

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

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**BILL:** CS/SB 248

**INTRODUCER:** Education Pre-K -12 Committee and Senator Simon

**SUBJECT:** Student Participation in Interscholastic and Intrасcholastic Extracurricular Sports

**DATE:** March 12, 2025      **REVISED:** \_\_\_\_\_

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	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Palazesi	Bouck	ED	<b>Fav/CS</b>
2.	_____	_____	JU	_____
3.	_____	_____	RC	_____

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 248 expands the ability of private school students to participate in interscholastic or intrасcholastic athletics at Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) member schools. The bill also removes the requirement that only students enrolled in non-FHSAA member private schools with 200 or fewer students are eligible to participate in FHSAA interscholastic or intrасcholastic activities at an FHSAA public school in a given academic year.

The bill also specifies that home education program students are eligible to participate on an interscholastic athletic team at any public school within their school district of residence, provided they meet certain requirements.

The act takes effect July 1, 2025.

**II. Present Situation:**

**The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA)**

The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) is designated as a governing nonprofit organization of athletics in Florida public schools. Any public or private high school or middle school in this state, including charter schools, virtual schools, and home education cooperatives, may become a member of the FHSAA and participate in the activities of the FHSAA; however,

membership in the FHSAA is not mandatory for any school.<sup>1</sup> The FHSAA is required to adopt bylaws that:<sup>2</sup>

- Establish eligibility requirements.
- Prohibit recruiting.
- Require all students to pass a medical evaluation each year.
- Regulate people who conduct investigations on behalf of the FHSAA.
- Establish sanctions for coaches who have committed major violations of the FHSAA bylaws.
- Establish the process and standards by which FHSAA determines eligibility.
- Adopt guidelines to educate athletic coaches, officials, administrators, and student athletes and their parents of the risk of concussion and head injury.
- Adopt bylaws that require each student athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or competition to be immediately removed from the activity.
- Adopt bylaws for the establishment and duties of a sports medicine advisory committee.

Each year, the FHSAA sponsors over 3,500 championship series games, through which 144 teams, and 294 individuals are crowned state champions in 32 sports. Over 800,000 students annually participate in these athletic programs.<sup>3</sup>

Florida law authorizes home education program students and students who attend a charter school or the Florida Virtual School to participate in interscholastic or intrascholastic activities at a public school or at a private school. The student must meet requirements related to educational progress, must meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance that are required of other students in extracurricular activities, and must register with the school of his or her intent to participate.<sup>4</sup>

### **Private School Student Participation in the FHSAA**

The FHSAA is required to work with each district school board and its member private schools to facilitate a program to allow a middle school or high school student who attends a private school to be eligible to participate in an interscholastic or intrascholastic sport at a member public school if:<sup>5</sup>

- The private school in which the student is enrolled is not a member of the FHSAA.
- The private school student meets the guidelines for the conduct of the program established by the FHSAA's board of directors and the district school board or FHSAA member private school.

The parents of a private school student participating in an FHSAA interscholastic or intrascholastic activity are responsible for transporting their child to and from the member school where the student participates. Each year, the private school student may only participate at the member school in which they registered, and the student must apply to participate in the program

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1006.20(1), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1006.20(2), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Florida High School Athletic Association, *About FHSAA*, available at <https://fhsaa.com/sports/2020/1/16/About.aspx>, (last visited Mar. 5, 2025).

<sup>4</sup> Section 1006.15(2)(c)-(e), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1006.15(8)(a), F.S.

through the FHSAA. Only students enrolled in non-FHSAA member private schools with 200 or fewer students are eligible to participate at an FHSAA member school in any given academic year.<sup>6</sup>

### **Home Education Program Student Participation in the FHSAA**

A home education student is eligible to participate in FHSAA interscholastic activities at the public school the student would be assigned to based on the district school board's attendance area policies or at a public school the student could choose to attend under controlled open enrollment. The student may also enter into an agreement with a private school to participate in that school's interscholastic activities. To be eligible, a home education student must meet the following criteria:<sup>7</sup>

- The home education student must meet the requirements of the home education program.<sup>8</sup>
- During the period of participation at a school, the home education student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects taken in the home education program by a method of evaluation agreed upon by the parent and the school principal.
- The home education student must meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he or she participates.
- The home education student must meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities.
- The student must register with the school his or her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school before participation.
- A student who transfers from a home education program to a public school before or during the first grading period of the school year is academically eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities during the first grading period provided the student has a successful evaluation from the previous school year.
- Any public school or private school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities is ineligible to participate in such activities as a home education student until the student has successfully completed one grading period in home education.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

CS/SB 248 amends s. 1006.15, F.S., to authorize a private school student to participate in Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) interscholastic or intrascholastic sports at an FHSAA member public school if his or her private school does not offer the sport, regardless of the private school's FHSAA membership status. The bill also removes the requirement that only students who are enrolled in non-FHSAA member private schools consisting of 200 or fewer students are eligible to participate in FHSAA interscholastic or intrascholastic activities in any given academic year.

The bill also specifies that students enrolled in a home education program are eligible to participate on an interscholastic athletic team at any public school in the school district in which

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<sup>6</sup> Section 1006.15(8)(b)(c)(f)(g), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1006.15(3)(c), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Section 1002.01(1), F.S., A "home education program" means the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent to satisfy attendance requirements.

the student resides, regardless of school capacity, but subject to conditions already specified in law.

The act takes effect July 1, 2025.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This bill does not have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1006.15 of the Florida Statutes:

**IX. Additional Information:**

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Education Pre-K-12 on March 11, 2025:**

The committee substitute authorizes home education students to participate on an interscholastic athletic team at any public school within their school district of residence, provided they meet certain requirements.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.