

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to interscholastic activities;
 3 amending s. 1006.15, F.S.; providing requirements for
 4 determining whether a school offers an activity or
 5 sport; revising the criteria a private school student
 6 must meet to participate in a sport at a Florida High
 7 School Athletic Association (FHSAA) member school;
 8 removing a provision limiting which non-FHSAA member
 9 private school students are eligible to participate in
 10 FHSAA sports; amending s. 1006.20, F.S.; revising the
 11 requirements for the appointment of members to the
 12 FHSAA board of directors; providing requirements for
 13 membership of FHSAA committees on appeals; providing
 14 timelines for specified appeals; authorizing the FHSAA
 15 board of directors to conduct meetings solely for
 16 certain appeals; requiring the publication of appeal
 17 decisions online; providing requirements for such
 18 publications; providing an effective date.

19
 20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 22 **Section 1. Subsection (2) and paragraphs (a), (e), and (g)**
 23 **of subsection (8) of section 1006.15, Florida Statutes, are**
 24 **amended to read:**

25 1006.15 Student standards for participation in

26 interscholastic and intrascholastic extracurricular student
27 activities; regulation.—

28 (2) Interscholastic extracurricular student activities are
29 an important complement to the academic curriculum.
30 Participation in a comprehensive extracurricular and academic
31 program contributes to student development of the social and
32 intellectual skills necessary to become a well-rounded adult. As
33 used in this section, the term "extracurricular" means any
34 school-authorized or education-related activity occurring during
35 or outside the regular instructional school day. When
36 determining whether a school offers an activity or sport, the
37 activity or sport must be in the same designation required by s.
38 1006.205(3)(a).

39 (8)(a) The Florida High School Athletic Association
40 (FHSAA) shall, in cooperation with each district school board
41 and its member private schools, facilitate a program in which a
42 middle school or high school student who attends a private
43 school is eligible to participate in an interscholastic or
44 intrascholastic sport at a member public high school, a member
45 public middle school, a member 6-12 public school, or a member
46 private school, as appropriate for the private school student's
47 grade level, if:

48 1. The private school in which the student is enrolled
49 does not offer the interscholastic sport ~~is not a member of the~~
50 ~~FHSAA.~~

51 2. The private school student meets the guidelines for the
52 conduct of the program established by the FHSAA's board of
53 directors and the district school board or member private
54 school. At a minimum, such guidelines must provide a deadline
55 for each sport by which the private school student's parents
56 must register with the member school in writing their intent for
57 their child to participate at that school in the sport.

58 (e) Any ~~non-FHSAA member~~ private school that has a student
59 who wishes to participate in this program must make all student
60 records, including, but not limited to, academic, financial,
61 disciplinary, and attendance records, available upon request of
62 the FHSAA.

63 ~~(g) Only students who are enrolled in non-FHSAA member~~
64 ~~private schools consisting of 200 students or fewer are eligible~~
65 ~~to participate in the program in any given academic year.~~

66 **Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection**
67 **(7) of section 1006.20, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

68 1006.20 Athletics in public K-12 schools.—

69 (4) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

70 (a) The executive and legislative authority of the FHSAA
71 is vested in its board of directors, which is composed of 13
72 members, ~~8 of whom are appointed by the Governor and confirmed~~
73 ~~by the Senate,~~ as follows:

74 1. Two public member school representatives elected from
75 among its public school representative members. Each elected

76 representative must be from a different administrative region.

77 2. Two nonpublic member school representatives elected
78 from among its nonpublic school representative members. Each
79 elected representative must be from a different administrative
80 region that is also different from the public member school
81 representatives elected under subparagraph 1.

82 3. The commissioner or his or her designee from the
83 department executive staff.

84 4. Three members appointed by the President of the Senate,
85 three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
86 Representatives, and two members appointed by the Governor, as
87 follows:

88 a.3. Two public member school representatives appointed
89 from different administrative regions.

90 b.4. Two nonpublic member school representatives appointed
91 from different administrative regions that are also different
92 than those represented by the public member school
93 representatives appointed under sub-subparagraph a. subparagraph
94 3.

95 c.5. Two representatives, one appointed from the two
96 northernmost administrative regions and one appointed from the
97 two southernmost administrative regions.

98 d.6. One district school superintendent appointed from the
99 northernmost administrative region.

100 e.7. One district school board member appointed from the

101 southernmost administrative region.

102 ~~8. The commissioner or his or her designee from the~~
103 ~~department executive staff.~~

104 (7) APPEALS.—

105 (a) The FHSAA shall establish a procedure of due process
106 which ensures each student the opportunity to appeal an
107 unfavorable ruling with regard to his or her eligibility to
108 compete. The initial appeal shall be made to a committee on
109 appeals within the administrative region in which the student
110 lives. The FHSAA's bylaws shall establish the number, size, and
111 composition of each committee on appeals, which must have a
112 majority of its membership be representatives of member schools.

113 (b) No member of the board of directors is eligible to
114 serve on a committee on appeals.

115 (c) Members of a committee on appeals shall serve terms of
116 3 years and are eligible to succeed themselves only once. A
117 member of a committee on appeals may serve a maximum of 6
118 consecutive years. The FHSAA's bylaws shall establish a rotation
119 of terms to ensure that a majority of the members' terms do not
120 expire concurrently.

121 (d) The authority and duties of a committee on appeals
122 shall be to consider requests by member schools seeking
123 exceptions to bylaws and regulations, to hear undue hardship
124 eligibility cases filed by member schools on behalf of student
125 athletes, and to hear appeals filed by member schools or student

126 athletes. Each committee on appeals must issue a decision on
127 appeals of determinations of ineligibility within 20 days after
128 any such appeal during the applicable sports season.

129 (e) A student athlete or member school that receives an
130 unfavorable ruling from a committee on appeals shall be entitled
131 to appeal that decision to the board of directors at its next
132 regularly scheduled meeting or called meeting. The board of
133 directors shall have the authority to uphold, reverse, or amend
134 the decision of the committee on appeals. In all such cases, the
135 decision of the board of directors shall be final.

136 (f) The FHSAA shall expedite the appeals process on
137 determinations of ineligibility so that disposition of the
138 appeal can be made before the end of the applicable sports
139 season, if possible. The expedited process must provide that the
140 FHSAA board of directors issue a decision within 20 days after
141 receipt of an appeal of a determination of ineligibility by the
142 committee on appeals. The FHSAA board of directors may conduct
143 meetings for the sole purpose of considering such pending
144 appeals.

145 (g) In any appeal from a decision on eligibility made by
146 the executive director or a designee, a school or student
147 athlete filing the appeal must be permitted to present
148 information and evidence that was not available at the time of
149 the initial determination or if the determination was not made
150 by an unbiased, objective individual using a process allowing

151 full due process rights to be heard and to present evidence. If
152 evidence is presented on appeal, a de novo decision must be made
153 by the committee or board hearing the appeal, or the
154 determination may be suspended and the matter remanded for a new
155 determination based on all the evidence. If a de novo decision
156 is made on appeal, the decision must be made in writing, setting
157 forth the findings of fact and specific violation upon which the
158 decision is based. If a de novo decision is not required, the
159 decision appealed must be set aside if the decision on
160 ineligibility was not based on clear and convincing evidence.
161 Any further appeal shall be considered on a record that includes
162 all evidence presented.

163 (h) Decisions made by the committee on appeals, the
164 executive director, or his or her designee, and the FHSAA board
165 of directors must be posted online in a searchable format and in
166 compliance with ss. 1002.22 and 1002.221.

167 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.