vacancy occurs. Such members shall serve until the next annual meeting of the member schools of the Grand Division, at which time vacancies shall be filled by regular election.

Section 5. Power and Duties of Board of Control: The Board of Control shall:

- (a) Have general control over all athletic contests in which member schools participate.
- (b) Elect an Executive Director and delegate the authority to interpret and to enforce the Constitution and Bylaws of the TSSAA to the Executive Director.
- (c) Provide office facilities and employees for properly conducting the business of the Association. (The Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association is an Equal Opportunity Employer.)
- (d) Determine and authorize all necessary expenditures of money in the conduct of the affairs of the Association.
- (e) Determine methods of, and qualifications for, registration of officials; revoke registration of any official for just cause.
- (f) Hear appeals from decisions of the Executive Director and render final decisions in those appeals.
- (g) Have authority to rule on any cause not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws, until the Legislative Council adopts a rule covering the situation.

Section 6. Meetings: The Board of Control shall meet in August, November, January, March and June. Other meetings may be called by the President of the Board of Control. The various ex-officio representatives shall be

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permitted to attend meetings and may provide input on behalf of their constituents but shall have no vote and shall not be or remain present during any meetings held in executive session.

Section 7. Quorum: A majority of the members of the Board of Control shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article IV

Legislative Council

Section 1. Legislative Body: The legislative body of the TSSAA shall be a Legislative Council composed of nine members. Members shall consist of one representative from each Athletic District elected to serve for a period of three years. The terms of office of three of the members of the Legislative Council, one from each Grand Division of the state, shall expire each year.

Section 2. Election: The election of members of the Legislative Council shall take place in an annual meeting of the schools of each Grand Division. Nominations shall come from within the district of the member whose term is expiring, and only the members of that Athletic District may vote for their representative on the Legislative Council. Each member school of the Athletic District that is represented at the meeting by the principal, or other faculty member, shall be entitled to one vote. In the event of a tie vote the tie will be broken by a vote of the schools in that Grand Division of the state attending the regional meetings.

The term of office for members of the Legislative Council shall begin December 1 following their election.

All members of the Legislative Council must be full-time employees (minimum of 100 school days) who are principals or superintendents. (An assistant principal who devotes full time to administrative duties shall be eligible to serve.) County and city superintendents of systems of no more than one four-year high school or senior high school shall be eligible for membership. A principal or superintendent cannot serve as a member of the Legislative Council and the Board of Control at the same time.

Section 3. Officers: The officers of the Legislative Council shall be a president and a vice president. These officers shall be elected annually by the members of the Legislative Council and each shall perform the duties usually required of the office. The President of the Legislative Council shall also attend all meetings of the Board of Control. The Executive Director shall act as Secretary of the Legislative Council.

Section 4. Vacancies: Withdrawal from the teaching profession, suspension or lapse of membership of the school represented, or removal from the Athletic District represented shall immediately terminate membership on the Legislative Council, and the vacancy shall be filled as provided below.

Vacancies on the Legislative Council shall be filled by the members of the Legislative Council representing the Grand Division wherein the vacancy occurs. Such members shall serve until the next annual meeting of the member schools of the Grand Division, at which time vacancies shall be filled by regular election.

Section 5. Duties: The Legislative Council shall make necessary amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws and act upon suggestions submitted by 25 members of the Association.

Section 6. Meetings: The Legislative Council shall meet in December and in March. Other meetings may be called by the President of the Legislative Council. The various ex-officio representatives shall be permitted to attend meetings and may provide input on behalf of their constituents but shall have no vote and shall not be or remain present during any meetings held in executive session. The Executive Director shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Legislative Council, which shall include:

- (a) Proposals from the regional meetings.
- (b) Proposals from any committee established by the Board of Control or Legislative Council.
- (c) Proposals from the TSSAA staff.
- (d) Any proposal submitted by the chief administrator of a member school to the Executive Director no later than four weeks prior to the Legislative Council meeting.

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The Legislative Council shall not consider any item not on the agenda prepared by the Executive Director.

The agenda shall be published no later than seven (7) days in advance of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Legislative Council.

Section 7. Quorum: A majority of the members of the Legislative Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article V

Executive Director

Section 1. The Executive Director shall be elected for a term of three years by the Board of Control.

Section 2. Under the direction of the Board of Control, the Executive Director shall receive, hold, expand and account for all funds of the Association.

Section 3. The Executive Director shall maintain the records and property of the Association.

Section 4. The Executive Director shall initiate investigations, conduct hearings, collect information, render decisions and fix penalties based on the information provided to the staff, and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the TSSAA. Such decisions shall be subject to review by the Board of Control on appeal by the principal of the member school involved.

Some examples of disciplinary action are, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Probation to an individual sport in an athletic program shall result in a fine of \$500.00 annually.
- (2) Probation to a total athletic program shall result in a fine of \$1,000.00 annually.
- (3) Restrictive probation to an individual sport in an athletic program shall result in removal from the tournament series and a fine of \$1,000.00 annually.
- (4) Restrictive probation to a total athletic program shall result in removal from the tournament series in all sports and a fine of \$2,000.00 annually.
- (5) Suspension of an individual sport from participation or the total athletic program from participation.
- (6) **No awards shall be given to a member school recognizing their finish in the regular season in any TSSAA sponsored sport if that school has been placed on restrictive probation for that sport.**

Section 5. The Executive Director shall attend all meetings and serve as Secretary of the Board of Control and of the Legislative Council.

Section 6. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Board of Control and of the Legislative Council.

Section 7. The Executive Director shall administer the rules and regulations governing the certification of officials as directed by the Board of Control.

Article VI

Hearings

Section 1. Any school charged with violating TSSAA regulations shall be notified of such charges by the Executive Director. If a hearing is desired by the school involved, the Executive Director must be notified immediately in writing. Provisions will then be made for such hearing, and the school so notified.

Section 2. Hearings shall be conducted by the Executive Director in the presence of two or more members of the Board of Control who represent the Grand Division of the state in which the school is located, and who shall act in an advisory capacity. After testimony has been heard, the Executive Director shall meet in executive session with the members of the Board of Control who are present at the hearing. After discussing with the Board members

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the evidence and possible penalties, the Executive Director shall decide what penalty, if any, is to be placed against the school.

Section 3. Regardless of whether a member school has sought a hearing under Section 2, the school may appeal any decision of the Executive Director to the Board of Control. If the decision of the Executive Director is sustained, the school making the appeal shall defray the expenses for the meeting of the Board of Control in case a special meeting of the Board is called to consider the appeal.

Section 4. No member of the Board of Control shall serve on the Board while a case involving the school which he/she represents is being heard.

Article VII

Amendments

Section 1. The Constitution may be amended by a majority of the membership of the Legislative Council. The action of the Legislative Council shall be final except that any amendment it makes may be appealed to the entire membership upon request of 25 members of the Association submitted to the Executive Director in writing. An appeal to the membership must be participated in by at least 51 percent of the total membership or the appeal will be void. A two-thirds majority of those voting will be necessary to reject a regulation adopted by the Legislative Council. Any item, not on the regional agenda, that is submitted by a member school to the Legislative Council must be in writing and submitted to the Executive Director no later than four weeks prior to the meeting of the Legislative Council at which the item is to be submitted. Any item to be placed on the agenda of the Legislative Council must be submitted by the chief administrator of a member school, a committee established by the Board of Control, Legislative Council or members of the TSSAA staff.

Section 2. The Legislative Council shall not act on any proposed rule changes affecting any sport sponsored by TSSAA unless the proposed change has been called to the attention of the membership by letter or by being printed in the TSSAA bulletin.

Article VIII

Regional Meeting

Section 1. Regional meetings shall be held in November and/or December of each year at Jackson, Nashville and Knoxville for the purpose of electing members to Board of Control and Legislative Council and of considering proposals to amend the Constitution and Bylaws or other legislative proposals. Proposals for consideration at regional meetings may be submitted by member schools, the Board of Control, or the Legislative Council. All such proposals must be submitted to the Executive Director in writing not later than October 15 of the year they are to be presented at the regional meetings. The Executive Director shall furnish all member schools with a list of all legislative proposals prior to the regional meetings, and the school or group responsible for each proposal shall be indicated. A committee composed of the President and Vice-President of the Legislative Council, the President of the Board of Control, and the Executive Director shall determine the order in which these proposals shall be considered at the regional meetings.

Each member school, provided it is represented by the principal, or by a faculty member designated by the principal, shall be entitled to one vote on all matters considered at the regional meeting held in its area, unless the Board of Control rules in advance of the regional meeting that certain items on the agenda shall not be voted on by the entire membership but that the vote shall be limited to schools concerned with a particular question. Non-voting faculty representatives of member schools have the privilege of speaking for or against any proposal considered.

The action of the member schools at the three regional meetings shall be used as a guide by the Legislative Council in adopting or rejecting legislative proposals.

FAQ's concerning the Constitution can be found on Page 39.

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DEFINITIONS

Affiliate Member – A school that has all the privileges and responsibilities of membership but does not participate in the tournament series in any sport.

Athletic Program – All aspects of the member school's program of interscholastic athletic competition in the sports listed in Article I, Section 5, of the TSSAA Bylaws.

Athletic Record – A student has an "athletic record" if the student has played in an interscholastic contest at the varsity, junior varsity, ninth grade, or any other level, on behalf a TSSAA member school or a school that is a member of a state athletic association holding membership in the National Federation.

Bona Fide Change of Residence – A move from one community to another that justifies a change of schools. Where a family continues to maintain a previous residence for the residential purposes of that family or any of its members, the move is not one that justifies a change of schools for purposes of the TSSAA Bylaws.

Coach – Anyone who instructs or supervises student-athletes in practices or contests.

Cooperative Program – Two member schools forming a single team in a sport in which at least one of the schools does not have a team and has not had a team for the previous five (5) years.

De Novo – Heard anew. Where a decision by the Executive Director is appealed "*de novo*" to the Board of Control, the Board of Control is not in any way bound, restricted, or limited by the findings or conclusions of the Executive Director and may render whatever decision it deems appropriate based on its own review of the facts and circumstances.

Enrolled – A student is considered "enrolled" at a school, for purposes of these Bylaws, when the student has (a) completed all paperwork required for attendance at the school; (b) paid all deposits and tuition due where applicable; and (c) either (i) attended classes for three days; (ii) engaged in three or more days of football, girls volleyball, cross country, golf, or girls soccer practice during the period on or after the Monday of the week of August 1; or (iii) participated in an athletic contest in any sport. A student may not be considered to be enrolled in more than one school at any time.

Guardian – An adult with whom the student has lived for twelve (12) or more months. For purposes of TSSAA Bylaws, official appointment by a court is not required to establish guardianship; however, no person may be considered a guardian for purposes of these Bylaws unless the student has lived with that person for twelve (12) or more months, regardless of whether that person has been appointed as a guardian by a court.

Junior Varsity – Any level of play below the varsity level, whether denominated as junior varsity, b-team, or otherwise. The membership of a junior varsity team shall be composed of varsity substitutes and any other non-varsity players identified on the school's eligibility list.

Last Participation Date – the date of the last interscholastic athletic contest in which the student participated.

Parent – The birth mother and biological father of a student; the person(s) to whom a proper jurisdiction grants adoption of the student; or a step-parent with whom the student regularly resides.

Practice – Any interaction between a coach and student-athlete(s) where instruction, teaching, coaching, etc., is occurring. Happenstance communications between coach and student-athlete(s), in circumstances where attendance by the student-athlete is neither expected nor required, are not considered to be practice. Such communications may not, however, be used to circumvent the requirement in open facilities that a coach act in a supervisory capacity only.

Principal – The chief on-site administrative official of the member school, whether known as "principal," "headmaster," "executive principal," or by some other title.

Regular Attendance – A student is considered to be in "regular attendance" at a school when the student is enrolled at the school; is taking at, or under arrangements approved by the member school, a minimum of five (5) full courses or the equivalent for which credit toward high school graduation will be granted by the member school upon the student's completing and passing the courses; and is satisfying the requirements of the school or school system for class attendance applicable to students generally.

School Team – An entity comprised of one or more students in a school, under the control and conduct of the school, which represents the school in interscholastic athletic competition.

Territory – For a public school, the "territory" of the school is the geographic boundaries and bus routes of the area served by that school as established by the local board of education. For a system-wide public school, the "territory" of the school is the geographic boundaries of the school system. For a non-public school, the "territory" of the school is the area within a twenty (20) mile radius from the school.

Tournament Competition – The TSSAA-sponsored championship tournament series.

Transfer Student – A transfer student is any student changing schools for any reason other than having completed the highest, or terminal, grade at another school. A student who must change schools because he/she has completed the highest grade at his/her previous school is not considered a transfer student and is eligible to participate in athletics at any school he/she attends, without further approval, provided he/she satisfies the residence requirement above.

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BYLAWS

There are three primary objectives that the member schools of the TMSAA attempt to achieve through their Bylaws: (1) maintaining athletics in its proper perspective as subordinate to the primary academic mission of the schools; (2) preventing the exploitation of students for athletic purposes; and (3) fostering fair competition, or a "level playing field," among the TMSAA member schools. While some particular Bylaws may serve additional purposes, all of the Bylaws should be read with these three overriding objectives in mind.

Unless otherwise stated in the TMSAA Bylaws, the Middle School Association does not levy monetary fines. Other non-monetary penalties may be assessed by the Executive Director, based on the facts.

Article I

Membership and Athletic Program Administration

Membership - Sections 1, 2, and 3
Financial Statement - Section 4
Sponsored Sports - Section 5
Cooperative Programs - Section 6
Responsibility of the Principal - Sections 7 and 8
Coaches - Section 9
Rules Meetings for Coaches - Section 10
Contracts - Section 11

Membership

Section 1. Membership in the Tennessee Middle School Athletic Association shall be open to any school that terminates with the 7th or 8th grade, both for boys and girls interscholastic athletic competition. Schools with any combination of grades 6-12 will hold only one membership in the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, but may compete in the Middle School Athletic Association, Junior High Division, and Senior High Division.

Any member school that withdraws from TMSAA membership must be an affiliate member for one year upon application to renew membership. Affiliate membership is defined as having all rights of other member schools but not being allowed to participate in TMSAA tournament series.

Section 2. Membership in the Middle School Athletic Association shall be open to any school that terminates with the 7th or 8th grade. Membership dues are \$300.00 annually, which includes catastrophic insurance coverage.

Membership contracts shall be submitted by May 15 for the next school year. Membership dues shall be paid no later than September 1 and shall be for the school year (July 1 to June 30). There shall be a five dollar (\$5.00) per business day late fee charged to any school that fails to remit its membership dues by September 1.

Section 3. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Financial Statement

Section 4. The fiscal year of the Association shall be from July 1 to June 30. At the close of the fiscal year, the Executive Director shall publish a financial statement. All surplus funds shall be used as directed by the Board of Control.

Sponsored Sports

Section 5. TMSAA shall sponsor the following sports: baseball, girls softball, basketball, bowling, cross country, football, golf, tennis, track and field, girls volleyball, soccer, and wrestling.

Cooperative Programs

Section 6. Schools may petition TMSAA annually for permission to have a cooperative program in any sport if one of the schools does not have that program. The Executive Director of TMSAA may approve such cooperative programs subject to approval by principal of schools involved, the governing board of the schools involved, and the Board of Control.

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Responsibility of the Principal

Section 7. The principal of each school, in all matters pertaining to the athletic relations of his/her school, is responsible to this Association. Administrators must realize that they have more responsibilities than the general public to understand the purpose of high school athletics and the principles behind the TMSAA rules, and they must maintain that level of understanding and purpose when dealing with the general public and students. The principal shall exercise control over all finances, the scheduling of contests, and all other matters involved in the management of the school's athletic program. Any school whose athletic program is managed by a non-school group shall not be eligible to hold membership in TMSAA.

The principal shall furnish to the Executive Director such information as may be desired concerning eligibility of contestants, participation and reports on officials. Failure to comply within a reasonable time shall subject the school to suspension, fine or other penalty. Any eligibility list shall remain on file in the principal's office for a period of not less than five years.

The principal, assistant principal, or athletic director shall attend the meeting for all administrators annually.

Section 8. All games shall be properly supervised to insure sportsmanlike contests. The host school shall be responsible for providing sufficient security to insure orderly conduct on the part of all spectators. Visiting teams shall be accompanied by the principal or someone designated by the principal. If the game is played on a neutral field and neither team is designated as the host team, the competing schools shall share the responsibility of providing sufficient security.

Member schools are responsible for the conduct of their own fans and students at every athletic contest, regardless of where it may be held.

The coach and principal of each of the schools participating in an athletic contest shall file a report immediately with the state office if there is any unusual incident involving poor sportsmanship, during or following the game, on the part of players, coaches, school administrators, game officials or spectators.

Coaches

Section 9. All coaches will fall under one of the following categories:

1. Full-time employee (a minimum of 100 school days) of a board of education with a Tennessee state teaching license or the equivalent.
 2. Retired educator (five or more years' experience) with a valid Tennessee state teaching license or the equivalent.
 3. Non-faculty coach – Anyone approved by the principal, superintendent, and/or local board of education in the normal course of employment procedures in accordance with applicable state law. All non-faculty coaches shall be submitted to the state office annually.
- A. All coaches must be approved by the principal, superintendent, and/or local board of education. Any coach who is not a full time employee of the school system and does not possess a teacher's certificate or the equivalent, or is not a retired educator must complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session within his or her first year of assuming the position. A fine of \$50.00 will be assessed to the school if the coach does not complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session, and he or she will be required to complete the session immediately. All non-faculty coaches must complete the ASEP Coaches Education Program in a TSSAA-approved course within five years of assuming the position. Schools must submit the names of all non-faculty coaches to the state office each year. A school must pay an annual registration fee of \$40.00 per coach. The maximum fee for a school to register non-faculty coaches will be \$100.00 per year.
- B. Does not apply for the TMSAA.
- C. Head coaches in any sport may be full-time employees, retired educators, or a non-faculty coach. A non-faculty head coach must take the ASEP Coaches Education Course in a TSSAA-approved course within five years of assuming the head coaching position. He/She must complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session within one year of assuming the position.
- D. Assistant coaches may be full-time employees, retired educators, or non-faculty coaches.
- E. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

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- F. Does not apply for the TMSAA.
- G. Does not apply for the TMSAA.
- H. All coaches are subject to the TMSAA rules and regulations and must conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a coach and representative of the school. All coaches are responsible to the principal of his/her school. Coaches must realize that they have more responsibilities than the general public to understand the purpose of high school athletics and the principles behind the TMSAA rules, and they must maintain that level of understanding and purpose when dealing with the general public and students. Coaches must be paid entirely from funds approved by the board of education or the governing board of the school.

Rules Meetings for Coaches

Section 10. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Contracts

Section 11. Contracts made and entered into by member schools may be cancelled by mutual agreement or by authority of the Board of Control. All contracts between two schools shall be signed by the principals contracting. In the event a dispute arises under a written contract between two member schools, and the contracting schools are unable to resolve that dispute, either school may request a resolution by the Executive Director. The Executive Director's determination may be appealed to the Board of Control, whose decision shall be final and binding. TMSAA shall not resolve any disputes under contracts that are not in writing.

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Article II Eligibility

Preamble

Enrollment - Section 1

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High School Graduate - Section 5

Eight Semester Rule - Section 6

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Home School Rule - Section 25

Preamble

The member schools of the Tennessee Middle School Athletic Association have adopted, through their elected representatives, an essential inter-related group of minimum eligibility requirements which establish the threshold for participation for all students within the interscholastic program and which work together to define and preserve the fundamental nature of the program.

At the junior varsity or B-Team level, the only eligibility rules that apply are those in Sections 1 (Enrollment), 2 through 4 (Academic Rules), 6 (Semester Rule), 8 (Grade Participation), 9 (Age Limit), and 10 (Physical Examination and Parental Consent). At the varsity level, all eligibility rules apply.

Enrollment and Attendance

Section 1. To be eligible, students shall be regularly enrolled, in regular attendance, and carrying at least five full courses or the equivalent. A student is eligible to participate in football, volleyball, cross country, golf, and girls' soccer prior to the beginning of school if the student is enrolled at the school and meets all other eligibility requirements.

A student shall not participate in athletics during any semester unless he/she is duly enrolled on or before the 20th day of the semester. This rule shall not apply to transfer students who have met the attendance requirements in the school last attended.

Academic Rules

Section 2. To be eligible to participate in athletic contests, a student shall have been academically promoted to the next higher grade. Any student repeating a grade is ineligible to participate. A student who is ineligible at the beginning of the school year may gain eligibility the second semester by passing five (5) subjects, or the equivalent, the preceding semester, provided the student is not repeating the same grade.

If a student is forced to withdraw from school, or is prevented from enrolling in school, due to the student's illness, his/her accident, or his/her disability, the principal may request a ruling in regard to the student's eligibility, provided the student was eligible at the time the illness or accident forced the student to withdraw or prevented the student from enrolling in school. If ruled eligible, such a student shall be charged with a semester of attendance for athletic purposes for the semester of non-attendance or withdrawal.

A student who returns to a member school after attendance at a school of correction or alternative school may be eligible for athletic participation provided the school of correction or alternative school is accredited by the Tennessee State Department of Education and provided the student returns to the school attended before entering the school of correction or alternative school.

Section 3. For athletic purposes the scholastic record filed in the office of the principal or superintendent at the end of a semester shall be final. Credits earned in a summer school accredited by the State Department of

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Education shall be recognized for eligibility purposes provided the student was enrolled during the spring semester immediately preceding the summer session and attended at least 40 days of that spring semester.

Section 4. A student who drops out of school before the end of the semester shall be ineligible to participate in secondary school athletics until the student has been in school a semester and has passed in at least five full unit subjects or the equivalent. (To become eligible under this regulation, a student must attend school for at least 40 days of the semester, but in no case shall the eligibility become effective until the beginning of the succeeding semester.)

High School Graduate

Section 5. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Semester Rule

Section 6. A student shall have 6 semesters to complete 4 possible semesters of participation after entering the 7th grade. Attendance of 40 school days of any semester shall be regarded as a "semester" under this rule. If a student participates in athletics during a period of attendance of any number of days less than 40, he/she shall be charged with a semester of attendance. No student shall participate in any sport more than three seasons. Any student who repeats 6th, 7th, or 8th grade after having passed that grade shall not be eligible until they have reached the next higher grade.

Repeating Rule

Section 7. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Grade Participation

Section 8. No student in a grade below the 6th grade can participate as a member of a team in the Tennessee Middle School Athletic Association.

A school with teams in any combination of the Senior High Division, Junior High Division, and Middle School Athletic Association may certify a student for any division in which he or she may participate. A student may participate in only one division at any time. A student who has been certified as a member of the Middle School Athletic Association or Junior High Division may be advanced to a higher division at any time, provided the state office is advised to remove his or her name from the lower division eligibility report and a new eligibility report is filed to show that the student has advanced to a higher division.

Once an eighth grade student who is enrolled and in regular attendance at a high school participates in a sport at that level, he/she will be ineligible to participate in the same sport for a member middle school.

Age Limit

Section 9. No student shall be eligible to compete in the Middle School Athletic Association during any school year if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 1.

Physical Examination and Parental Consent

Section 10. It is required that no student be permitted to participate in practice sessions or in athletic contests until there is on file with the principal a preparticipation medical evaluation form signed by a doctor of medicine, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, or certified nurse practitioner stating that the student has passed a physical examination, not prior to April 15, and that in their opinion the student is physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletics. In lieu of the form, the principal may accept a signed statement from the health care provider certifying that the student has passed a physical examination that encompasses all elements on the preparticipation medical evaluation form and attesting that in their opinion the student is physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletics.

No student shall be required to submit to a physical exam if his/her parent(s) or legal guardian shall file with the principal a signed, written statement (affirmed under the penalties of perjury) declining such physical examination on grounds of sincerely held beliefs or practices.

It is required that no student be permitted to participate in practice sessions or in athletic contests until there is on file a parental consent certificate signed by a parent or legal guardian stating that the student has the consent of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian to participate

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Students Changing Schools

Section 11. General Provisions.

Residence. A student changing schools for any reason, to be eligible, must live at home with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), unless:

- (a) the student is moving to a boarding school and has no athletic record the previous twelve months in any sport;
- (b) the student is moving as a direct result of the dissolution of the student's home due to death;
- (c) the student is moving as a direct result of the divorce of the student's parents; or
- (d) the student is moving as a direct result of the separation of the student's parents, provided a complaint or petition for absolute divorce has been filed with a court having jurisdiction to grant the divorce.

"Transfer Student" Defined. A transfer student is any student changing schools for any reason other than having completed the highest, or terminal, grade at another school. A student who must change schools because he/she has completed the highest grade at his/her previous school is not considered a transfer student and is eligible to participate in athletics at any school he/she attends, without further approval, provided he/she satisfies the residence requirement above.

Executive Director Approval Required. A school may not allow a transfer student to participate in athletics until his/her eligibility has been verified and approved by the Executive Director. The school is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the information supplied to the Executive Director for this purpose.

Participation While Ineligible. If a student who is ineligible, under these provisions regarding students changing schools, competes in a contest while ineligible, then the student upon becoming eligible under these provisions will nonetheless be ineligible to participate in twice the number of contests in which he/she participated as an ineligible student or will be ineligible for the remainder of the season, whichever is less.**Section 12. Eligible Transfer Students.**

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

- a. The student has no athletic record in the previous twelve months in any sport sponsored by TMSAA;
- b. There has been a bona fide change of residence by the student's parents or guardian. If such a change of residence occurs between school years, the student must transfer at the beginning of the school year to be eligible. If the change of residence occurs during the school year, the student may transfer without loss of eligibility (1) at the time his/her parents change residence; (2) at the end of the next report card period; (3) at the close of the semester or term; or (4) at the close of the school year;
- c. The student changes schools as a direct result of re-zoning or reassignment of students by the local school system;
- d. The student is moving from a boarding school where they are a boarder to the school serving the territory where his/her parents live, or vice versa, provided the student has attended the school he/she is leaving for a minimum of twelve months and provided the principal at the school he/she is leaving indicates in writing that the move is not for athletic or disciplinary reasons. The move must be at the beginning of the school year. (Note: The school must be outside the day school territory of the boarding school.);
- e. The student is transferring to a senior high school in the same system into the earliest grade offered at that senior high school, i.e. at the student's first opportunity to move to that school;
- f. The student who has been determined by a Court to be dependent and neglected and consequently changes residences and schools as a result of a Court order;
- g. The first time the student changes residence from one parent to the other as a result of a court ordered custody change, so long as the principal of the former school attests in writing that the move was not for athletic or disciplinary reasons; or

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- h. The first time the student changes residence from a guardian to either or both parents as a result of a court ordered custody change, so long as the principal of the former school attests in writing that the move was not for athletic or disciplinary reasons;
- i. The student is attending school where the student's parent works as a full-time employee, that parent takes a full-time job at a different school, and the student transfers to the school where the parent takes the new job. The transfer must take place when the parent takes the job or, if the job change occurs during the school year, the transfer must be made at the beginning of the following school year;
- j. The student who transfers from school A to school B and then returns to school A without having participated in any sport at any level or without practicing in any sport at any level at school B. This must be verified in writing by the administration of school B.

Section 13. Ineligible Transfer Students.

The following transfer students are ineligible for a period of twelve months from the student's last participation date (these provisions do not apply to students who have no athletic record for the previous or current school year):

- a. A student who transfers without a bona fide change of residence by his/her parents;
- b. A student who transfers as a result of a change of residence is ineligible unless (1) the old residence is outside the territory of the new school, *and* (2) the new residence is *both* outside the territory of the old school *and* inside the territory of the new school;
- c. If a student has been ruled eligible as a result of a change of residence, and the parents or guardian return to the former residence before the student has been enrolled in the new school for one complete school year (or twelve months if the transfer occurred during the school year), the student will be ineligible for twelve months from his/her last participation date;
- d. If a student has satisfied all other requirements for eligibility but was under discipline at his/her former school, the student shall be ineligible at the new school for twelve months or until the disciplinary charges have been removed, whichever is less.

If the ineligible student has an athletic record for the previous or current school year in football, basketball, baseball, girls softball, or track and field, the student is ineligible in all of these sports. In all other sports, ineligibility applies only to the particular sport in which the ineligible student has an athletic record for the previous or current school year.

Section 14. Practice Rules.

Only students who are enrolled and in regular attendance at a school may participate in practice.

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

A student who engages in three or more days of off-season practice 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.

Section 15. Foreign-Exchange Programs.

A foreign exchange student is an international student who attends high school in the U.S. To be eligible for interscholastic athletics in the U.S., such student must be under the auspices of and be placed with a U.S. host family by an international student exchange program that has been accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Education Travel (CSIET) and be recognized by the U.S. Department of State. The foreign exchange program must assign students to host families by a method that ensures that no student, or his/her parents, school or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic or other purposes. The foreign exchange student may not be selected or placed on any basis related to his/her athletic interests or abilities.

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A foreign exchange student is considered to be placed with a host family when written notice of placement is provided by the exchange organization to the student and his/her parents, and to the host family.

Neither the school the student attends nor any person associated with the school shall have input into the selection of the student.

No member of the school's coaching staff, paid or voluntary, shall serve as the host family.

The foreign exchange student must possess a current J-1 visa, issued by the U.S. State Department.

The foreign exchange student must comply with all eligibility requirements, with the exception of Article II, Section 11 (Residence).

The foreign exchange student may participate a maximum of one school year.

Tuition and Financial Aid

Section 16. Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Recruiting Rule

Section 17. Athletic recruiting is prohibited. Athletic recruiting is the use of influence on a student or the parents or guardians of a student, by any person(s) directly or indirectly associated with the school, to secure or retain a student for athletic purposes. In the event that there is a violation of this rule, there shall be a penalty against the school, and the student(s) who was the subject of the violation shall be ineligible for a minimum of one year.

The penalty and any additional period of ineligibility beyond the one-year minimum will be determined by the Executive Director based on a consideration of the number of violations involved, the number of student-athletes involved, the nature of the violation(s), the individual(s) responsible for the violation(s), and the extent to which the violation may have been knowing, deliberate, or in reckless disregard of the provisions of this rule and the commentary that accompanies this rule.

Guidelines for Understanding the Recruiting Rule

1. Athletes or perspective athletes should be treated no differently than students who are not athletes. Students should be seen as students and not singled out based on their potential athletic ability.
2. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, a coach who is contacted by any student or family or individual about attending a school where he or she is the coach should inform that person that he or she needs to contact the administrative official or officials of the school who normally deal with the admission process.
3. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, any meeting with coaches regarding athletes or prospective athletes should be a part of the admissions process at the school and should take place at the school.

Q. How is influence for athletic purposes interpreted in the recruiting rule?

A. Examples of influence for athletic purposes may include, but are not limited to:

1. Offers of or acceptance of any special privileges not afforded to other students, whether athletes or not.
2. Offers of financial aid based on need to any prospective student-athlete by any member of the coaching staff. All financial aid questions should be referred to the principal or person in charge of financial aid.
3. Inducing or attempting to induce or encourage any prospective student-athlete to attend any member school for the purpose of participating in athletics even when the special remuneration or inducement is not given.
4. Any initial contact or prearranged contact by a member of a coaching staff or representative of the school and a prospective student-athlete in the seventh grade and above.
5. Offering or acceptance of any item with school advertisement (shirt, caps, jackets, etc.) to a prospective student; provided that this example does not apply to items of only nominal value (pencils, etc.) that a school gives to all families that participate in the school's admission process.
6. Admitting students to athletic contests free of charge based on their participation in athletics with non-school teams.

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7. Recognizing students at athletic contests based on their participation in athletics with non-school teams.
8. Coaches or their representatives calling, sending questionnaires, cards or letters, or visiting prospective student-athletes and/or their families at their homes. For purposes of the example, the terms "coach" assumes that the individual initiating the contact is acting in his or her capacity as a coach. If that person serves another role at the school and is not acting in his or her capacity as coach, then there may be no violation, unless the contact is really a method for what is in face the use of influence for athletic purposes.
9. Coaches or their representatives providing refreshments, gifts, and/or asking prospective student-athletes or family members for contact information.

Q. What is allowed or permitted by member schools in contacting prospective students?

A. The Recruiting Rule is not intended to prevent a member school from marketing its total school program or conducting programs designed to attract students based on the school's overall educational and extracurricular programs. However, such programs must not be used as a method for securing students for athletic purposes. Examples of programs or things that would be permissible include, but are not limited to:

1. With the permission of the administration of both schools, a school may present programs or give information to elementary, junior high, or middle schools, which explain their total educational program. There should be a diversity of presenters, speaking on a variety of topics to students of all interests.
2. Once a student has pre-enrolled at a school in the spring or summer, taken necessary steps, been accepted or approved, paid a deposit (if required), and signed a contract indication they will attend, the school may contact the student or family concerning summer programs, camps, physicals, etc., provided the student has:
 - a. Completed his/her classes and exams at his/her previous school;
 - b. Signed the independent school's enrollment contact; and
 - c. Paid the deposit required by the independent school.
3. Mass marketing of a school directed to a general population of students.
4. Mass media advertising.
5. Responding to inquiries from parents of prospective students about various aspects of the school's program.

Q. Are there activities that might appear inconsistent with the Recruiting Rule and the Guidelines but have been historically engaged in by many member schools and are permitted under the current Recruiting Rule and Guidelines?

A. Yes. Over the course of many years, there are a number of activities that many schools have customarily engaged in and that have not been regarded as violations of the Recruiting Rule. So long as the activity does not single out particular student-athletes, and so long as the activity is not being used to circumvent the Recruiting Rule, the following such activities are permissible regardless of any apparent inconsistency with the Recruiting Rule or the Guidelines:

1. With the permission of the administration of both schools, a coach may present programs or give information to elementary, junior high, or middle schools, which explain their total program. All information concerning a particular sport program must be given out at one or both of the schools. Any program must be presented at one or both schools. Those students in attendance or who receive information must be determined by the administration of both schools.
2. Students on school teams and/or all students in a school or particular grade may be admitted to athletic contests free of charge provided it has been approved by the administration of both schools.
3. Students on school teams and/or all students in a school or particular grade may be recognized for their accomplishments at athletic contests provided it has been approved by the administration of those schools.

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Amateur Rule

Section 18. A student who has never used and is not using his/her knowledge of athletics or his/her athletic skill for pay in the sports which this Association governs and who has always contested under his/her own name is an amateur. (Accepting money for officiating athletic contests or for working as an employee in a city or county recreation program is not a violation of this regulation.) A student who violates the amateur rule shall be ineligible for 12 months in the sport in which the violation occurs.

Such a student may be reinstated as an amateur after a period of one calendar year from the time he/she was declared ineligible has elapsed, provided he/she has not violated the amateur rule during this period.

Award Rule

Section 19. A student may accept a medal, trophy, state championship ring, high school letter, sweater, jacket, shirt, blazer or blanket but nothing else of commercial value. (A sweater, jacket, shirt, blazer or blanket must carry the high school letter or other appropriate award emblem.) None of the approved awards shall be accepted from an individual or a non-school organization unless the giving of such award has been approved by the principal of the school the athlete attends. Acceptance of forbidden awards will cause a student to become ineligible for 12 months in the sport in which the violation occurs. Bowling, golf and tennis students will abide by USBC, USGA, and USTA regulations in accepting awards.

Section 20. A member school that has any connection with the presentation of a forbidden award — such as assisting in the selection of the person to receive the award, permitting the award to be given at a school function, or holding the award for a student until he/she has graduated — shall be subject to suspension from tournament play in the involved sport(s) for one season.

Independent-Game Participation

Section 21. Once a student's name is listed on the school eligibility report, if a student participates in an independent game in that sport before the season has closed or his/her name has been removed from the eligibility report at the request of the school principal, the student shall be ineligible as explained below.

Any organized game in which players not registered with TMSAA participate – regardless of whether admission is charged - is considered as an independent game. Violation of this rule will render the student ineligible 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.

A student's name may be removed from the school's eligibility list upon written request of the principal. After such a request has been filed with the state office, a student may then participate as an independent without penalty. If a principal requests the state office to remove a student's name from the school's eligibility list, such student may not again be certified during the season of that sport.

This rule does not apply to bowling, golf, and tennis.

Specialized Camps

Section 22. All expenses of an athlete who attends any athletic camp where specialized instruction is offered in any sport sponsored by TMSAA must be paid by the athlete or his/her parents.

All-Star Games

Section 23 Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Special Cases Involving Hardship

Section 24. Except for the eligibility rules in regard to age and to the number of semesters in school, the Executive Director shall have the authority to set aside the effect of any eligibility rule upon an individual student when:

- (a) the circumstances causing the student to fail to satisfy the eligibility rule were unforeseen and unavoidable;

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- (b) application of the rule to the student works an undue hardship in light of the unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances;
- (c) application of the rule would not accomplish the purpose for which the rule was intended; and
- (d) in the case of a change of schools, the change is for reasons unrelated to participation in athletics.

The burden of establishing each of these elements to the Executive Director's satisfaction is upon the school at which eligibility is sought.

Any decision of the Executive Director on any request for a waiver of eligibility rules under this Section may be appealed *de novo* to the Board of Control at its August, November, January or March meetings. If the appeal to the Board of Control or any materials in connection with that appeal are received by TMSAA less than one full week prior to the scheduled Board of Control meeting, the member school at which eligibility is sought shall be responsible for all additional expenses associated with providing copies of that material to the Board of Control. A school appealing a decision of the Executive Director under this Section must have an administrator (principal, assistant principal, or athletic director) present at the Board of Control meeting.

Home School Rule

Section 25. This bylaw establishes the minimum eligibility requirements for a home school student desiring to participate in extracurricular athletics at a member school:

A. Definitions

1. A "home school" is a school conducted by a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for their own child. To be a "home school" for the purposes of this bylaw, the child must be registered with the LEA that the child would otherwise attend if he/she were not being home schooled. For a student of a "home school" to be eligible under this bylaw, the parent-teacher must satisfy all of the requirements of Tenn. Code Ann. Section 49-6-3050(b) [see Appendix].
2. "Director of Schools" shall mean the chief administrative official of a public school system. In the case of a private school, the responsibilities of the Director of Schools are to be carried out by the Head of School or chief administrative official in that school.

B. Minimum Eligibility Requirements

1. a. The student shall be enrolled in a home school conducted by his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
- b. The student must be taking a minimum of five (5) academic subjects or the equivalent administered by the parent(s) or guardian(s) which count toward graduation.
- c. The student must be registered with the Director of Schools (or Head of School, if a private school) by August 1 of the current school year.
2. The participating student must have a legal residence within the school district where he/she is registered, if registering with a public school. If registering with a private school, the student must have a legal residence within 20 miles of the private school and meet all tuition and financial aid requirements.
3. By August 15 of the school year, the parent or guardian must make application for participation in athletics to the principal of the member school in which the home school athlete wishes to try out and possibly participate.
4. a. The home school athlete shall meet the same academic and conduct standards required of a member school student-athlete to participate in the athletic program.
- b. The Director of Schools (Head of School for private schools) or their designee shall confer with the parent(s) or guardian(s) conducting the home school to determine that the home school student is academically eligible.
- c. If a home school student's course of study does not include five (5) academic subjects or the equivalent, which are being administered by the parent/guardian, then the Director of Schools (Head of School, for a private school) or their designee and the parent/guardian

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shall develop an alternative measure of academic progress and submit it to the TSSAA for approval.

- d. In no event shall a home school student be eligible who is not receiving the minimum four (4) hours per day of instruction administered by their parent/guardian.
 - e. In no event shall a home school student be eligible who has fallen three (3) or more months behind the student's appropriate grade level.
 - f. Verification of academic eligibility shall be provided by the member school to the TSSAA each semester.
5. The home school student must provide proof of basic primary medical insurance coverage and liability insurance coverage which names the TSSAA as an insured party in the event the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to students enrolled in home school programs.
 6.
 - a. The LEA may impose a participation fee for each sport in which a home school athlete participates. Such participation fee shall not exceed three hundred dollars annually for each sport and shall be paid in full prior to the first regular season contest.
 - b. A home school student participating at a private school must pay full tuition and abide by all financial aid rules. For the purpose of this rule, "full tuition" is defined as the same amount paid by all other students enrolled and in regular attendance at the school.
 7. The home school student must meet all other TSSAA eligibility requirements.
 1. Eligibility issues may be appealed in accordance with the Bylaws of the TSSAA.
 9. The home school athlete must adhere to the same standards of behavior, responsibility, performance, and code of conduct as other participants of the team.
 10. Ultimate decisions on team rosters are left to the member schools.

Transfer:

1. Eligibility will be established at the first member school the home school athlete decides to participate. After participation at the first member school, any changes within member schools shall be governed by the transfer rule.
2. Any student who withdraws from a regular school program, which for the purpose of this policy is defined as a member school, to enroll in a home school education program and who is ineligible at the time of withdrawal from the regular school program due to his/her failure to meet academic or behavioral eligibility standards shall be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competition as a home education athlete until such time as he/she has satisfied this home school bylaw as well as all other eligibility bylaws of TSSAA.

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Article III Compliance

Effect of Agreeing to Join TSSAA - Sections 1 and 2

Enforcement - Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6

Unsportsmanlike Conduct - Sections 7, 8, 9, and 10

Playing of Ineligible Student-Athletes – Sections 11, 12, 13, and 14

Forfeitures - Sections 15 and 16

Effect of Agreeing to Join TMSAA

Section 1. Membership in the association is voluntary. By joining the association, a member school agrees to abide by all rules of the association. If a member school, or that school's governing body, files suit against the association and does not prevail on the merits, the member school shall reimburse the association for all legal fees and expenses incurred by the association in connection with said suit.

Section 2. Each member school has a responsibility to monitor its athletic program and to self-report any violations of TMSAA Bylaws to the Executive Director as soon as the school is aware of possible violations. The responsibility extends to all administrators and coaches at the school. Each member school is responsible for the conduct of its administrators and coaches and for any knowledge possessed by its administrators or coaches.

Enforcement

Section 3. The Executive Director and/or the Board of Control shall have power to suspend, to fine, or otherwise penalize any member school for the violation of any provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws of the association or for other just cause. The period of suspension or other penalty shall be left to the discretion of the Board of Control where the penalty is not fixed.

Section 4. The Executive Director shall, in his discretion, determine whether information about any possible violation of the TMSAA Constitution or Bylaws is sufficiently reliable to justify further investigation. The Executive Director shall also, in his discretion, determine whether to conduct any investigation of possible violations of the Constitution or Bylaws as well as the nature and extent of any investigation that may be conducted and the procedures to be used in any such investigation. Factors to be considered by the Executive Director in making these determinations may include, but are not limited to, the workload of the TMSAA office, the seriousness of the alleged violation, the availability of staff members to assist in any investigation, the cost of investigation, the time needed to conduct an investigation, and any other factor the Executive Director may deem relevant in making these decisions.

Section 5. (a) A violation of the TMSAA Constitution or Bylaws will not result in any investigation or penalty if it is inadvertent and the school first learns of and reports the violation after the conclusion of the following year's playoffs in the sport in which the violation occurred, (b) If it is determined that a school (or any of its administrators or coaches) had knowledge of a violation or possible violation of the TMSAA Constitution or Bylaws and failed to promptly self-report it as required in Section 15, or that a delay in self-reporting occurred as a result of a failure by the school to properly monitor its athletic program as required in Section 15, the provisions of subsection (a) shall not apply. In any such case, a violation may be investigated and penalties may be implemented regardless of when the violation occurred.

Section 6. Any school under suspension, if it has restricted its athletic program to intramural athletics for the period of suspension, may be reinstated by the Board of Control upon application made in writing, 20 days in advance of the time it desires to be reinstated, to the Executive Director by the principal of the school and by the governing board under which the school operates. The Executive Director shall present the application of the suspended school to the Board of Control for its consideration. The principal and the governing board shall agree in writing that the school will abide by all rules of the association in the future. The principal and each member of the governing board shall sign the statement.

If a school with one or more two-year contracts has its athletic program in any sport suspended for violation of TMSAA regulations -- and the first game of the two-year contract has been played at the offending school -- such school shall be required to complete the contract, or contracts, when it resumes its athletic program if the school, or schools, affected desire.

Suspension of a member school shall free all existing contracts between that school and other member schools.

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Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The TMSAA and its member schools believe strongly that the major purpose of athletics at the secondary level is to be a part of the total educational program. A major part of this purpose is to stress to coaches, players, officials, and fans the vital importance of sportsmanship. It is critical that all people in each of these categories understand the major role that they play and the role model that they can be for others.

Recognizing this principle, unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of any of these groups cannot be accepted. As a result, the following actions will be taken when unsportsmanlike conduct occurs:

Section 7. Student Athletes Ejected For Unsportsmanlike Conduct In Any Sport

- A. In contests in which officials are involved, the officials will immediately notify the state office with both a telephone call and a written report if players are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. In soccer, this would be for a RED CARD ONLY.
- B. On the ejection of the student-athlete, the school will be required to submit a report on the action of the player and any disciplinary action taken by the school. The minimum penalty will be as follows:
 - 1. Football – 1 Game Suspension
 - 2. Soccer – 2 Game Suspension, except for the following offenses which shall result in a 1 Game Suspension:
 - a. A player anywhere on the field (other than a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area) who deliberately handles a ball to prevent it from going into the goal.
 - b. A foul by a player against an opponent who is moving toward his/her offensive goal with an obvious opportunity to score.
 - 3. All other sports – 2 Game Suspension

The student-athlete is also suspended from all levels of participation (varsity, junior varsity) the same number of contest(s) in the sport involved.

If the student-athlete is finishing the highest ending grade in his/her school and cannot fulfill all of the disciplinary action due to the completion of the season, he/she will fulfill the action in the next sport in which they participate.

- C. In addition to what is presently required when a player is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct, a meeting shall be held with the player, coach, principal, and parent(s) or guardian(s) with a report on the meeting and plans to directly address the matter to be filed with the state office.
- D. If a player is ejected for second time for unsportsmanlike conduct, a more severe punishment shall be imposed.
- E. In sports where TSSAA officials are not used, it will be the responsibility of the principal and/or coach of the player involved to report this incident to the state office.
- F. Other non-monetary penalties may be assessed by the Executive Director based on the facts.
- G. In all situations where ejections occur for unsportsmanlike conduct, the individual will be removed from the next contest(s) following the one in which the ejection occurred.

Section 8. Substitutes Leaving Bench Area In An Incident or Fans Coming Onto The Field or Floor

- A. The school will be required to submit a report and video tape if available. All schools are instructed to inform individuals taping to continue taping all incidents.
- B. For substitutes leaving the bench area in an incident or fans coming onto the field or floor, the school may be subject to disciplinary action.

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Section 9. Coaches Ejected For Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- A. The school and coach will be required to submit a written report of the incident.
- B. The school will be given a choice of removing the coach for a specified number of contest(s) or face further disciplinary action. The school shall not allow the suspended coach to attend games while under suspension.
- C. In addition to what is presently required when a coach is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct, a meeting shall be held with the coach, principal, and superintendent, or his/her appointed representative, with a report on the meeting and plans to directly address the matter to be filed with the state office by the principal.
- D. On any subsequent ejection by the same coach, the school will be given a choice of removing the coach for a specified number of contest(s) and pay a fine of \$100 or face further disciplinary action. The school shall not allow the suspended coach to attend games while under suspension.
- E. In sports where TSSAA officials are not used, it will be the responsibility of the principal and/or coach involved to report this incident to the state office.
- F. Other non-monetary penalties may be assessed by the Executive Director based on the facts.

Section 10. Appeals

Any appeal request regarding the ejection of players or coaches shall be submitted in writing from the administrator of the school, stating which playing rule was misapplied. It should be accompanied by \$50.00. If the appeal is granted, the \$50.00 will be returned to the school.

Playing of Ineligible Student-Athletes

Section 11. All rulings on eligibility must be in writing, and the accidental, intentional or other use of ineligible players by a member school shall require that team victories in which the ineligible player participated BE VACATED; and any one or more of these additional actions may be taken:

- (a) That individual or team records and performances achieved during participation by such ineligible be vacated or stricken;
- (b) That team or individual awards earned by such ineligible be returned to the TMSAA; and
- (c) That a fine for the playing of an ineligible player be assessed against the school, if deemed necessary.

Section 12. If a student is ineligible according to TMSAA rules but is permitted to participate in interscholastic competition contrary to such TMSAA rules but in accordance with the terms of a court restraining order or injunction against his/her school and/or the TMSAA, and that injunction is subsequently voluntarily vacated, stayed, reversed or finally determined by the courts that injunctive relief is not or was not justified or expires without further judicial determination, those actions stipulated in Section 13 shall be taken.

Section 13. If an ineligible contestant competes in a meet, match or tournament and any violation of TMSAA rules occurs, all points earned by that student, or by a relay team of which he/she may have been a member, in that meet or tournament are to be VACATED; and in team sports (baseball, basketball, football, girls soccer, soccer, girls softball and girls volleyball) ALL WINS ARE VACATED.

In vacating wins, each victory is treated as though the game were not played. Opponents still count actual outcomes.

When a team plays an ineligible athlete in TMSAA tournaments or playoffs, all wins are vacated, the team is removed from the tournament or playoff, and no team replaces that team in the tournament series.

Section 14. If an otherwise ineligible student-athlete provides false information to a member school and is erroneously determined to be eligible and is allowed to participate on the basis of that false information, the student shall be ineligible at all levels in all sports at any member school for twelve (12) months from his or her last participation date.

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Forfeitures

Section 15. If a team is removed from competition, the school shall face disciplinary action by TMSAA. Non-monetary penalties may be assessed by the Executive Director based on the facts.

Section 16. If the coach is ejected from the contest and an assistant coach or full-time employee of the board of education that possesses a teacher's certificate and is assigned as a school representative is not available to continue as coach, the event is terminated and forfeited to the opponent.

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Article IV Miscellaneous

Schools Which Member Schools May Play or Scrimmage – Section 1
Contests With Out-Of-State Teams – Section 2
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Use of Tobacco – Section 14
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Schools Which Member Schools May Play or Scrimmage

Section 1. A member of the Tennessee Middle School Athletic Association is permitted to play or scrimmage any middle school team with grades 6, 7, and 8 in regular season play.

For the purposes of this rule, a school team may be one school or a cooperative program of one or more schools.

A member school may play one alumni game in all sports except football. If the school has separate teams for boys and girls in a particular sport (e.g., girls and boys basketball), each team may play an alumni game.

Contests with Out-Of-State Teams

Section 2. 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.

Interstate Tournaments and Meets

Section 3. A member school may only participate in an interstate tournament or meet that is sanctioned or approved by the state associations whose member schools are participating and, where applicable, the National Federation of State High School Associations.

A member school that wishes to host an interstate tournament or meet shall make application to the Executive Director for sanctioning of the tournament or meet.

Varsity Team

Section 4. There can be only one varsity team in any sport.

Eligibility Lists

Section 5. An eligibility list containing the name of each student who is to participate during the season in each sport shall be filed online prior to the first contest. If a student whose name does not appear on the original eligibility list wishes to become a member of the squad, the student's name shall be filed online before the student is allowed to participate.

Filing Schedule Reports

Section 6. Member schools shall file with the state office a copy of the schedule in each sport. Schedules shall be filed online prior to the date of the first contest.

Rules of the Game

Section 7. The official rules books as published by the National Federation of State High School Associations shall be used in football, basketball, baseball, girls softball, wrestling, girls soccer, soccer, track and field, cross

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country, and girls volleyball. The official rules of the USGA shall be used in golf. The official rules of the USTA shall be used in tennis. The official rules of the USBC shall be used in bowling.

Cheerleading squads must abide by the AACCA Safety Guidelines while practicing or participating in a TSSAA sanctioned event.

TMSAA SPORTS REGULATIONS

2011-12 Football Regulations

- In football, teams must now follow **NFHS Football Rule 3-1-2 (Mercy Rule)**: Beginning in the second half, if the point differential is 35 points or more, a continuous clock will be used except on scores, timeouts, officials' time-out, and between quarters. If the point differential goes below 35 points, go back to regular timing rules.
- The ball to be used in games involving only players below the 9th grade may have the dimensions found in table 1-3-1 in the NFHS Football Rulebook. The NFHS Authenticating Mark does not have to be on the ball.

2011-12 Girls' Volleyball Regulations

In girls' volleyball, regular season and tournament matches will be 2-of-3 games. Games will be played to 25 points with the third game played to 15 points. The format will be rally scoring for all games and each game must be won by 2 points.

2011-12 Pre-Game Warm-Ups and Spirit Rules for Cheerleaders during Basketball Games

If a team circles the entire floor during pre-game warm-ups while the jurisdiction of the officials has started, there will be technical foul charged indirectly to the head coach. If a team runs through a team already warming up, a technical foul will be charged indirectly to the head coach.

Also, teams must go to the free throw line area directly in front of their bench during pre-game introductions or during pre-game warm-ups. No team will be allowed around the mid-court circle during or after introductions.

Cheerleaders cannot stand at anytime during the game in the area of the free throw lane extended under the basket.

2011-12 Basketball Regulations

In basketball, there is a mandated continuous clock when one team gets a 35-point advantage over its opponent in the fourth quarter. The clock would only stop for shooting fouls, timeouts, injuries, and the administration of technical fouls. The clock will continue to run for the remainder of the game, regardless if the point differential gets closer than 35-points.

2011-12 Wrestling Regulations

- **Weight Classes:** 76, 83, 91, 99, 106, 113, 119, 125, 131, 141, 151, 165, 185, 225, 250. All matches count.
- **Match Time:** Varsity and Championship Round Matches, 1-2-2 Minutes
Junior Varsity and Consolation Round Matches, 1-1-1 Minute
- **Other:** Situations and rules will follow the National Federation Wrestling Rules Book.

2011-12 TMSAA Baseball Pitching Rule

A pitcher may pitch no more than twelve innings in any one calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) and no more than seven innings in any one day. After pitching four or more innings in any one game, the pitcher must have at least two days rest before he or she can pitch again. (For example, if a pitcher pitches four or more innings any time on Monday, that pitcher would not be able to pitch again until Thursday, etc. If a pitcher pitches to any batter, the pitcher is charged with an inning.) If removed as a pitcher, the player may play any other position.

THE PITCHING RULE APPLIES TO ALL GAMES PLAYED BY A TMSAA BASEBALL TEAM.

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DEFINITIONS

Practice – Coach and player(s) together with instruction, teaching, coaching, etc. For all sports, except football and basketball, practice can begin no earlier than four weeks prior to the first scheduled contest and shall end after the last tournament or regular season game in which the team participates.

Open Facilities – Schools may use their facilities for students in their building prior to or at the conclusion of the school day. Coaches may serve in a supervisory capacity only. There is no instruction, no teaching, no coaching, etc. Coaches may not participate or play in any manner. It is a free play type atmosphere.

Weight Training / Conditioning – Must be a generic type program that would be beneficial to all students and not sport specific. Exception: In baseball and girls softball, players may throw to condition arms.

Dead Period – No coaching, observing, or contact between coach and players in sport involved. There is no practice, no open facilities, and no weight training / conditioning. In all sports, the week preceding the 4th of July week and the week of the 4th of July will be a dead period. There can be no coaching, contact with, or observation by coaches with any players. All schools' indoor facilities must be closed unless approved in writing by the TMSAA.

Preseason Scrimmages – A school cannot practice with or scrimmage another school until both schools have practiced a minimum of three days. **Practice During the School Day** – All athletic practice during the regular hours of any school day shall conform to the same rules, regulations, and season as corresponding athletic practice outside the school day.

50% Rule – Does not apply for the TMSAA.

Tournament – All tournaments shall be held on consecutive days with no other regular season games being played during the tournament unless permission is granted by the Executive Director. A tournament is defined as a competition of three or more teams and three or more games, matches, etc., which progress to determine a winner. Tournaments shall count as two games/dates, not withstanding the number of games/dates in which each team participates in a tournament. Post Season Tournaments or Bowl Games may be played, provided the plan is approved by the state office annually. Any post season tournament or play-off format that exceeds the number of regular season contests allowed must be approved by the state office.

Basketball Regulations:

- 18 regular season games with all tournaments counting as two games, not withstanding the number of games in which each team participates in a tournament.
- The season ending TMSAA Area and Sectional tournament series will count as one tournament, provided no other games are played between or after.

Tournament Guidelines:

1. The state is divided into three sections (East, Middle, and West) for the purpose of having middle school tournaments.
2. Each section is divided into smaller areas. Sections are considered similar to a high school region. An area is generally or similar to a district in high school.
3. Area and Sectional administrators, athletic directors, and coaches should conduct a meeting to select directors, dates and sites for each tournament they decide to have. Area schools may decide to have tournament series in any sport.
4. All tournament series information (date, site, director, etc.) in each sport must be submitted to the state office as soon as it is decided upon.
5. Area and Sectional basketball tournaments should be completed each year by the Saturday prior to the TSSAA high school district basketball tournaments.
6. During tournament play, each area and section may decide to divide schools into classifications as membership in the area increases.
7. TSSAA and TMSAA will recognize any league that contains at least six member schools competing among themselves.
8. Any school may be a member of the middle school association and choose not to participate in the tournament series.

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9. A school team may enter only one tournament series which will advance them to the sectional tournament. Schools must participate in the tournament series in the Area which they have been assigned. Any school desiring to move to a different Area must submit a written request to the state office. No school will be moved without a legitimate reason.

10. TSSAA/TMSAA DOES NOT SANCTION ANY MIDDLE SCHOOL STATE TOURNAMENT.

Multiple Contests – In all individual sports (cross country, golf, track and field, tennis, and wrestling) individuals accompanied by a coach may enter varsity competition at a different site on the same time and date, and this will count as two days on the school's schedule.

Beginning Sport – Any school that is starting a sport for the first time may have five days of off-season practice prior to the first season the sports begins. This would apply to girls' volleyball, girls' soccer, soccer, baseball, softball, and track and field. It would not apply to football and basketball since schools are allowed 10 days in the off-season in football and 5 days in the off-season in basketball.

TMSAA SPORTS CALENDAR

Section 8. For each sport there shall be a beginning practice date, a date for the first contest, a limit for the number of regular season contests, rules in regard to tournaments where applicable, rules in regard to off-season practice, and rules in regard to summer practice.

Sport	First Practice Date	Date of First Contest	Number of Regular Season Contests	Off-Season Practice	Summer Practice
Football	Monday of Week of Aug. 1 or 4 Weeks Prior to First Contest, Whichever is Later.	Left up to the Discretion of the Local Education Association	8 Games	10 Days Within 15 Consecutive Schools Days & 2 Interschool Scrimmages	No Pads
Golf (Boys' & Girls')			15 Dates	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Girls' Volleyball			20 Matches	None	No Restrictions
Cross Country (Boys' & Girls')			12 Dates	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Girls' Soccer			12 Matches	None	No Restrictions
Basketball (Boys' & Girls')	Monday of Week of Oct. 1 or 4 Weeks Prior to First Contest, Whichever is Later.		18 Games Plus Season Ending Tournament	10 Days Within 15 Consecutive School Days & 2 Interschool Scrimmages	No Restrictions
Wrestling			12 Dates	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Girls' Softball & Baseball			16 Games	None	No Restrictions
Soccer			12 Matches	None	No Restrictions
Track (Boys' & Girls')			8 Dates	None	No Restrictions
Tennis (Boys' & Girls')			15 Matches	No Restrictions	No Restrictions

Jamborees

Section 10. A member school may participate in one jamboree per sport provided (a) the jamboree is approved by the state office and is held before any of the participating schools play their first game; (b) the jamboree is sponsored by the participating schools and all proceeds go to the participating schools; (c) the jamboree is conducted in accordance with the following regulations:

- A. No team or participant shall play more than the equivalent of half of a game or contest.
- B. Registered TSSAA officials must be used.

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- C. Schools participating in a jamboree must file the regular eligibility report with the state office prior to participating.
- D. Schools must hold membership in TSSAA or membership in a Tennessee conference in order to be eligible to participate in a jamboree. (Out-of-state schools must obtain approval from their state association before participating.)
- E. Football schools may participate in a jamboree as early as Thursday of the week preceding the opening of football season.
- F. Basketball schools may participate in a jamboree one week preceding the opening of basketball season.

Participation in such a jamboree shall not count as a regular-season contest.

TMSAA Post Season Tournament Financial Guidelines

- A. During the pre-tournament meeting, administrators shall vote on the amount each individual worker should receive (example: Amount to pay director, clock operator, announcer, gate keepers, custodian, etc.).
- B. Every host school shall prepare a financial report immediately following the tournament.
- C. Every school participating in the tournament shall be provided a copy of the financial report from the host school.
- D. Items included on the Tournament Financial Report should be income by details, itemized expenses, and total number of shares and amount to be divided per school. The amount divided should be the income minus the expenses. Shares per school should be determined based on the number of games each school plays.
- E. TMSAA strongly recommends that each school receive tournament shares based on the number of games played after all expenses are paid.
- F. It is recommended that concessions and profits from T-shirt sales, etc. be kept by the host school. This would not be included in the Tournament Financial Report.

A copy of the Tournament Financial Report shall be forwarded to the TSSAA office. PLEASE NOTE: TMSAA does not receive any money from these tournaments.

Awards

Section 13. TSSAA shall furnish trophies, plaques, ribbons and medals in TSSAA-sponsored sports as determined by the Board of Control.

Use of Tobacco

Section 14. The use of tobacco in any form by coaches, officials, and athletes is prohibited at TSSAA sanctioned events.

Officials

Section 15. Officials used in contests in which TSSAA member schools participate are independent contractors and are not employees of TSSAA. Individuals desiring to serve as officials in contests in which TSSAA member schools participate must register with TSSAA. The Executive Director shall establish the minimum qualifications and standards for registration with TSSAA.

Section 16. (a) Officials shall be agreed upon by both schools. (b) These officials must be registered and approved by TSSAA. If a registered official who has been engaged for an athletic contest fails to appear, the principal of the home school may, with the approval of the visiting school, select an official for the contest. If this is done, the principal of the home school must mail to the Executive Director within 48 hours evidence showing that a registered official was employed for the game and that the official did not appear. The principal of the home school shall give the name and address of the registered official who was employed to officiate the game, and the name and address of the non-approved official used as a substitute.

Section 17. It shall be the duty of a game official to file immediately a report with the state office if there is any unusual incident involving unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the players, coaches, cheerleaders, or fans.

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Section 18. The Executive Director shall have authority to suspend the registration of officials who are guilty of unsportsmanlike or unethical conduct or who fail to file immediately required reports with the state office. Such decisions shall be subject to review by the Board of Control upon appeal by the official.

Section 19. An official shall be prohibited from working in an athletic contest in which a member of his/her immediate family — son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, father, husband or wife — is playing or is serving as a coach for either team. If an official is a teacher, the official is prohibited from working in an athletic contest if one of the teams represents the school in which the official is employed as a teacher unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

Section 20. A school may drop an official from a game after the official has been engaged. If a school decides that it is wise to break its agreement with an official, it may be done by paying the official the regular fee for the game. Canceled and postponed games do not come under the above provision, provided that the official is duly notified. In the case of postponed games, the officials that were originally employed must be given the opportunity to work on the new date.

Bond

Section 21. The Executive Director of the TSSAA shall execute annually a Surety Bond on \$30,000 or more if the Board of Control directs, covering TSSAA funds held by him. The fee on this bond is to be paid from the Association funds.

Amendments

Section 22. The Bylaws of the TSSAA shall be amended by the same method as the Constitution.

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APPENDIX to HOME SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY BYLAW [text of Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3050(b)]

- (b) (1) Provide annual notice to the local director of schools prior to each school year of the parent-teacher's intent to conduct a home school and, for purpose of reporting only, submission to the director of schools of the names, number, ages and grade levels of the children to be home schooled, the location of the school, the proposed curriculum to be offered, the proposed hours of instruction and the qualifications of the parent-teacher relative to subdivision (b)(4). Information contained in the reports may be used only for record keeping and other purposes for which similar information on public school students may be used in accordance with guidelines, rules and regulations of the state board of education. The director of schools or the director's designee shall ensure that attendance teachers are informed of parents' rights to conduct a home school pursuant to § 49-6-3001(c)(4), subsection (a) of this section and § 49-50-801 upon employment of the attendance teachers and at the beginning of each school year;
- (2) Maintenance of attendance records, subject to inspection by the local director of schools, and submission of these records to the director of schools at the end of each school year;
- (3) Instruction for at least four (4) hours per day for the same number of instructional days as are required by state law for public schools;
- (4) Possession of a high school diploma or GED by the parent-teacher;
- (5) (A) Administration by the commissioner of education, or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service that is approved by the LEA, to home school students of the same state board approved secure standardized tests required of public school students in grades five (5), seven (7) and nine (9); however, the test for grade nine (9) shall not be the high school proficiency test required by § 49-6-6001;
- (B) (i) Tests administered by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall be at the same time tests are administered to public school students, and shall be administered in the public school that the home school student would otherwise be attending, or at whatever location students at such school are tested. Tests administered by the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall be administered without charge. The parent-teacher may be present when the home school student is tested in grade five (5). Both parent-teacher and home school student shall be under the supervision of the test administrator;
- (ii) Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered within thirty (30) days of the date of the statewide test. Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered at the expense of the parent-teacher;
- (iii) All test results from either administration by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service, shall be provided to the parent-teacher, the director of schools and the state board of education;
- (6) (A) Consultation between the director of schools and the parent-teacher if the home school student falls three (3) to six (6) months behind the home school student's appropriate grade level, based on the test required in subdivision (b)(5);
- (B) If a home school student falls six (6) to nine (9) months behind the home school student's appropriate grade level in the home school student's reading, language arts, mathematics or science test scores or such of these areas, regardless of the term used on the test, as are actually tested for the student's grade level, based on the tests required in subdivision (b)(5), the parent shall consult with a teacher licensed by the state board of education and having a certificate or endorsement in the grade level or course or subject matter in which consultation is sought. The parent and teacher shall design a remedial course to help the child obtain the child's appropriate grade level. The parent shall report the remedial course for the child to the local director of schools;
- (C) (i) If a home school student falls more than one (1) year behind the home school student's appropriate grade level in the home school student's comprehensive test score for two (2)

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consecutive tests based on the tests required in subdivision (b)(5) and if the child is not learning disabled in the opinion of a teacher licensed to teach at the child's grade level, the local director of schools may require the parents to enroll the child in a public, private or church-related school, in accordance with this part, and the parents shall have all rights provided by law to respond to this requirement;

- (ii) If a test indicates that a home school student is one (1) year or more behind the home school student's appropriate grade level, the same test shall be administered to the child not more than one (1) year later, notwithstanding the required testing schedule in subdivision (b)(5)(A);
- (7) Proof shall be submitted to the local director of schools that the home school student has been vaccinated as required by § 49-6-5001 and has received any other health services or examinations as may be required by law generally for children in this state;
- (8) Submission by the home school student entering public schools to the evaluation test provided for in § 49-50-801, if the local system requires the test, or the tests required by the state board of education for transfer students.

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TENNESSEE SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1.

Q. How are members of the Board of Control and Legislative Council selected?

A. Members of the Board of Control and of the Legislative Council are selected at the annual regional meetings in the fall. Each school represented has one vote. The sites, dates, and times of these meetings are determined by the Board of Control and posted on the TSSAA Calendar of Events.

2.

Q. May a decision made by the Executive Director be appealed to the Board of Control?

A. Yes.

3.

Q. What procedure is followed by a school that wishes to appeal to the Board of Control a decision of the Executive Director?

A. The school principal should notify the Executive Director in writing that the principal wants the Board of Control to review the case. If it is satisfactory to hold the review of the case at the next regular meeting of the Board of Control, it will be listed on the agenda. If the case is of such nature that the school wants immediate action, the principal should so indicate. The Executive Director will then communicate with the president of the Board who will call a special session to consider the case. When such a special session of the Board is called, the school requesting the special session shall pay all expenses of the meeting in the event the Board of Control sustains the decisions of the Executive Director.

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TENNESSEE MIDDLESCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION BYLAWS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Membership

1.

Q. How much are a school's membership dues?

A. Membership dues are \$300.00 annually, which includes catastrophic insurance.

Sponsored Sports

1.

Q. A school has both a boys' soccer program and a girls' soccer program. Can a female student participate in both the girls' program and the boys' program?

A. No. If the school has a girls' soccer program, then any female student may participate on the girls' soccer program. If a school does not have a girls' soccer program, then the student may participate on the boys' soccer team. This would also apply to basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, tennis, and track and field.

2.

Q. Can a female student participate in both baseball and girls' softball?

A. Yes. Baseball is not defined as a comparable sport to softball. A female student may participate in both girls' softball and baseball.

3.

Q. Can a boy participate on the girls' volleyball team?

A. No. Girls' volleyball, by its title, is a sport for girls only.

Responsibility of the Principal

1.

Q. Who is held responsible for a member school's observance of TMSAA regulations?

A. The principal or administrative head of the school.

2.

Q. Who is responsible for the conduct of the spectators at a game?

A. The principal and coach of the host school are primarily responsible. It is the duty of the host school to see that adequate security is present and assigned so that any disorder can be handled immediately. If the game is played on a neutral field and no host team is designated, the competing schools are jointly responsible for providing adequate security protection. Each school is responsible for the conduct of its students and fans, regardless of where an athletic contest is played.

Non-Faculty Coaches

1.

Q. How long does a non-faculty coach have to enroll in and complete the ASEP Coaches Education Program after being submitted to the TMSAA?

A. Once approved by the principal, superintendent, and/or local board of education, non-faculty coaches must enroll in and complete courses in Coaching Principles and Sport First Aid within five years after being submitted to the TMSAA.

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2.

Q. How often does a non-faculty coach have to enroll in and complete the ASEP Coaches Education Program?

A. Once a non-faculty high school coach successfully completes the classes within their first five years, he/she will not be required to take any additional courses.

3.

Q. What additional requirements must a non-faculty coach meet?

A. All non-faculty coaches must complete TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session within their first year of coaching.

4.

Q. Where can I obtain a copy of the ASEP Coaches Education Courses Schedule and Application for Enrollment?

A. On the TSSAA's website under Coaches Education Classes. Only applications from TSSAA & TMSAA member schools will be accepted during the first two weeks of the Application Period. No early registrations will be accepted.

5.

Q. Are student-teachers considered non-faculty coaches?

A. If he/she is currently student teaching, he/she is allowed to do whatever his/her supervising teacher (college professor in charge) allows him/her to do as part of his/her total educational experience. He/She would not be considered non-faculty while he/she is student teaching.

6.

Q. Are retired educators considered non-faculty coaches?

A. No.

7.

Q. Do non-faculty cheerleading coaches have to be registered with TMSAA?

A. Yes. However, it is not necessary for you to pay for cheerleading coaches. We only need the names for insurance purposes. Cheerleading coaches do not have to complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session or the ASEP Coaches Education courses.

8.

Q. Can I register a non-faculty coach online through out the school year?

A. Yes. Once they have been approved by the principal, superintendent, and/or local board of education, they can be submitted online. Also, the registration fee of \$40.00 per non-faculty coach, not to exceed \$100.00 per school each year, must be submitted to our office.

9.

Q. Can a non-faculty coach be a head coach?

A. Head coaches in any sport may be full-time employees, retired educators, or non-faculty coaches. A non-faculty coach must take the ASEP Coaches' Education Course in a TSSAA-approved course within five years of assuming the coaching position. He/She must complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session prior within one year of assuming the coaching position.

10.

Q. Are middle schools limited to the number of non-faculty coaches they can use?

A. Middle schools are not limited to the number of non-faculty coaches they can use.

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11.

Q. As a first year teacher who is coaching, do I have any requirements?

A. No, only non-faculty coaches are required to complete the TMSAA Online Coaches Training Session within one year of assuming the coaching position.

Enrollment and Attendance

1.

Q. Is there any regulation about the time a student must enroll in order to be eligible during a given semester?

A. Yes. A student must enroll on or before the twentieth day of a semester.

Academic Rules

1.

Q. What is the academic rule in middle school?

A. To be eligible to participate in athletic contests a student shall have been academically promoted to the next higher grade. Any student repeating a grade is ineligible to participate. A student who is ineligible at the beginning of the school year may gain eligibility the second semester by passing five (5) subjects or the equivalent the preceding semester provided the student is not repeating the same grade.

2.

Q. May a student compete in athletics if they are being held back?

A. Any student who repeats the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade after having passed that grade shall not be eligible until they have reached the next higher grade. **Note:** Refer, also, to Article II, Section 7 in the TSSAA Bylaws.

3.

Q. A student is academically eligible at the beginning of the school year. At the end of the first semester the student passes only one subject. Is the student eligible to participate in athletics the second semester?

A. Students that are academically eligible at the beginning of the school year will be academically eligible the entire school year.

4.

Q. A student is ineligible at the beginning of the school year. Is it possible for the student to gain eligibility later?

A. Yes, the student may gain eligibility the second semester by passing five subjects, or the equivalent, the preceding semester, provided the student is not repeating the same grade.

5.

Q. Can a student attend summer school and earn credits toward academic eligibility?

A. Yes. Credits earned in a summer school accredited by the State Department of Education may be counted toward academic eligibility, provided the student was enrolled during the spring semester immediately preceding the summer session and attended at least 40 days of that spring semester. All credits must be earned by the first day of the beginning of the school year.

6.

Q. A special education student meets the academic requirements of his/her IEP by the beginning of the school year. What is his/her eligibility status?

A. The student will be academically eligible the entire school year.

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7.

Q. The school passing mark is 70. At the close of the first semester an athlete has a grade of 80. At the close of the second semester the grade in the same subject is 65. At the end of the school year the two grades are averaged and the student is allowed one unit of credit. May this subject be used in meeting the academic requirements?

A. Yes.

8.

Q. A student passes both semesters of a course, but does not receive credit toward graduation at the end of the school year because he/she does not meet the attendance policy. Is the student academically eligible to participate in athletics?

A. No. If the student does not receive credit toward graduation, the course may not be counted toward athletic eligibility.

9.

Q. Are subjects such as physical education and ROTC counted in determining the eligibility of a player?

A. Yes. Provided these subjects carry one full credit for the year or one-half credit for the semester and meet one hour each day for five days a week or the equivalent.

10.

Q. Is a student who drops out of school for one or more semesters eligible to participate when that student returns, provided he/she completes the last semester he/she was in school and receives the required number of credits the preceding school year?

A. No. A student must attend school one semester before he/she becomes eligible to participate.

11.

Q. A student is forced to withdraw from school, or is prevented from enrolling in school, due to illness or accident to the student. After being out of school for a semester, or a part of a semester, the student recovers from and enters school at the beginning of the next semester. Is it possible for such a student to be eligible to participate in athletics?

A. Such a case may be considered as a special case by the Executive Director provided the principal submits details in regard to the absence of the student. If the student is ruled eligible, that student shall be charged with a semester of attendance for athletic purposes, even though he/she attended less than forty days of the semester, or did not even enroll.

12.

Q. A student has an incomplete or is conditioned at the end of the school year. Will the student be eligible for participation as soon as the conditions are removed?

A. A student who receives an incomplete in a subject which causes him/her not to meet minimum scholastic requirements is ineligible until the course is satisfactorily completed. His/Her eligibility is restored at that point.

13.

Q. A student was not in school during the spring semester. May that student attend summer school and become eligible for athletic participation the following fall by passing five subjects in summer school that would give him/her the required number of credits for eligibility?

A. No. A student must have been in school the preceding semester or the last semester school was in session in order to be eligible. A summer session is counted as a continuation of the spring semester.

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14.

Q. A student repeats a course for which the student has already received a passing grade or is taking a course for which the student is not receiving credit toward graduation. Will this subject count as one of the credits earned the preceding school year for athletic eligibility?

A. No. A student may not repeat a course that he/she has already passed for athletic eligibility purposes nor may a student count a subject for which he/she is not receiving credit towards graduation for athletic eligibility purposes.

15.

Q. A student enrolls in a school and attends only two days. Is this considered enrollment?

A. No. In the definition of "enrolled", (c) states, "A student is considered "enrolled" at a school when the student has either attended classes for three days, has engaged in three or more days of football, girls volleyball, cross country, golf, or girls soccer practice during the period, on or after the Monday of the week of August 1, or has participated in an athletic contest in any sport."

16.

Q. A student attends school for twenty-five days and then drops out. During the twenty-five days of attendance: (a) he/she participated in one or more athletic contests; (b) he/she did not participate in any athletic contest?

A. (a) Student will be charged with a semester since he/she participated in an athletic contest.

(b) Student will not be charged with a semester since that student did not attend forty or more days.
(See Article II, Section 1.)

17.

Q. A student who was ineligible the first semester becomes eligible the second semester by passing five subjects or three blocks or the equivalent. May he/she participate the weekend that marks the close of the first semester?

A. No. A student is not eligible until the opening day of the second semester.

Semester Rule

1.

Q. What is the maximum number of semesters a student can attend school and still be eligible for athletic participation in the Middle School Association?

A. A student has 6 semesters to complete 4 possible semesters of participation after entering the 7th grade. No student shall participate in any sport more than 3 seasons.

Grade Participation

1.

Q. When can a student begin participating as a member of a team in the Middle School Association?

A. No student in a grade below the 6th grade can participate as a member of a team in the TMSAA.

Age Limit

1.

Q. Is a student whose fifteenth birthday falls on August 1 ineligible for participation in the Middle School Association?

A. Yes, any student who becomes fifteen years of age on or before August 1 of any school year is ineligible.

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2.

Q. If a student becomes fifteen years of age on August 2, or any date thereafter, is that student eligible to participate for the remainder of the school year?

A. Yes.

STUDENTS CHANGING SCHOOLS

1.

Q. A student changes school because of the death of his/her parents or guardians. The change is necessary in order for the student to have a home. Is he/she eligible?

A. Such cases should be submitted to the Executive Director who will make a decision on the facts submitted.

2.

Q. It becomes desirable for a student to live with his/her grandparents. The change in residence causes a change of school. If the grandparents are designated as the guardians of this student will the student be eligible to participate in athletics?

A. Such a student may be ruled eligible by the Executive Director if he is convinced that the guidelines as set forth in Article II, Section 24 have been met.

3.

Q. If an athlete with or without an athletic record lives with a guardian, instead of his/her parents, is the student eligible for athletic participation?

A. He/She may be approved by the Executive Director if the student has lived with the guardian for twelve months or longer. If the athlete has lived with his/her guardian, for a period of less than twelve months, he/she is ineligible unless approved by the Executive Director under the provisions of the hardship rule.

4.

Q. A student with or without an athletic record moves to live with a guardian other than a parent. Is the student eligible?

A. No. A student must live with the new guardian, if other than their parent, for 12 months or longer.

5.

Q. A student whose parents are divorced or separated (provided divorce papers have been signed and processed through the courts) participates in athletics at school A while residing with one parent. The student then transfers to school B where they are residing with the other parent. Is the student eligible to participate in athletics?

A. Yes, provided it is the first change from parent to parent since establishing an athletic record, there is a court-ordered custody change, and a letter from the principal of the student's former school indicating that the move was not for athletic reasons.

6.

Q. A student whose parents are divorced or separated (provided divorce papers have been signed and processed through the courts) participates in athletics at school A while residing with one parent. The student then transfers to school B where they are residing with a guardian other than a parent. Is the student eligible to participate in athletics?

A. No. The student will be ineligible until he/she has lived with his/her new guardian for twelve months.

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7.

Q. A student who has a record of participation the previous year in baseball only transfers to a nearby school without any change of residence on the part of the student's parents. Is that student eligible to participate in football or basketball?

A. No. Such a student is ineligible in football, basketball, baseball and track for a period of 12 months from the last participation date in baseball. (See Article II, Section 13 regarding eligibility in tennis, volleyball, wrestling, soccer, girls soccer, bowling, cross country and golf.)

8.

Q. A student transfers to a school because the student's parents have moved to the community in which the school is located. The student's scholastic and athletic records are satisfactory. May such a student be allowed to participate pending the approval of his/her transfer by the Executive Director?

A. No. All transfer students must be approved by the Executive Director before being allowed to participate.

9.

Q. If the parents of an athlete move from the territory in which the athlete has been attending school, may this student remain in the school to which he/she has been going and live with someone other than his/her parents without forfeiting his/her eligibility?

A. Yes, provided he/she has been enrolled in that school for a year or longer, provided no "undue influence" has been used to cause the student to continue in the same school, and provided the parents pay the expenses incurred as a result of the student not living at home.

10.

Q. If an athlete's parents change residence after the beginning of the school year, must the athlete transfer immediately to the school serving the district into which his/her parents have moved?

A. No. The athlete may transfer to the new school without loss of eligibility at the time his/her parents move, at the end of the next grading period, at the end of the semester or at the beginning of the next school year. (If the athlete remains in his/her former school and participates in an athletic contest after his/her parents have moved, he/she cannot become eligible to participate in that sport in the second school until he/she has completed the report card period or the semester.)

11.

Q. How are the words "change of residence" to be interpreted?

A. As moving from one community to another so as to justify a change of schools. Moving across the street or a few blocks away from the former residence, or similar moves, cannot be accepted as justifying a transfer to another school. TSSAA does not recognize "dual" residences (maintaining two homes, apartments, etc.)

12.

Q. What are guidelines that are used in determining whether a bona fide change of residence has taken place?

A. Some guidelines are, but not limited to:

1. Changing of mailing address 2. Disconnecting phone in previous residence 3. Disconnecting of utilities in previous residence 4. All furniture moved from previous residence 5. The original residence should be closed, rented, or disposed of and not used by family.

13.

Q. Is it possible for an athlete who does not live at home with his/her parents or guardians to become eligible?

A. Yes. After such a student has attended school for a full school year, and has lived in the community in which the school is located for a period of at least twelve months, the student's case may be submitted to the Executive Director for a ruling.

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14.

Q. A student transfers from School A to School B without a bona fide change in residence by the parents. The change is a result of school zone changes made by the local board of education. Is the student eligible?

A. Yes. Provided he/she meets all other eligibility requirements.

15.

Q. A student with an athletic record the previous year lives in Town A. His/Her father gets work in Town B and decides it will be more convenient for his son or daughter to enter school in Town B since he/she can ride with him as he goes to and from work. Will such a student be eligible to participate on the school team of Town B?

A. No. There has been no change of residence.

16.

Q. An eighth grade student participates as a member of a high school or junior high school team. The next year the student transfers to another school without any change of residence on the part of his parents. Is the student eligible for athletic participation?

A. No. The student is a transfer with an athletic record the previous year. His/Her parents have not changed residence. (This regulation is sometimes misinterpreted due to the statement that eighth grade participation does not count against a student. Such participation does not count as one of the four years he/she is allowed to participate while in high school, but the student is charged with an athletic record the previous year and cannot therefore transfer to another school unless there has been a corresponding change of residence on the part of his/her parents.)

17.

Q. A student participates in basketball at school A. He changes to school B without a corresponding change of residence by the parents and wants to play basketball. Is he eligible?

A. No. A student will be eligible twelve months from his/her last participation date. Example: A student last played basketball on January 16, 1991 at school A. That student would be eligible at school B on January 17, 1992.

18.

Q. A student with an athletic record transfers from school A to school B without a corresponding change of residence of his/her parents. After attending school B, the student returns to school A. Is the student eligible to participate at school A?

A. Yes, provided the student did not participate in contests or practice in any sport at any level at school B. This must be verified in writing by the administration of school B.

19.

Q. A student who transfers from school A to school B due to a bona fide change of residence by his/her parents is ruled eligible at school B and participates in athletics at school B. One month later the family of the student returns to the original residence where the student was attending school A. Is the student eligible to participate in athletics?

A. No. The student is ineligible to participate in athletics for twelve months from his/her last participation date, since the parents have returned to the original residence serving school A before the student has been enrolled in school B for one year.

20.

Q. What is meant by the term "system-wide" public school in the definition of "territory" as defined in the Definitions?

A. A system-wide public school is a school without geographic zones or bus routes that draws students throughout the school system. Examples of system-wide public schools are, but not limited to: Chattanooga School for the Arts & Sciences, Martin Luther King, the magnet portion of Liberty Technology High School, etc.

21.

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Q. An international student attends a TMSAA school and lives with someone other than his/her parents. Is the student eligible?

A. Yes, provided the student is in a Foreign Exchange program which has been approved by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

22.

Q. An international student comes to live with a new guardian and enrolls in a school where the guardians reside. The student is not in a Foreign Exchange program approved by the CSIET. Is the student eligible?

A. No. A student must be in a Foreign Exchange program approved by CSIET. The student is ineligible at the varsity level but may be eligible at the junior varsity level provided he/she meets the requirements of Article II, Section 15.

23.

Q. An international student attends a TSSAA school and is in a foreign exchange program that is not approved by CSIET. Is the student eligible?

A. No. A student must be in a Foreign Exchange program approved by CSIET.

24.

Q. An international student is in a Foreign Exchange program approved by the CSIET. The student participates in athletics with a TSSAA school while living with one host parent then transfers to another school as a result of a change of host parents. Is the student eligible at the new school?

A. No. As a result of the change of guardians the student must now comply with Article II, Section 11 and Article II, Section 12 in the same manner as all other students.

Award Rule

1.

Q. If a student accepts cash, merchandise or other compensation in a sport sponsored by TMSAA will he/she lose his/her eligibility in that sport?

A. Yes, competing for anything of commercial value during the school year or during the summer vacation is a violation of the award rule. (An exception to this would be in bowling, golf, and tennis as regulated by USBC, USGA, and USTA Award Rules.)

Independent-Game Participation

1.

Q. Team A is eliminated in the district basketball tournament. May players on Team A participate in an independent game or tournament without endangering their eligibility?

A. The basketball season ends for any member school when the school is eliminated from tournament play. Students may participate as members of independent teams in any sport after the season for that sport has closed without affecting their eligibility, provided the amateur rule is not violated.

2.

Q. A golfer, tennis player, or bowler wishes to participate in a club tournament during the golf, tennis, or bowling season. Is this a violation of the independent rule?

A. No, provided the golfer, tennis player, or bowler participates as an individual and not as a member or representative of his/her school. The independent rule does not apply to golf, tennis, and bowling.

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3.

Q. May a player participate in a scrimmage, practice game or game with an independent team after being registered with TMSAA in that sport?

A. No. The student shall be ineligible immediately in the sport in which the violation occurs.

4.

Q. Is it a violation for a registered athlete in baseball or softball to practice with an independent team?

A. No, provided he/she participates in practice situations only (batting practice, infield practice, etc.), provided no game situations are involved.

5.

Q. Is it a violation for a registered athlete in track or cross country to participate in a road race?

A. No, provided the race is longer than 3200 meters during track season or longer than 5K (3.1 miles) during cross country season.

6.

Q. A basketball player participates in an independent game and the school notifies the state office of the violation. What is the penalty?

A. The student will be ineligible for the next seven contests (25% of the number of games allowed under the sports calendar) or the remainder of the season, whichever is the least.

7.

Q. A student is registered on the girls' softball team with school A. The student then participates in an independent girls' softball game. She then returns to school A's softball team where she plays three games. The coach of school A determines that the student has played in an independent game and reports the violation to the state office. What is the penalty?

A. School A has played an ineligible player for three games. The three games will be forfeited and disciplinary action will be taken. The student is ineligible for nine games. (If a student participates in three contests as an ineligible player, the three contests will be forfeited, disciplinary action will be taken against the school, and the student will be ineligible to participate in the next nine contests or for the remainder of the season, whichever is the least.)

Home School Rule

1.

Q. Who is eligible to tryout, as a home school athlete, for a TMSAA member school team?

A. Only those who meet the definition of an "independent home school" student are eligible to tryout provided they meet all ten criteria outlined within TSSAA's Home School Bylaw.

Students registered in a non-public school are not considered to be in an independent home school program administered by their parent or guardian, which is what is required for purposes of the Home School Bylaw. As a result, home school students attending a "non-public school" are not eligible under the TSSAA rule.

2.

Q. How do I know if my home school child is attending a non-public school?

A. A complete list of non-public schools may be found on the State Department of Education website at: <http://www.tn.gov/education/nonpublic/index.shtml>

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3.

Q. For a home school athlete to be eligible to tryout for a TMSAA member public school team must my child be registered with the LEA?

A. Yes.

4.

Q. Are there any requirements that the parent conducting the home school must meet for purposes of the TSSAA Bylaws?

A. Yes. First, the home school athlete must meet all ten criteria outlined within TSSAA's Home School Bylaw. Additionally, the parent-teacher must satisfy all of the requirements of Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-3050(b) for the home school student to be eligible to try out for a TSSAA member school team. The statute is contained in the Appendix of the TSSAA Bylaws.

5.

Q. What are the academic requirements for a home school athlete?

A. The academic courses must be approved by the local board of education (or private school) in compliance with Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-3050(b). TSSAA does not regulate where or how any student athlete receives credit toward graduation. TSSAA is concerned with the following: (1) Are the participants enrolled in a minimum of five academic courses which have been approved by the school and/or school system? And (2) If taken at a member school would the course count towards graduation? If the answer to both questions is "yes", the home school athlete would meet the requirements set forth in the "Academic Rule" and "Home School" Bylaw.

6.

Q. What if a student takes four of the five academic courses at an independent home school, but registers and attends a non-public school for the fifth credit (i.e. science lab,) would this potential home school athlete be eligible under the Home School Bylaw?

A. No. According to the Bylaw, if the home school student actually registers with the non-public school that is not a member of TSSAA, the home school student would not be an "independent home school" student, and would not be eligible to tryout as a home school athlete for another TSSAA member school team. For further explanation, see Question 1 under Home School Rule.

7.

Q. If a potential home school student wants to tryout for a TSSAA member school baseball team, what is the last date that the home school student can registered with the local school superintendent (or head of school if a private school)?

A. A home school student must be registered by August 1 of the current school year, regardless of whether the student desires to participate in a fall, winter, or spring sport.

8.

Q. What is the last date that a home school student can make application for participation in athletics to the principal of the member school in which the athlete wishes to tryout and possibly participate?

A. August 15th of the school year in which they desire to participate.

9.

Q. Can a home school student tryout for a team prior to meeting all requirements of the rule in the TSSAA Bylaws?

A. No. All requirements of the rule must be met prior to the home school student trying out for a team, with the exception of the participation fee. If a participation fee is imposed by the LEA, the home school student would only be required to pay that fee only if they become a member of the team.

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10.

Q. What type of insurance, if any, does a home school athlete participating on a TSSAA member school team need to maintain?

A. The home school student must provide proof of basic medical insurance coverage and liability insurance coverage which names the TSSAA as an insured party in the event the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to students enrolled in home school programs. TSSAA Catastrophic Insurance will extend to the home school athlete as it does with all other student-athletes participating at a member school.

11.

Q. If the LEA imposes a participation fee, could the home school athlete be responsible for any additional monetary payments after he/she makes a particular team?

A. Yes, but this will be left to the LEA, and not TSSAA. Many LEAs charge an additional fee to all the athletes participating in a particular sport, such as golf. Some LEAs charge an equipment fee or uniforms fee, while other LEAs require athletes to raise a certain amount of money with fundraising. If the non-home school student athlete is being held responsible for monetary contributions, the home school athlete can be held responsible for those same monetary contributions, which will vary within LEAs.

12.

Q. If a home school athlete makes the roster of a TSSAA member school team in football, basketball, and baseball, what is the participation fee?

A. The answer will vary by LEA. The maximum amount that the home school athlete could pay is \$900.00 (\$300.00 per sport x 3 sports).

13.

Q. If a home school athlete wants to participate on a TSSAA member private school team, what must the home school athlete do?

A. (1) In order to meet the definition of an independent home school student, the student must register with the local Board of Education regardless of where they wish to tryout. (2) The home school athlete must register with the head of school on or before August 1 of the current school year. (3) Additionally, the home school athlete must pay full tuition and abide by all financial aid rules.

14.

Q. If a student has dropped out, withdrawn, or been expelled from a TSSAA member school, will that student be eligible to participate at another TSSAA member school as a home school athlete?

A. No. If the student was expelled then he/she would be carrying a discipline record which makes them ineligible for one year or until the disciplinary charges have been removed. If the student dropped out or withdraws from school he/she would be subject to the TSSAA's transfer rules.

15.

Q. If a student receives an education at home, is that student a "home school student" for purposes of the TSSAA Bylaw?

A. Not necessarily. See Question 1 and 2 under Home School Rule.

16.

Q. If a home school athlete tries out for a TSSAA member school team, is the home school athlete automatically on the roster?

A. No, like all sports rosters, the ultimate decisions are left to the member schools regarding the athletes that make the team as well as the amount of playing time that each athlete receives.

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17.

Q. If a student participates in basketball as a member of a home school team during the regular season, would that same student be eligible to participate in baseball as a home school athlete on a TSSAA member school team?

A. No, a home school team is considered a school team for purposes of Article 4, Section 1 of the TSSAA Bylaws. Accordingly, the student would have to choose whether he wanted to participate on the home school basketball team or participate as a home school athlete for a TSSAA member school.

Schools Which Member Schools May Play or Scrimmage

1.

Q. What schools may a member school of TMSAA play or scrimmage during regular season?

A. TMSAA member schools may play or scrimmage the following:

1. Any middle school team with grades 6, 7, and 8.
2. An individual home schooled student who might be invited to participate in a track meet, wrestling competition, golf competition, etc. This would primarily apply to individual sports.
3. A home school team in a team sport, such as basketball, baseball, softball, etc., where home schooled students go together to form a cooperative team.

2.

Q. Who can a member school of TSSAA not play during regular season?

A. Any non-school team. Examples would be a club team, recreational park league team, or any type of independent team.

Contests with Out-Of-State Teams and Interstate Tournaments

1.

Q. Must all single games with out-of-state teams be sanctioned by TMSAA, the other state association, and the National Federation?

A. No. Only those games which involve travel in excess of 600 miles round trip must be approved by TMSAA. Those games sponsored by individuals or organizations other than member schools require sanctioning by TMSAA, the other state association, and the National Federation.

2.

Q. May a TMSAA school participate in interstate tournaments or meets that have not been sanctioned?

A. No. All interstate tournaments and meets must be sanctioned by TMSAA, the other state associations concerned, and the National Federation.

Varsity Teams

Q. Can a school's junior varsity team participate against another school's varsity team?

A. No. A game is either a varsity game for both teams, a junior varsity game for both teams, or a scrimmage for both teams. An exception may be made by the Executive Director when a school is beginning an athletic program.

TMSAA SPORTS CALENDAR

1.

Q. A coach has a weight lifting program at school during off-season and in the time permitted by the sports calendar. The program is open to both players and non-players. Is this a violation?

A. No, provided activities are limited to weight lifting, and provided no player is required to attend.

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2.

Q. Can a coach have a conditioning program in the off season, provided it is not during the Dead Period?

A. Yes, provided it is a program that would benefit all students and is open to all players and non-players.

3.

Q. Is it permissible for a school to have try-outs before the first practice date?

A. Try-outs are considered practice. During the school-year, no school may hold try-outs prior to the first practice date as set forth by the TSSAA Sports Calendar. Try-outs in football and basketball may be held during spring practice but students enrolled and in regular attendance at that school may participate. Try-outs may be held in the summer during the time outlined for practice in that sport.

4.

Q. Does the 50% rule apply to middle schools?

A. No. The 50% rule applies only to high school teams.

Awards

1.

Q. From where/whom do tournament directors get the awards for their tournament?

A. Tournament Directors may contact A&M Products Company to order awards. Their contact information is as follows: A & M Products; 575 Elm Place; PO Box 266; Princeton, IL 61356; Phone – (815) 875-2667

Officials and Contracts with Officials

1.

Q. May a school use one or more non-registered officials in a contest provided the other officials are registered?

A. All football officials, including the clock operator, must be registered with TSSAA. All basketball officials, except the timer and scorer, must also be registered with TSSAA. All baseball and girls softball umpires must be registered with TSSAA; also wrestling, girls soccer, soccer and girls volleyball officials.

2.

Q. If a registered official has been employed but for some reason fails to appear, may a school use a non-registered official without being subject to any penalty?

A. Yes, provided the state office is notified in writing within 48 hours after the game is played. This report should give the name and address of the registered official who was employed to work the game and the reason for his/her failure to do so if known; also the name and address of the official who was used in place of the registered official.

3.

Q. What is the policy of TMSAA toward the decisions of officials?

A. The decisions of officials are accepted as final and binding.

4.

Q. May a school drop an official from the game after the official has been engaged?

A. Yes, if a school decides that it is wise to break its agreement with an official, it may be done by paying the official the regular fee for the game.

COACHING REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Non-Faculty Coaches

- _____ Must be approved by principal, director of schools, and/or school board each year.
- _____ Must be submitted by the principal to TMSAA each year.
- _____ Must complete the Online TSSAA Coaches Training Session within one year of beginning coaching.
- _____ Must have attended and successfully completed the ASEP Coaches Education course (Coaching Principles/Sports First Aid) within their first five years.

Retired Educators (five or more years of teaching experience) & **Full-Time employees** (those who are not in their first year of teaching and are currently teaching a minimum of 100 school days) are not considered non-faculty. These individuals have no other requirements.

Public Address Announcements For use at Home Events

P.A. ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE MADE DURING GAME ADMINISTRATORS MEETING:

WE CALL TO YOUR ATTENTION THE GAME ADMINISTRATORS MEETING THAT IS BEING HELD ON THE FIELD. THIS MEETING INCLUDES, THE GAME ADMINISTRATOR OF THE HOST SCHOOL, THE TWO HEAD COACHES, THE REFEREE AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECURITY TEAM. EACH IS REVIEWING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS GAME. WE ASK THAT EACH SPECTATOR CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN A POSITIVE SPORTSMANLIKE MANNER. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO CHEER FOR YOUR TEAM AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION. ENJOY THIS EVENING AND THE GAME.



Sportsmanship: Pre-Game Announcements

THIS GAME IS BEING PLAYED ACCORDING TO THE RULES OF THE TENNESSEE SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION. THESE RULES PROVIDE FOR FAIR COMPETITION AMONG PLAYERS. SPECTATORS CAN HELP PROMOTE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP, ALSO, BY OBSERVING THE RULES OF FAIR PLAY. EACH ONE IS REQUESTED TO TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KEEPING THIS GAME AT A HIGH LEVEL OF SPORTSMANSHIP.



WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME YOU THIS EVENING TO (name of school). GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY PURPOSES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM. OUR ATHLETES RECOGNIZE THAT JUDGMENT CALLS ARE MADE IN GOOD FAITH AND THAT THEY MUST ABIDE BY THE DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS. SPECTATORS CAN SUPPORT THEIR HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAM BY REFRAINING FROM DEROGATORY OR INTEMPERATE REMARKS OR CHEERS. WE HOPE YOU WILL ENJOY THE GAME AND SUPPORT YOUR ATHLETES IN A POSITIVE AND SPORTSMANLIKE MANNER.



TSSAA BELIEVES THAT ATHLETES SHOULD BE COMPETITIVE, SPORTSMANLIKE AND EXCEL ACADEMICALLY. WE BELIEVE THAT STUDENTS IN THE STANDS SHOULD HAVE FUN, BUT NOT TAKE THE FOCUS AWAY FROM THE GAME. WE BELIEVE COACHES SHOULD ACT AS TEACHERS, HELPING STUDENT-ATHLETES DEVELOP WHILE STILL KEEPING HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS IN PERSPECTIVE. WE BELIEVE THAT PARENTS SHOULD ALWAYS BE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS AND BE SUPPORTIVE OF THEIR CHILD'S DECISIONS. WE BELIEVE OFFICIALS COMMIT THEIR OWN TIME TO HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS AND RESPECT SHOULD ALWAYS BE SHOWN AND GIVEN TO THEM.



P.A. Announcement Provided by BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee

BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD OF TENNESSEE IS PROUD TO SUPPORT HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND THE TSSAA. WHETHER IT'S PLAYING SPORTS OR TAKING THE STAIRS INSTEAD OF THE ELEVATOR, YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG OR OLD TO MOVE TOWARDS A HEALTHY FUTURE. SO GET ON YOUR FEET, CHEER ON YOUR TEAM AND JOIN BLUECROSS IN MAKING A HEALTHIER TENNESSEE.



P.A. Announcement Provided by the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Office

FANS AS YOU LEAVE TODAY, PLEASE REMEMBER TO STAY SAFE ON THE ROAD: CLICK IT OR TICKET AND DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE IMPAIRED.

Guidelines for Spectators (Parents)

- 👉 Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of being a parent of a student-athlete who is representing the school and community.
- 👉 Remember that school athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are sometimes made.
- 👉 Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes, and as people.
- 👉 A ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious.
- 👉 Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- 👉 Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. Treat them as you would a guest in your own home.
- 👉 Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- 👉 Recognize and show appreciation for outstanding plays by either team.
- 👉 Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before, and during games, and afterwards on or near the site of the event.
- 👉 Use only those cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- 👉 Communicate openly with your son/daughter about being a good sport.
- 👉 Be a role model. You must set an example for the students/athletes.

Examples of Unacceptable Behavior

- 👉 Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free throw attempt, serve, etc.
- 👉 Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
- 👉 Booing or heckling an official's decision.
- 👉 Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- 👉 Yells that antagonize opponents.
- 👉 Refusing to give recognition for good performances.
- 👉 Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches, or participants.
- 👉 Name-calling in any form (officials, coaches, participants).
- 👉 Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.
- 👉 Doing your own yells instead of following the lead of the cheerleaders.