Bylaws
of the
Florida High School
Athletic Association, Inc.

2020-21 Edition

These Bylaws have been adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the Representative Assembly of the Florida High School Athletic Association and are applicable to the 2020-21 school year.
# Table of Contents for Bylaws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Look for</th>
<th>On Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revisions to Bylaws for 2020-21 School Year</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Constitutional Bylaws

### Article 1 – Name, Purpose, Objectives, General Terms and Fundamental Belief

1.1 Name .......................................................... 4
1.2 Purpose .......................................................... 4
1.3 Objectives .......................................................... 4
1.4 General Terms .................................................. 4-6
1.5 Fundamental Belief .............................................. 6

### Article 2 – Principles for the Conduct of Interscholastic Athletics

2.1 Educational Nature of Interscholastic Athletics ....... 6
2.2 Participation is a Privilege ..................................... 6
2.3 Sportmanship and Ethical Conduct .......................... 7
2.4 Gender Equity ..................................................... 7
2.5 Administrative Control and Responsibility ................. 7
2.6 Compliance With Rules ........................................ 7
2.7 Nondiscrimination and Diversity ............................. 7
2.8 Competitive Equity .............................................. 8
2.9 Eligibility Rules .................................................. 8
2.10 Florida High School State Championship Series Competition ........................................ 8

### Article 3 – Membership

3.1 General Principles .............................................. 8
3.2 General Definitions ............................................ 8-9
3.3 Qualifications & Conditions of Membership .......... 9-10
3.4 Conditional Membership ..................................... 9-10
3.5 Obligations of Membership .................................. 10-11
3.6 Application for Membership .................................. 11-12
3.7 Procedures for Admittance and Election to Membership ........................................ 12
3.8 Membership Dues and Fees .................................. 12
3.9 Privileges of Membership ....................................... 12
3.10 Termination and Restriction of Membership .......... 13
3.11 Geographical Areas .......................................... 13

### Article 4 – Organization and Governance

4.1 General Principles .............................................. 13
4.2 General Definitions ............................................ 13
4.3 Board of Directors ............................................. 14-15
4.4 Representative Assembly ..................................... 15
4.5 Sectional Appeals Committees ............................... 15-16
4.6 Executive Director ............................................. 17-18
4.7 Elections and Vacancies ...................................... 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Look for</th>
<th>On Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 5 – Amendments</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Submission of Amendments</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Action by Representative Assembly</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Effective Date of Amendments</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Operational Bylaws

### Article 6 – Authority and Responsibilities of the Principal

6.1 Definition and Responsibility ................................ 19-20
6.2 Certification of Student Eligibility ......................... 20
6.3 Recruitment of Students ...................................... 20

### Article 7 – Sportsmanship

7.1 School Representatives ........................................ 20
7.2 Unsportsmanlike Conduct ..................................... 20-21

### Article 8 – Interscholastic Contests

8.1 Interscholastic Contest ......................................... 21
8.2 Rules of Competition .......................................... 21
8.3 Schools With Which Contests May be Held .......... 21-22
8.4 Contracts ......................................................... 22-23
8.5 Categorization of Sports ...................................... 23
8.6 Participation by Gender ........................................ 23
8.7 Florida High School State Championship Series .......... 23
8.8 Season Limitations ............................................. 23
8.9 Use of Registered Officials ................................... 24

### Article 9 – Student Eligibility

9.1 General Principles .............................................. 24
9.2 Attendance Requirements ..................................... 24-27
9.3 Transfer Regulations .......................................... 27-28
9.4 Academic Requirements ...................................... 28-30
9.5 Limit of Eligibility ............................................. 30
9.6 Age ................................................................. 30-31
9.7 Physical Examination .......................................... 31
9.8 Consent and Release .......................................... 31
9.9 Amateurism ....................................................... 32
9.10 Athletic Contest Participation ................................ 32

### Article 10 – Compliance and Enforcement

10.1 Principles and Penalties ..................................... 32-33
10.2 Forfeiture of Contest ......................................... 33
10.3 Protest Procedure ............................................ 33
10.4 Due Process .................................................... 33-34
10.5 General Principles for Appeals and Requests for Waiver .......... 34-36
10.6 Appeal and Request for Waiver Procedures .......... 37-39
10.7 Empowerment .................................................. 39
10.8 Procedure in Cases of Expulsion ......................... 39-40
10.9 Compliance With Decisions ................................. 40

---

2020-21 FHSAA Handbook
## Revisions to Bylaws for 2020-21 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bylaw</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
<th>Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Modifies language related to Sectional Appeals Committee Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.4.1.3.1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Adds a new exception to Attendance During Previous Two Consecutive Semesters Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5.1.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Modifies language related to Limit of Eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5.1.3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Adds a new exception to Limit of Eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6.4.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Adds clarifying language related to Age - What is Documented Proof of Age?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5.5.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Adds a new exception related to Initial Appeals or Requests for Waivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Modifies language related to Filing an Initial Appeal or Request for Waiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.6.2.2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Removes language related to Appeal of Penalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.6.2.3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Removes language related to Committee Acts on Basis of Record in Case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 1**

**Name, Purpose, Objectives, General Terms and Fundamental Belief**

**1.1 NAME**
The name of this corporation is “Florida High School Athletic Association, Inc.”

**1.1.1 Common References.** This organization is commonly referred to as the “Florida High School Athletic Association,” the “Association,” or the “FHSAA.”

**1.1.2 Location of Office.** The FHSAA Office is located in Gainesville, Florida.

**1.1.3 Type of Organization.** The FHSAA is a voluntary association of middle/junior high schools, senior high schools, combination schools (K-12, K-8, 6-12, etc.) and home education cooperatives that are physically located in Florida. It operates as a not-for-profit corporation.

**1.1.4 National Affiliation.** The FHSAA shall maintain membership in the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

**1.2 PURPOSE**
The FHSAA provides leadership for the development, supervision and promotion of interscholastic athletic programs sponsored by its member schools. Participation in these programs enriches the educational experience of qualified student-athletes by providing them with opportunities to compete in an equitable, sportsmanlike and wholesome manner.

**1.3 OBJECTIVES**
To achieve its purpose, the FHSAA will:

(a) Strive for interscholastic athletics to be an integral part of the educational program;

(b) Ensure the equitable conduct of interscholastic athletic competitions;

(c) Promote an understanding that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege earned by those who meet the established requirements;

(d) Provide rules for administrative control of, and responsibility for, interscholastic athletic programs that is consistent with the rules of the Association;

(e) Recognize the outstanding accomplishments of student-athletes, coaches, teams and schools;

(f) Protect member schools from exploitation by organizations and individuals whose purposes are not consistent with educational athletics;

(g) Encourage cooperation, friendship and sportsmanship among student-athletes, coaches and member schools; and

(h) Cooperate with the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Education in governing interscholastic athletics.

**1.4 GENERAL TERMS**

**1.4.1 Bylaws or FHSAA Bylaws** – refers to the rules and regulations of this Association that have been adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Assembly of this Association.

**1.4.2 Policies or FHSAA Policies** – refers to the rules and regulation of this Association that have been adopted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

**1.4.3 Regulations or FHSAA Regulations** – refers to the FHSAA Bylaws and Policies.

**1.4.4 Administrative Year** – refers to the period of time that begins on July 1 and continues to June 30.

**1.4.5 School/Academic/Athletic Year** – refers to the period of time which begins with the first day of practice for the fall sports or the first day of classes, whichever comes first for an individual school, and continues until the last day of classes for an individual school.

**1.4.6 Summer** – refers to the period of time which begins on the first day following the last day of classes for an individual school and continues through the Saturday preceding the first of day of practice for the fall sports.

**1.4.7 Permissible Contact** – refers to the time in which a coach is allowed to meet with athletes for the purpose of conducting tryouts, demonstrating and instructing sport-specific skills and techniques, and practices for a given sport.

**1.4.8 Start of a Sports Season** – commences with the first day of permissible contact for the given sport as determined in the FHSAA Planning Calendar.
1.4.9 **End of a Sports Season** – concludes with the last regular season contest for the given sport or the contest in which an individual school has been eliminated from, or has been named the overall champion of, the Florida High School State Championship Series for the given sport as determined in the FHSAA Planning Calendar.

1.4.10 **Fiscal Year** – refers to the period of time that begins on July 1 and continues to June 30.

1.4.11 **Calendar Year** – refers to 365 continuous days.

1.4.12 **Standardized Calendar** – refers to the calendar in which each week is numbered 1 through 52, with Week 1 beginning the first Sunday in July.

1.4.13 **Semester** – refers to that period of time approximately equal to one-half of an academic year (approximately 90 days), with August through December/January as the first semester and January through May/June as the second semester.

1.4.14 **One Full Semester** – defined as being in attendance and earning a grade for an entire semester period (i.e., August through December/January as the first semester and January through May/June as the second semester).

1.4.15 **Team Sport** – refers to any sport in which competition is held between two collective groups of individuals in which winning or losing is by the group as opposed to by individuals (i.e., baseball, basketball, competitive cheerleading, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, volleyball, water polo, etc.). Only team honors are awarded in team sports.

1.4.16 **Individual Sport** – refers to any sport in which competition is held between or among individuals in which winning or losing is by individuals (i.e., bowling, cross country, golf, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, weightlifting, wrestling, etc.). Team and individual honors are awarded in individual sports.

1.4.17 **Athletic Activities** – refers to contact between coaches and student-athletes including, but not limited to: conditioning, weightlifting, tryouts, practices, intra-squad scrimmages and contests.

1.4.18 **Representative of a School's Athletic Interests** – refers to any independent person, business, organization or group that participates in, assists with and/or promotes that school’s interscholastic athletic program. This includes:

(a) A student-athlete or other student participant in the athletic program at that school;

(b) The parents, guardians or other family members of a student-athlete or other student participant in the athletic program at that school;

(c) Immediate relatives of a coach or other member of the athletic department staff at that school;

(d) A volunteer with that school’s athletic program;

(e) A member of an athletic booster organization of that school;

(f) A person, business, organization or group that makes financial or in-kind contributions to the athletic department or that is otherwise involved in promoting the school’s interscholastic athletic program.

1.4.19 **Grading Period** – A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days).

1.4.20 **Member School** – refers to a senior high school, middle/junior high school, a combination school or home education cooperative that is provisionally admitted or duly elected to membership in the Association.

1.4.21 **Secondary Violations** – Secondary violations are those that are isolated or inadvertent in nature, or provide little or no competitive advantage.

1.4.22 **Major Violations** – Major violations are those that are committed intentionally, or that provide a significant competitive advantage, or are committed due to a lack of administrative control of the interscholastic athletic program regardless of whether the school claims ignorance of the rule(s) violated, including, but not limited to, knowingly allowing an ineligible student to participate in a contest or violations to the recruiting and sportsmanship policies of the association (§ 1006.20(2)(f)1, F.S.). Multiple secondary violations may together be considered a major violation. A secondary violation committed by a school already on probation may be considered a major violation.

1.4.23 **Residence** – Residence as used throughout the rules and regulations of this association is used in two contexts; “school residence,” meaning the school at which student attends or represents and “physical residence,” meaning the location at which a student lives with his/her parent or guardian. A student and his/her parents cannot occupy a residence at more than one address, and only the student’s current residence may be used for eligibility purposes. For those students who are required to have multiple physical residences by a court of competent jurisdiction, please refer to Bylaw 9.2.1.3.

1.4.24 **Athletic Activities Affiliated with a School** – Athletic activities affiliated with a school are any athletic activities not sponsored by the school but are organized, coached and/or supervised by a school employee, athletic department staff member, or representative of the school’s athletic interests or in which the majority of participants are students who attend the school.

1.4.25 **Principal** – A “principal” is the administrator responsible for the day-to-day operation of a school, whether the individual’s specific title is principal, headmaster, director, administrator, head of school or otherwise. The principal is responsible for the conduct of the school’s interscholastic athletic programs.

1.4.26 **FHSAA Representative** – An “FHSAA representative” is the school representative who represents on behalf of the school in its relationship with the Association. The FHSAA representative is the principal, unless the principal delegates the task to an assistant principal or the athletic director. The principal, however, cannot delegate the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the school’s interscholastic athletic programs (§ 1006.20(3)(b), F.S.).
1.4.27  Calendar Week – A “calendar week” is the seven (7) consecutive days Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

1.4.28  School Week – A “school week” is the six (6) consecutive days Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

1.4.29  Academic Week – An “academic week” is the five (5) consecutive days Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; excluding any of these days for which students are not required to attend school by the school or school district.

1.4.30  Guardianship – Guardianship must be appointed legally by a court of competent jurisdiction (§ 744.102(5), F.S. and 744.102(9), F.S.).

1.4.31  Traditional Student – Traditional students are students who are enrolled in and physically attend the school at which they participate, except for Dual Enrolled or Early Admission students.

1.4.32  Non-Traditional Student – Non-Traditional Students are students who are not enrolled in and physically attend the school at which they participate, including, but not limited to; Home Education students, certain Charter School students, Special School students, certain Non-Member Private School students and students enrolled in FLVS-FT Public Program.

1.4.33  Combination Middle School Program – A combination senior high school that participates in middle school athletics in one or more sports recognized or sanctioned by this association is considered to have a middle school program and must indicate such on its annual membership application. The middle school teams will be limited to grades 6 through 8.

1.4.34  Clear and Convincing Evidence – Clear and convincing evidence is evidence that is precise, explicit, lacking in confusion and of such weight that it produces a firm belief or conviction, without hesitation, about the matter in issue.

1.4.35  Athletic Program – a school is considered to have an “Athletic Program” if it offers one or more sports at the interscholastic or intramural level.

1.4.36  Sub-varsity Participation – Sub-varsity participation is participation as an individual in an individual sport or as a team member in a team sport where such participation does not affect the outcome of a varsity contest or event. Individual sub-varsity participation is for exhibition only. Team sub-varsity participation is team competition on, but not limited to, a freshman team, junior varsity team, B-Squad team, etc. Sub-varsity participation is open to all grade levels of the school at which the student participates.

1.4.37  Home Zoned Public School – the home zoned public school is the public school the student would be assigned according to the district school board attendance area policies.

1.4.38  Preponderance of the Evidence – Preponderance of the evidence is defined to mean the evidence which is at the greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it.

1.4.39  Charter School – A charter school, by state statutes, is considered a public school (s.1002.33(1) FS).

1.5  FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF

Interscholastic athletic programs play a vital role in the education of students who participate in them. Through their participation in interscholastic athletics, students are provided character-building opportunities to demonstrate honesty, integrity, respect, caring, cooperation, trustworthiness, leadership, tolerance and personal responsibility. These fundamental values enable participants to realize and fulfill their potential as students, as athletes, as individuals and as citizens.

CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 2

Principles for the Conduct of Interscholastic Athletics

FHSAA rules governing the conduct of interscholastic athletic programs are designed to advance one or more basic principles, including the following, to which member schools are committed. In some instances, a delicate balance of these principles is necessary to help achieve the objectives of the Association.

2.1  EDUCATIONAL NATURE OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Interscholastic athletic programs are designed to enhance the educational experience. The student-athlete is a student first, an athlete second; and each and every practice and competition is an extension of the classroom. This is what clearly separates interscholastic athletics from all other forms of youth sports.

2.2  PARTICIPATION IS A PRIVILEGE

Participation in interscholastic athletics by a student is a privilege, not a right. To earn this privilege, students must abide by the rules and meet standards of academic performance and personal behavior that are related to school purposes.
2.3 SPORTSMANSHIP AND ETHICAL CONDUCT
Interscholastic athletic programs must encourage good character, enhance the integrity of education and promote civility in society. Student-athletes, coaches and all others associated with interscholastic athletic programs, as well as those who attend interscholastic athletic events, should adhere to the fundamental values of honesty, integrity, respect, caring, cooperation, trustworthiness, leadership, tolerance and personal responsibility. Each school is responsible for:
(a) Establishing policies for sportsmanship and ethical conduct in its interscholastic athletic programs that are consistent with the educational mission and goals of the school; and
(b) Educating, on an ongoing basis, all individuals associated with the school’s interscholastic athletic programs and events about those policies.

2.4 GENDER EQUITY
The FHSAA will conduct its activities in a manner free of gender bias and will adopt rules that enhance schools’ efforts to comply with applicable gender-equity laws.

2.5 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITY
2.5.1 Member Schools. Each school must control its interscholastic athletic programs by FHSAA rules and regulations. The principal, who is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the school’s interscholastic athletic programs, is responsible for ensuring this control, which extends to and includes responsibility for and control over the actions of:
(a) The administration and faculty;
(b) The athletic department staff and student-athletes;
(c) The student body, parents and other spectators at athletic events; and
(d) Any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.
2.5.2 District, Charter and Private School Boards. District, charter and private school boards must establish, through their code of student conduct, student eligibility standards and related student disciplinary actions regarding student participation in interscholastic and intrascholastic extracurricular activities (§ 1006.195,(1)(a), F.S.). The code of student conduct must provide that:
(a) A student not currently suspended from interscholastic or intrascholastic extracurricular activities, or suspended or expelled from school, pursuant to a district school board’s suspension or expulsion powers provided in law, including § 1006.07, § 1006.08, and § 1006.09, F.S., is eligible to participate in interscholastic and intrascholastic extracurricular activities.
(b) A student may not participate in a sport if the student participated in that same sport at another school during that school year, unless the student meets the criteria in § 1006.15(3)(h), F.S..
(c) A student’s eligibility to participate in any interscholastic or intrascholastic extracurricular activity may not be affected by any alleged recruiting violation until final disposition of the allegation pursuant to § 1006.20(2)(b), F.S..
2.5.3 Non-Traditional Students. Students who participate in interscholastic and intrascholastic extracurricular activities for, but are not enrolled in, a public school pursuant to § 1006.15(3)(c)-(e) and (8), F.S. (i.e. non-traditional students, reference Bylaw 1.4.32), are subject to the district, charter or private school board’s code of student conduct for the limited purpose of establishing and maintaining the student’s eligibility to participate at the school.
2.5.4 Controlled Open Enrollment and Choice Programs. A school district or charter school may not delay eligibility or otherwise prevent a student participating in controlled open enrollment or a choice program from being immediately eligible to participate in interscholastic activities (§ 1002.31(6), F.S.).

2.6 COMPLIANCE WITH RULES
Each school must comply with all applicable FHSAA rules. The FHSAA will assist schools in their efforts to achieve full compliance with all rules and will establish fair procedures for addressing alleged or identified failures in compliance. A school found to have violated FHSAA rules will be subject to such disciplinary and corrective actions as may be determined to be appropriate by the Association.

2.7 NONDISCRIMINATION AND DIVERSITY
The FHSAA will promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. The Association will not discriminate in its governance policies, programs and employment practices on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, creed, sexual orientation or educational choice. The FHSAA will promote diversity of representation within its governance structure and substructures. Each school is responsible to determine independently its own policies regarding nondiscrimination and diversity.
2.8 COMPETITIVE EQUITY
FHSAA rules will promote the opportunity for equity in competition to assure that individual student-athletes and school teams will not be prevented unfairly from achieving the benefits possible through participation in interscholastic athletics.

2.9 ELIGIBILITY RULES
The FHSAA will adopt and enforce eligibility rules that assure proper emphasis on educational objectives and promote competitive equity among schools.

2.10 FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES COMPETITION
This Association may conduct state championships to determine the official state champion(s) in those sports that are sanctioned by the Board of Directors. The privilege to participate in the Florida High School State Championship Series will be limited only to those senior high schools and combination schools that are duly elected to full membership in this Association. The Board of Directors will determine the sports in which state championships are to be conducted and will establish the terms and conditions for each state championship.

CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 3

Membership

3.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES
3.1.1 Opportunity for Membership. A senior high school, a middle/junior high school, a combination school, a charter school, a virtual school or a home education cooperative located in Florida may be a member of the FHSAA if it meets the qualifications, conditions and obligations of membership.

3.1.2 Classifications. Senior high school members may be divided into classifications for purposes of competition in FHSAA championships. The Board of Directors will adopt the criteria for determining these classifications.

3.1.3 Assignment to Geographical Areas. Member schools are assigned to geographical areas for the purpose of representation in the FHSAA governance structure and substructures.

3.1.4 Deadlines. When deadline dates fall on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday as established by Florida Law, the deadline will be the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

3.1.5 Termination of Membership. All privileges of a member school will cease immediately when its membership ends.

3.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS
3.2.1 Member School. A “member school” is a senior high school, middle/junior high school, combination school, a charter school, a virtual school or home education cooperative that is provisionally admitted or duly elected to membership in the Association (§ 1006.20(1), F.S.). Member school not only refers to the institution, but also to its administration, faculty, athletic staff, student-athletes, student body, and any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.

3.2.1.1 Restricted Member. A “restricted member” is a member school that has its membership privileges restricted in some manner because it fails to meet the qualifications, conditions and obligations of membership.

3.2.1.2 Applying Member. An “applying member” is a member school that is under an “application period” immediately following its initial submission of an application for membership. During the “application period,” the school can participate in preseason and regular season interscholastic competition with member schools, but will have no other privileges of a “full member.”

3.2.1.3 Provisional Member. A “provisional member” is a member school that is under a “provisional period” immediately following its initial application for membership. During the “provisional period,” the school can participate in preseason and regular season interscholastic competition with member schools, but will have no other privileges of a “full member.”

3.2.1.4 Full Member. A full member will enjoy all privileges of membership, unless otherwise specifically withheld according to these bylaws. Membership privileges include, but are not limited to, the privilege to compete in FHSAA championships, the privilege to vote in Association elections, the privilege to seek election to positions in the FHSAA governance structure and substructures, and the privilege to make application for and serve as host of multi-school events that require FHSAA office approval.

3.2.1.5 Membership by Sport. A private school shall have the option of maintaining full membership (as defined above) in the association or joining by sport and simultaneously maintaining membership in another athletic association. A public school shall have the option to apply for consideration to join another athletic association (§ 1006.20(1), F.S.).
3.2.2 Types of Member Schools.

3.2.2.1 Senior High School. A “senior high school” is any traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, private school or university laboratory school that provides instruction to students at one or more grade levels from 9 through 12.

3.2.2.2 Middle/Junior High School. A “middle/junior high school” is any traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, private school or university laboratory school that provides instruction to students in middle school configurations (terminal grade of 6, 7 or 8) or junior high school configurations (terminal grade of 9).

3.2.2.3 Combination School. A “combination school” is any traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, private school or university laboratory school that provides instruction to students in both middle/junior high school grades and/or senior high school grades (i.e. K-12, K-8, 6-12, 7-12, etc.) under the direction of a single principal as defined in Bylaw 1.4.25 and located on the same campus, except for 9-12 high schools which have 9th grade centers at a separate location, with participation and enrollment based on a single campus site. A combination school must hold membership as a middle school if its terminal grade is grade 6 through 8, as a junior high school if its terminal grade is grade 9, or as a senior high school if its terminal grade is grade 10 through 12.

3.2.2.4 Home Education Cooperative. A “home education cooperative” is a parent-directed group of individual home education students that provides opportunities for interscholastic athletic competition to those students and may include students in grades 6–12.

3.3 QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

3.3.1 Schools. A senior high school, middle/junior high school or combination school located in the state of Florida may become a member if:

(a) The principal applies for membership on a form provided for that purpose;
(b) The school is registered with the Florida Department of Education;
(c) The school is accredited by an agency approved by the Association;
(d) The governing body of the school approves the school’s membership in the Association, and adopts these bylaws annually as the rules governing its interscholastic athletic programs;
(e) The school pays all dues and other fees required of member schools;
(f) The school maintains the insurance coverage required of member schools;
(g) The school provides the principal, the FHSAA representative and the athletic director with the appropriate modes of communication;
(h) The school, if applicable, successfully completes its applying and provisional period; and
(i) The Board of Directors elects the school to membership.

3.3.1.1 Loss of Accreditation. A member school that loses its accreditation will have a maximum of three (3) years to regain accreditation. No privileges of membership will be withheld during this three-year period.

3.3.1.2 Exemption from Accreditation Requirement. A middle/junior high school is exempt from the accreditation requirement.

3.3.2 Home Education Cooperatives. A home education cooperative located in the state of Florida may become a member if:

(a) The principal applies for membership on a form provided for that purpose;
(b) The governing board of the cooperative adopts these bylaws annually as the rules governing its interscholastic athletic programs;
(c) The cooperative pays all dues and other fees required of member schools;
(d) The cooperative maintains the insurance coverage required of member schools;
(e) The cooperative successfully completes its applying and provisional period;
(f) The cooperative provides the principal, the FHSAA representative and the athletic director with the appropriate modes of communication; and
(g) The Board of Directors elects the cooperative to membership.

3.4 CONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP

3.4.1 First-Time and Former Member Membership. A completed membership packet (reference Bylaw 3.6.1.1) must be on file at the FHSAA office on or before April 30 for the school to be considered for membership with the association. A conditional three year membership period will begin upon submittal of the membership application packet which will include the following:
3.4.1.1 Application Period. The application period will be one (1) full year and commence the school year immediately following the submittal of the membership application packet in which the school must show each of the following:

(a) Receipt of recommendation letters from six (6) local public and/or private FHSAA full member schools; and

(b) Provide registered Florida Department of Education School Number; and

(c) Affirmation of Accreditation from an FHSAA approved agency; and

(d) Commitment to participate in a minimum of (2) team sports (reference Bylaw 1.4.15) in two separate sport seasons with a minimum of one (1) girls and one (1) boys team sport; and

(e) Commitment to participate in a minimum of (2) individual sports (reference Bylaw 1.4.16) in two separate sport seasons with a minimum of one (1) girls and one (1) boys individual sport.

3.4.1.1.1 Acceptance into Provisional Membership. At the conclusion of one year, if each of the above are met, the Board of Directors may approve for a school to enter into Provisional Membership.

3.4.1.1.2 No Extension of Application Period. A school that fails to complete a one year application period will be directed to reapply again by submitting a completed membership packet (reference Bylaw 3.6.1.1).

3.4.1.1.3 Privileges during Application Period. A school in the application period will be recognized as an applying member of the FHSAA and may participate in preseason and regular season interscholastic competition with member schools, but will have no other privileges of a full member.

3.4.1.1.4 Exemption from Application Period. A newly opening school created by the consolidation or division of the student populations of existing member schools is exempt from the provisional period if:

(a) The new school is governed by the same board as the existing member schools; and

(b) The new school meets all other qualifications and conditions of membership.

3.4.1.2 Provisional Membership Period. A two-year provisional period will begin after a school successfully completes its application period of membership and is approved by the Board of Directors. During the provisional period the school must demonstrate an understanding of and comply with all bylaws and other rules of the Association.

3.4.1.2.1 First Year. During the first year of the provisional period the school must be represented at an association approved compliance seminar by its principal, FHSAA representative and athletic director.

3.4.1.2.2 Second Year. During the second year of the provisional period:

(a) The school must be represented at an association approved compliance seminar by either its principal, FHSAA representative or athletic director; and

(b) The school must submit to an onsite inspection of its interscholastic athletic programs, and

(c) Demonstrate a working knowledge of FHSAA regulations.

3.4.1.2.3 Extension of Provisional Period. The Board of Directors may extend the provisional period for additional years or approve, at the request of a school that has not qualified for membership, to have their provisional period extended.

3.4.1.2.4 Exemption from Provisional Period. A newly opening school created by the consolidation or division of the student populations of existing member schools is exempt from the provisional period if:

(a) The new school is governed by the same board as the existing member schools; and

(b) The new school meets all other qualifications and conditions of membership.

3.4.1.2.5 Privileges during Provisional Period. A provisional member may participate in preseason and regular season interscholastic competition with member schools, but will have no other privileges of a full member.

3.5 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

3.5.1 Administrative Control. A member school must control its interscholastic athletic programs in accordance with the regulations of the Association. Responsibility for this control rests with the principal, who is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the school’s interscholastic athletic programs.

3.5.1.1 Scope of Responsibility. Responsibility for control of a school’s interscholastic athletic programs extends to and includes the education of, responsibility for and control over the actions of the school’s administration, faculty, athletic staff, student-athletes, student body, and any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.

3.5.2 Compliance with Rules. A member school must comply with all bylaws and other rules of the Association. The school must monitor its athletic programs to assure compliance with all bylaws and regulations must identify and report to the FHSAA Office instances in which compliance has not been achieved, and must take appropriate corrective actions regarding such instances of non-compliance. Staff members, student-athletes and other individuals and groups representing, supporting or promoting the school’s athletic interests must comply with applicable bylaws and rules. The school is responsible for such compliance.
3.5.2.1 Eligibility of Student-Athletes. A member school must certify the eligibility of all student-athletes. The school must not permit a student-athlete to participate in interscholastic competition unless the student-athlete meets all eligibility requirements.

3.5.2.2 Cooperation with Association. A member school must fully cooperate in the investigation of any alleged violation of the bylaws or other rules of the Association. A school that refuses to permit the interview of any individual, to grant access to and inspection of pertinent records, to submit relevant information to the Association upon request, or otherwise interferes with or obstructs the investigation, will be in violation of this provision.

3.5.2.3 Attendance at Compliance Seminar. A member senior high/combination school must be represented by its principal and/or FHSAA representative and/or athletic director at periodic association approved compliance seminars as established by the Board of Directors.

3.5.2.4 Audits and Compliance Reviews. The FHSAA Office may review member schools to verify compliance with bylaws and other rules of the Association. A school selected for review must fully cooperate with the review. A school that refuses to grant access to and inspection of records under review or refuses to permit the interview of any individual responsible for maintaining those records, or otherwise interferes with or obstructs the review, will be in violation of this provision.

3.5.3 Insurance Coverage. Prior to participating in interscholastic athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student’s candidacy for an interscholastic team, each student athlete must be covered by athletic accident medical insurance, catastrophic accident insurance and catastrophic disability insurance. A member school must verify that athletic accident medical insurance coverage, catastrophic accident insurance coverage, and catastrophic disability insurance coverage is provided for each of its student-athletes. The school also must provide general liability insurance coverage for itself. The Board of Directors will establish the minimum limits for each type of insurance coverage.

3.5.4 Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct. A member school must establish policies that promote sportsmanship and ethical conduct in its interscholastic athletic programs. These policies must require student-athletes, coaches and all other individuals associated with the school’s interscholastic athletic programs to adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. The school must educate, on a continuing basis, all staff members, student-athletes, student body, and other individuals and groups representing, supporting or promoting the school’s athletic interests about these policies.

3.5.5 Acceptance of Decisions. A member school must accept in good conscience the decisions of the Association. A member school that, by any act or attitude, refuses to accept a decision of the Association, or holds in contempt or derision the decision, or permits or acquiesces in any contempt or derision on the part of any group or individual associated with the school, may be expelled or assigned to restricted membership. This provision does not deny a member school the right to due process within the Association as provided in these bylaws.

3.6 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

3.6.1 First-Time Membership. The principal of a school applying for first-time membership must submit a complete application packet as provided by this association. The application packet must be received in the FHSAA Office on or before a date established by the Board of Directors for the school to be considered for admission in the following school year.

3.6.1.1 Application Packet

3.6.1.1.1 Application Form. The application form must be obtained from the FHSAA Office. The form must be fully completed and signed by the principal.

3.6.1.1.2 Insurance Coverage. The principal must provide photocopies of insurance certificates showing that the school has purchased the insurance coverage required of member schools.

3.6.1.1.3 Financial Condition. The principal must document that the school can meet the financial obligations of membership. This documentation must be a photocopy of financial statements from the most recent period that have been independently audited or reviewed by a certified public accountant, and one of the following:

(a) A photocopy of the school’s most recent federal tax return;
(b) A photocopy of prior year operating revenues and expenses as reported to the governing body for the school; or
(c) A photocopy of operating budget revenues and expenses for the school that has been approved by the governing body.

3.6.1.2 Former Member. A former member school that applies to re-establish its membership must pay a re-admission fee, satisfy any outstanding obligations to the Association, and complete its application and provisional period, before it becomes eligible for re-election to full membership. These conditions will apply whether the school’s previous membership was terminated voluntarily or involuntarily.

3.6.2 Continuing Membership. The FHSAA Office will provide to each member school a form on which to continue its membership. The principal must complete, sign and return the form to the FHSAA Office by a date established by the Board of Directors. A school that does not submit the form by the deadline will be assessed a late fee. A school whose form is not received by a date established by the Board of Directors may not be considered for reelection to membership.

3.6.2.1 Insurance Coverage. A member school continuing its membership must provide photocopies of insurance certificates showing that the school has purchased the insurance coverage required of member schools.
3.6.2.2 **Good Standing.** A member school must be in good standing with the Association to continue its membership without restriction. Good standing requires the school to satisfy all outstanding obligations to the Association by the conclusion of the current school year.

3.7 **PROCEDURES FOR ADMITTANCE AND ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP**

3.7.1 **First-Time Admittance.** The Board of Directors, at its final meeting of each school year, will determine if a school applying for first-time membership in the Association will receive provisional admission in the following year. The FHSAA Office will recommend whether the school should be admitted.

3.7.2 **Election to Membership.** The Board of Directors, at its final meeting of each school year, will determine whether to elect to membership a school that has applied for first-time full membership or has applied to continue its membership.

3.7.2.1 **First-Time Membership.** A school that has completed its provisional period will be considered for first-time election to membership. The FHSAA Office will report to the Board of Directors whether the school has satisfied the conditions of its provisional period and meets fully the qualifications and conditions of membership. The FHSAA Office also will recommend whether the school should be elected to membership.

3.7.2.2 **Continuing Membership.** A member school that applies to continue its membership will be considered for reelection to membership. The FHSAA Office will report to the Board of Directors whether the school continues to meet fully the qualifications and conditions of membership and is a member in good standing. The FHSAA Office also will recommend whether the school should be reelected to membership.

3.7.2.3 **Private School Membership.** A private school that has completed its provisional period or applies to continue its membership, will have the option of membership by sport.

3.7.3 **Advance Notice of Unfavorable Recommendation.** The FHSAA Office will provide advance notice in writing to the principal of a school that will not be recommended for admittance, election or reelection to membership. The notice must contain the reason for the unfavorable recommendation. The principal will be advised that he or she may appear before the Board of Directors at the meeting to explain why the school should be admitted, elected or reelected to membership.

3.7.4 **Decision of Board of Directors.** The decision of the Board of Directors whether to admit, elect or reelect a school to membership must be by majority vote. The decision will be final.

3.7.4.1 **Reconsideration of Decision.** A school that is not admitted, elected or reelected to membership by the Board of Directors may request that the decision be reconsidered. The Board of Directors may reconsider the decision at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The school, however, will not be permitted to compete against member schools until it is admitted, elected or reelected to membership.

3.8 **MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES**

3.8.1 **Annual Dues.** The Board of Directors will determine the annual dues to be assessed each member school.

3.8.2 **Membership Fees.** The Board of Directors may assess additional membership fees to be paid by each member school.

3.8.3 **Payment.** Dues and fees are payable each year in accordance with the deadline set by the Board of Directors.

3.9 **PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

3.9.1 **Privileges of Full Membership.** A full member will enjoy all privileges of membership, unless otherwise specifically withheld according to these bylaws. Membership privileges include, but are not limited to, the privilege to compete in FHSAA championships; the privilege to vote in Association elections; the privilege to seek election to positions in the FHSAA governance structure and sub-structures; and the privilege to make application for and serve as host of multi-school events that require FHSAA Office approval.

3.9.1.1 **Other Schools Not Eligible for FHSAA Championships.** The following member schools are also not permitted the privilege of participation in FHSAA championships:

(a) Senior high schools during the application and provisional period;

(b) Middle/junior high schools, as well as home education cooperatives comprised entirely of students in middle/junior high school grade levels;

(c) Schools operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice;

(d) Schools contracted by the Department of Juvenile Justice to provide juvenile justice educational programs, if students attending those programs are permitted to represent the school in interscholastic competition; and

(e) Schools that provide housing to students but are not recognized as boarding schools by the Board of Directors, if students housed by the school are permitted to represent the school in interscholastic competition.
3.10 TERMINATION AND RESTRICTION OF MEMBERSHIP

3.10.1 Suspension. The FHSAA Office may suspend a member school that fails to meet one or more of the qualifications, conditions and/or obligations of membership until the deficiency is corrected.

3.10.1.1 Failure to Pay Dues and Fees. A member school that does not pay its dues and fees by the deadline set by the Board of Directors will be suspended from membership. The suspended school may be reinstated at any time prior to December 31 by paying its dues and fees, and an additional reactivation fee. Membership is terminated if the suspended school fails to pay in full its dues and fees by December 31.

3.10.2 Expulsion. The Board of Directors may expel a member school that fails to meet one or more of the qualifications, conditions and/or obligations of membership, or fails to support and adhere to the purposes and policies of the Association.

3.10.2.1 Restricted Membership. The Board of Directors, instead of expulsion, may restrict one, more or all of the membership privileges of the school. The school remains a member even if all of its membership privileges are restricted.

3.10.3 Cessation of Privileges. All privileges of a member school will cease upon any termination of its membership.

3.11 GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

3.11.1 Method of Division. The Board of Directors will divide the Association’s membership along existing county lines into four contiguous and compact administrative sections, each containing an equal or nearly equal number of member schools, to ensure equitable representation in the FHSAA governance structure and substructures.

CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 4

Organization and Governance

4.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

4.1.1 Form of Government. The FHSAA is a representative democracy.

4.1.2 Governance. These bylaws, administrative policies and other regulations, as well as Florida Statutes pertaining to the FHSAA or interscholastic athletics in general, govern the Association.

4.1.2.1 Constitutional Bylaws. Constitutional bylaws establish the name, purpose, membership requirements and structure of the Association, as well as the more important principles for the conduct of interscholastic athletic programs. Only the Representative Assembly may adopt or amend constitutional bylaws.

4.1.2.2 Operating Bylaws. Operating bylaws govern the responsibilities of school administrations in conducting interscholastic athletic programs, the obligations of and relationships between schools in interscholastic contests, the eligibility of student-athletes, the penalties for rules infractions, and the procedures for appeals. Only the Representative Assembly may adopt or amend operating bylaws.

4.1.2.3 Administrative Policies. Administrative policies are adopted by the Board of Directors and are the basis for the regulations that govern the various FHSAA programs. Only the Board of Directors may adopt or amend administrative policies.

4.1.3 Florida Sunshine Law. All FHSAA meetings are conducted in compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law (§ 286.011, F.S.). All records are subject to the Florida Public Records Law (§ 119.01, F.S.).

4.1.3.1 Teleconference Meetings. On reasonable notice, the President of the Association may conduct a meeting of the Board of Directors by teleconference for routine administrative action or for emergency action. The teleconference shall be stenographically recorded and shall be conducted in such a manner that any member of the public shall have access to the telephone conference by telephone. The notice of such meeting shall provide the information necessary to allow public access by telephone to the telephone conference meeting.

4.1.4 Florida Statutes. The FHSAA cannot waive any provision of Florida Statutes.

4.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS

4.2.1 Year of Service. A person who serves on a body in the FHSAA governance structure has served one year of his/her term of service if he/she was elected or appointed in advance of the first regularly scheduled meeting of the body in a school year. A person who is appointed to fill a vacant seat on a body after it has held at least one meeting in a school year will not be considered to have served a full year.
4.3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.3.1 Composition. The Board of Directors is composed of the following sixteen (16) members (§ 1006.20(4)(a), F.S.):

(a) Four public school FHSAA Representatives, one elected from each administrative section;
(b) Four non-public school FHSAA Representatives, one elected from each administrative section;
(c) Two district school superintendents elected by the Florida Association of District School Superintendents – one from administrative sections 1 or 2, and one from administrative sections 3 or 4;
(d) Two district school board members elected by the Florida School Boards Association – one from administrative sections 1 or 2, and one from administrative sections 3 or 4;
(e) Three persons appointed at large by the Commissioner of Education. One must be appointed from administrative sections 1 or 2. One must be appointed from administrative sections 3 or 4. The third must help balance the Board of Directors for racial diversity or state population trends, or both, and may be appointed from any administrative section; and
(f) The Commissioner of Education or his/her designee from the Department of Education executive staff.

4.3.1.1 Restrictions. A district school superintendent and district school board member from the same public school district cannot serve on the Board of Directors at the same time.

4.3.1.2 Quorum. A quorum of the Board of Directors consists of nine members.

4.3.1.3 Passage. A majority of votes cast by board members voting is required to pass any measure.

4.3.2 Duties and Responsibilities. The Board of Directors:

(a) Adopts and amends administrative policies and regulations to govern the Association’s programs;
(b) Employs the Association’s Executive Director;
(c) Approves and oversees the Association’s budget;
(d) Assesses annual membership dues and other fees;
(e) Provides strategic planning for the Association;
(f) Authorizes statewide competitions that may or may not lead to state championships and establishes regulations governing those competitions;
(g) Serves as the highest and final appellate authority of the Association.

4.3.2.1 Budget and Audit. The Board of Directors at its final regularly scheduled meeting of a school year approves a preliminary budget for the next school year. It approves a final budget for the school year at its first regularly scheduled meeting of that school year. The Board of Directors provides for an annual audit of all accounts by a certified public accountant and the report is made available upon request.

4.3.2.2 Appellate Authority. The Board of Directors interprets and renders a final decision on all questions and appeals that result from the Association’s supervision of interscholastic athletic programs. It has administrative responsibility and rule making authority for the Association’s appellate branch. As such, the Board:

(a) Reviews, at the Executive Director’s request, the decision of a Sectional Appeals Committee or the Infraction Appeals Committee that directly conflicts with decisions of other Sectional Appeals Committees or the Board of Directors on the same question or rule, or that in the Executive Director’s opinion conflicts with the rules of the Association or has a great effect on the proper administration of interscholastic athletic programs throughout the state; and
(b) Renders at the Executive Director’s request an advisory opinion addressing issues as provided by rule.

4.3.2.3 Delegation of Duties and Responsibilities. The Board of Directors, when it deems appropriate, may assign for recommendation specific matters to committees that it creates for those purposes. The Board of Directors will make a final determination based on the committee’s recommendation.

4.3.3 Meetings. The Board of Directors meets a minimum of five times each school year. It sets the date and place of each meeting. The president may call additional meetings if needed.

4.3.4 Selection/Term of Service

4.3.4.1 Selection. Each constituent group selects its representatives to the Board of Directors. The FHSAA Representatives who represent each administrative section are elected by a majority of votes cast by all school representatives within the administrative section.

4.3.4.2 Term of Service. The term of service for a board member is three school years, beginning July 1 following his/her election or appointment. A board member may be reelected or re-appointed to a second three-year term, but cannot serve more than a maximum of six consecutive school years. These term limits, however, do not apply to the Commissioner of Education or his/her designee, whose term is unlimited.

4.3.5 Officers. The officers of the Board of Directors are a president and a president-elect. Each serves a term of one school year, which runs concurrent with one year of his/her term of service on the board. Neither can serve consecutive like terms.

4.3.5.1 President. The president presides over all meetings of the Board of Directors and performs other duties of the office. The president’s term of service begins on July 1 following a one-year term of service as president-elect.
4.3.5.2 President-Elect. The president-elect is elected by the Board from among its members at its last regularly scheduled meeting of each school year. To be eligible for election, the president-elect must have been elected or appointed to a second term and have no fewer than two years remaining in his/her second term of office. The president-elect performs the duties of the president if he/she is absent or unable to act. The president-elect’s term of service begins on July 1 following his/her election to the office. The president-elect becomes president on July 1 of the next school year.

4.3.5.3 Vacancies.
(a) If the president vacates the office before the end of his/her term, the president-elect will serve as president for the remainder of the vacated term and then as president for the term to which he/she was elected.
(b) If the president-elect vacates the office before the end of his/her term, the Board of Directors elects a new president-elect during its next regularly scheduled meeting.
(c) If both the president and president-elect vacate the offices before their terms end, the board elects an acting president and acting president-elect for the remainder of the school year at its next regularly scheduled meeting. A new president and president-elect for the following school year then will be elected at the final regularly scheduled meeting of the year.

4.4 REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY
4.4.1 Composition. The Representative Assembly is composed of the following delegates (§ 1006.20(5)(b), F.S.):
(a) An equal number of FHSAA Representatives from each of the four administrative sections, representing traditional public schools, private schools, middle schools, charter schools and home education cooperatives;
(b) Four district school superintendents elected by the Florida Association of District School Superintendents – one from each administrative section;
(c) Four district school board members elected by the Florida School Boards Association – one from each administrative section; and
(d) The Commissioner of Education or his/her designee from the Department of Education executive staff.

4.4.1.1 Diversity Appointments. The Board of Directors may appoint additional delegates if necessary to ensure racial and gender diversity in the Representative Assembly. There must be an equal number of appointees from each administrative section.

4.4.1.2 Delegate Restrictions. No member of the Board of Directors other than the Commissioner of Education or his/her designee can serve as a delegate to the Representative Assembly.

4.4.1.3 Quorum. A quorum of the Representative Assembly consists of one more than half of its member delegates.

4.4.1.4 Passage. A two-thirds majority of votes cast by delegates present and voting is required to pass any proposed amendment.

4.4.2 Duties and Responsibilities. The Representative Assembly’s only duty and responsibility is to act on proposed amendments to the bylaws of the Association that are submitted for its consideration. The assembly cannot propose any amendment for its own consideration.

4.4.2.1 Meetings. The Representative Assembly meets one time each school year. The Board of Directors sets the date and place of each meeting. The president of the Board of Directors can call additional meetings if needed.

4.4.3 Selection/Term of Service.
4.4.3.1 Selection. Each constituent group selects its delegates to the Representative Assembly. The FHSAA Representatives delegates from each administrative section or legislative division, if applicable, are elected by a majority of votes cast by all school representatives within the administrative section or legislative division.

4.4.3.2 Term of Service. The term of service for a Representative Assembly delegate is two school years. A delegate may be reelected or re-appointed to two additional two-year terms, but cannot serve more than a maximum of six consecutive school years. These term limits, however, do not apply to the Commissioner of Education or his/her designee.

4.4.4 Officers. The officers of the Representative Assembly are a chairperson and a vice chairperson. The assembly elects both from among its members at the beginning of its meeting. Both may be reelected to their offices at consecutive meetings if they continue to serve as delegates to the assembly.

4.4.4.1 Chairperson. The chairperson presides over the meeting of the Representative Assembly at which he/she is elected.

4.4.4.2 Vice Chairperson. The vice chairperson performs the duties of the chairperson if he/she is absent or unable to act.

4.5 SECTIONAL APPEALS COMMITTEES
4.5.1 Composition. There will be one Sectional Appeals Committee in each of the four administrative sections. Each committee will consist of the following seven (7) members:
(a) Two members representing public schools elected by the public school FHSAA Representatives in the section;
(b) One member representing non-public schools elected by the non-public school FHSAA Representatives in the section;
(c) One member representing public school districts selected on a rotating basis, when possible, by the Florida Association of District School Superintendents from among district school superintendents, or by the Florida School Boards Association from among district school board members in the section;
(d) One member representing recognized non-public school accrediting associations selected by the Florida Association of Academic Non-public Schools from among district-, regional- or school-based non-public school administrators or governing board members in the section;
(e) One at-large member from an under-represented gender and/or race appointed by the Board of Directors from among district-, regional- or school-based administrators in the section; and
(f) One attorney from among attorneys living in the section, who within the last five years has been a member in good standing of the Florida Bar or the bar of any other state in the union.

4.5.1.1 Restrictions. No member of the Board of Directors can serve on a Sectional Appeals Committee.

4.5.1.2 Criteria for Board-Appointed Members

4.5.1.2.1 At-Large Member. If 60 percent or more of the schools within a section are public, the Board of Directors must appoint a public school administrator as the at-large member. If less than 60 percent of the schools within the section are public, the Board of Directors must appoint a non-public school administrator as the at-large member.

4.5.1.2.2 Attorney. The attorney cannot be connected with any member school, public school district or non-public school accrediting organization, or represent student-athletes, coaches or athletic directors in any manner.

4.5.1.3 Committee Officers

4.5.1.3.1 Chairperson. The attorney serves as chairperson. He/she presides over all meetings of the committee and is the only member who may have contact with the FHSAA staff relative to any case pending before the committee.

4.5.1.3.2 Vice Chairperson. The committee elects a vice chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of each school year. The vice chairperson presides over meetings of the committee when the chairperson is absent or unable to act.

4.5.1.3.3 Vacancies. If the chairperson vacates the office before the end of the term of service, the Board of Directors will appoint a replacement during its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the vice chairperson vacates the office before the term of service, the committee will elect a new vice chairperson during its next regularly scheduled meeting.

4.5.1.4 Conflict of Interest. A member of a Sectional Appeals Committee who is associated with a school that files an appeal to the committee must disqualify himself or herself from hearing the case to avoid any conflict of interest.

4.5.1.5 Quorum. A quorum of a Sectional Appeals Committee will be four members. The Executive Director will appoint a qualified person or persons to serve as substitute members to ensure the presence of a quorum when it is known a committee member or members will not be present.

4.5.1.6 Passage. A majority of votes cast by committee members voting will be required to pass any measure.

4.5.2 Duties and Responsibilities. Each Sectional Appeals Committee will:

(a) Decide requests by schools seeking exceptions to bylaws and regulations of the Association;
(b) Decide undue hardship eligibility cases that are filed by schools on behalf of students; and
(c) Decide appeals of decisions rendered by the Executive Director or his/her designee that are filed by member schools. The Sectional Appeals Committee can only sustain, modify or overturn the decision.

4.5.2.1 Florida Statutes. A Sectional Appeals Committee will not have the authority to waive any provision of Florida Statutes.

4.5.2.2 Meetings. Each Sectional Appeals Committee will meet as needed to carry out its duties and responsibilities nine times each school year. These nine meetings must be held the months of August, September, October, November, December, January, February, March and April on such dates as adopted by the Board of Directors.

4.5.3 Selection/Term of Service

4.5.3.1 Selection. Each constituent group will select its representatives to the four Sectional Appeals Committees. The FHSAA Office will conduct an election in each administrative section to determine the school representatives who will serve on the committee. All school representatives within the section may vote in this election.

4.5.3.2 Term of Service. The term of service for a member of each Sectional Appeals Committee will be three school years. A committee member may be reelected to a second three-year term, but cannot serve more than a maximum of six consecutive school years.
4.6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

4.6.1 Employment. The Executive Director is the Association’s chief executive officer. The Board of Directors selects and employs the Executive Director by written contract for a stated period of time. This contract of employment may be renewed under conditions that are mutually satisfactory to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. No person, however, can be employed as Executive Director beyond the end of the school year in which he/she reaches the age of 70.

4.6.1.1 Staff. The Executive Director is authorized to employ additional persons as needed to efficiently conduct the business of the Association. Such additional persons shall report directly to the Executive Director or his/her designee.

4.6.2 Duties and Responsibilities. The Executive Director:

(a) Manages and directs the affairs of the Association;
(b) Administers and enforces FHSAA rules and impose sanctions when he/she finds that violations have occurred;
(c) Presents an operating budget to the Board of Directors each year for approval, acts as custodian of all Association funds, and updates the Board of Directors on the Association’s financial status at each of its meetings;
(d) Waives bylaws in order to comply with changes to Florida Statutes;
(e) Prepares and issues to schools all necessary publications, forms and other materials, including but not limited to:
   1. Annual Calendar of events and activities;
   2. Handbook of Bylaws and Policies;
   3. Current Membership List and Membership Directory; and
(f) Receives and checks all reports submitted by schools;
(g) Rules on the eligibility of all student-athletes who participate in interscholastic athletic programs in the sports recognized by the Association;
(h) Calls upon the Board of Directors for advice and assistance, and performs such duties as may be necessary and expedient;
(i) Keeps a record of all meetings of the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors, Sectional Appeals Committees and Infractions Appeal Committee;
(j) Mediates controversies between schools at their request;
(k) Represents, or designates a representative for, the Association in mediation of student eligibility issues;
(l) Refers to the Board of Directors for its review any decisions of Sectional Appeals Committees that he/she believes directly conflict with decisions of other Sectional Appeals Committees, of the Infractions Appeal Committee or of the Board of Directors or the same question or rule, or that, in his/her opinion, conflicts with the rules of the Association or has a great effect on the proper administration of interscholastic athletic programs throughout the state;
(m) Approves and supervises all tournaments, meets and contest schedules under the rules of the Association;
(n) Refers any of his/her decisions or rulings to the appropriate Sectional Appeals Committee, the Infractions Appeal Committee or the Board of Directors upon the request of a school;
(o) Oversees and directs audits and compliance reviews; (see Bylaw 3.5.2.4);
(p) Performs any other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

4.6.2.1 Emergency Power to Grant Provisional Eligibility. The Executive Director’s office may grant provisional eligibility; such as, but not limited to, sub-varsity participation, to a student-athlete who suddenly becomes ineligible if, in its opinion:

(a) The circumstances that cause the student-athlete to be ineligible are of a sudden and extraordinary nature and are completely beyond the control of the student-athlete, his/her parents, or school; and
(b) The student-athlete will miss all or most of the sport season in which he/she participates if required to wait for the opportunity for a hearing before a Sectional Appeals Committee.

4.6.2.1.1 Period of Provisional Eligibility. Any period of provisional eligibility granted to a student-athlete will end with the next regularly scheduled Sectional Appeals Committee meeting, during which his/her undue hardship waiver request will be considered. The student-athlete will immediately become ineligible for further competition if the Sectional Appeals Committee does not grant the waiver. The school that permitted the student-athlete to participate during the period of provisional eligibility, however, will not be penalized unless it is determined that provisional eligibility was granted on the basis of erroneous information provided by the student-athlete, his/her parents, or school.

4.6.2.2 Power to Mediate Student Eligibility. After a sectional appeals decision has been rendered, the Executive Director may resolve issues solely related to a student’s eligibility through mediation in accordance with these Bylaws. In this mediation the student athlete will be represented by his/her member school.
4.6.2.3 Compliance Reviews and Investigative Procedures. The Executive Director or his/her designee is authorized to assign individuals to investigate matters of student eligibility and/or bylaw/policy violations. The procedures outlined in Policy 39 (Policy on Investigative Procedures), which shall be in full compliance with § 1006.20(2)(g), F.S., will be followed for such investigations. Information and evidence obtained by an investigator will be submitted to the Executive Director or his/her designee for determination of eligibility and compliance. A determination of ineligibility or violation of bylaws/policies must be made in writing, setting forth the findings of fact and specific violation upon which the decision was based.

4.7 ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES

4.7.1 Elections

4.7.1.1 Positions Held by School Representatives. The FHSAA Office will conduct elections for school representative positions on the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors and Sectional Appeals Committees at such time as adopted by the Board of Directors each year in each administrative section as follows:

4.7.1.1.1 Declaration of Candidacy. The FHSAA Office will notify FHSAA Representatives of elections that must be held, and will place on the Internet a declaration of candidacy form for each race. An FHSAA Representative who wants to run in a particular race and is eligible to do so must download, complete and fax to the FHSAA Office the form for that race. The form must be completed, signed and received in the FHSAA Office by the deadline listed on the form to be valid. An FHSAA Representative who is not a principal must have the form signed by his/her principal granting him/her permission to run. An FHSAA Representative who wants to run in more than one race may do so, but must file the appropriate form for each race.

4.7.1.1.2 General Election. The FHSAA Office will provide each FHSAA Representative of each constituency group, who is eligible to vote in the general election, a ballot for that constituency group. The ballot will list the names of all candidates in each race. The school representative may vote for only one candidate in each race, and will be allowed 5 business days from the date the ballot is first provided to complete and submit the ballot. The candidate in each race, of each constituency group, receiving the majority of votes cast will be the winner.

4.7.1.1.2.1 Provisional Member School Representatives. The FHSAA Representative of a school that is in its provisional period of membership is not eligible to run for election.

4.7.1.1.3 Run-Off Election. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the general election, the FHSAA Office will provide to each FHSAA Representative who is eligible to vote in the run-off election a second ballot. The run-off ballot will list the names of the candidates who received the most and second-most votes in the general election. The FHSAA Representative may vote for only one candidate in the race, and will be allowed 5 business days from the date the ballot is first provided to complete and submit the ballot. The candidate receiving the majority of votes cast will be the winner.

4.7.1.1.4 Tie in Elections. The Board of Directors, by majority vote during its final regularly scheduled meeting of the school year, will determine a winner in any election that ends in a tie. Each candidate shall have the opportunity to submit a resume to the Board of Directors for its consideration.

4.7.1.2 Positions Held by District School Superintendents and District School Board Members. The Florida Association of District School Superintendents and the Florida School Boards Association will determine the method for electing their representatives to the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors and Sectional Appeals Committees and will conduct those elections.

4.7.2 Vacancies

4.7.2.1 Positions Held by School Representatives. The Board of Directors will appoint an eligible person to fill a school representative position on the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors or Sectional Appeals Committees when the person holding the position vacates before the end of his/her term of service. The person appointed to the position will serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

4.7.2.2 Positions Held by District School Superintendents and District School Board Members. The Florida Association of District School Superintendents and the Florida School Boards Association will determine the method for replacing their respective representatives on the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors and Sectional Appeals Committees when the person holding the position vacates before the end of his/her term of service. The person appointed to the position will serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

4.7.2.3 Positions Held by At-Large Appointees of Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner of Education will appoint an eligible person to fill an at-large position appointed by the Commissioner of Education when the person holding the position vacates before the end of his/her term of service. The person appointed to the position will serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

4.7.2.4 Determining Year of Service for Person Appointed to Fill Unexpired Term. A person appointed to fill a position on the Representative Assembly, Board of Directors or Sectional Appeals Committees for the remainder of an unexpired term is considered to have served a full year only if he/she was appointed prior to and attended the first meeting of the year.
CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 5

Amendments

5.1 SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS

5.1.1 Submission. Each member school FHSAA Representative, the Board of Directors acting as a whole or as members acting individually, any advisory committee to be established by the Association acting as a whole, and the Association’s Executive Director are empowered to propose amendments to the Bylaws. Any other individual may propose an amendment by securing the sponsorship of any of the aforementioned individuals or bodies. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted to the Executive Director by such date as adopted by the Board of Directors for consideration by the Representative Assembly. All proposed amendments received by the deadline shall be submitted by the Executive Director directly to the Representative Assembly for its consideration.

5.2 ACTION BY REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

5.2.1 Action. The Representative Assembly shall consider, adopt, or reject any proposed amendments to these Bylaws. The Representative Assembly may not, in and of itself, as a body be allowed to propose any amendment for its own consideration. Any revision to a proposed amendment by the Representative Assembly shall require the written authorization of its original sponsor(s). Such revisions shall require a majority of the votes cast by delegates present at the Assembly.

5.2.2 Passage. A two-thirds majority of the votes cast by delegates present is required for passage of any proposal. A vote on the final passage of any proposal shall be by roll call or signed ballot with the vote cast by each delegate reported to the member schools.

5.3 EFFECTIVE DATE OF AMENDMENTS

5.3.1 Effective Date. An amendment shall become effective on the first day of July following its adoption unless otherwise specified.

OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 6

Authority and Responsibilities of the Principal

6.1 DEFINITION AND RESPONSIBILITY

6.1.1 Responsibilities. The principal’s responsibilities include the following:

(a) Sign membership renewal application.
(b) Assure that all contracts for interscholastic athletic competition have been duly executed, including those entered into by a predecessor.
(c) Enforce the Association’s bylaws and policies in his/her school.
(d) Maintain institutional control of all phases of interscholastic athletic activities within a member school, including the activities of its student-athletes, booster clubs, parent groups, etc.
(e) Keep on file all records required by this Association for the current school year.
(f) Keep each of the following, but not limited to, required forms on file for at least seven (7) years:
   1. EL2 – Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation; and
   2. EL3 – Consent and Release from Liability Certificate; and
   3. AT18 – Post Head Injury/Concussion Initial Return to Participation (if applicable).
(g) Keep each of the following, but not limited to, additional forms (if applicable) until the student completes the terminal grade of the school:
   1. EL4 – Registration Form for Youth Exchange, Other International Student or Immigrant Student;
   2. EL7 – Registration Form for Home Education Student;
   3. EL7V – Verification of Student Registration with Public School District Home Education Office;
   4. EL12 – Registration Form for Non-Member Private School Student;
   5. EL12V – Verification Form for Non-Member Private School Students;
   6. EL14 – Verification of Student Controlled Open Enrollment Option with Public School District;
   7. GA4 – Affidavit of Compliance with the Policies on Athletic Recruiting & Non-Traditional Student Participation.
6.1.2 **Delegation of Responsibilities.** The principal may delegate his/her duties as the official representative to this Association to another member of his/her staff. This does not relieve the principal of the obligation to ensure that these bylaws and policies are adhered to.

6.2 **CERTIFICATION OF STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

6.2.1 **Eligibility Reports.** The principal or designee must annually submit all eligibility reports utilizing the official Association process as approved by the Executive Director.

6.2.1.1 **Accuracy.** The principal or designee shall certify that the information provided to the Association is accurate, and that the students named in the report are eligible in accordance with these bylaws.

6.2.2 **Principal is Unavailable.** An assistant principal designated by the principal or the school’s representative to the Association, if other than the principal, may electronically submit eligibility reports or sign eligibility correspondence if the principal is unavailable, provided that the circumstances are noted on the report or correspondence.

6.3 **RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS**

6.3.1 **General Principle.** Recruitment or attempted recruitment of students for athletic purposes is an act of unsportsmanlike conduct and is expressly forbidden.

6.3.2 **Definition of Recruiting.** Recruiting is the use of undue influence or special inducement by anyone associated with the school in an attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend or remain at that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.

6.3.2.1 **“Undue Influence and Special Inducement” Defined.** The Board of Directors shall establish and maintain a policy which defines undue influence and special inducement; lists examples of violations; establishes penalties; and regulates academic recruitment and financial aid programs. Refer to Policy on Athletic Recruiting for details.

6.3.3 **Liability for Recruitment.** A member school is responsible for any violation of this bylaw and/or the recruiting policies committed by any person associated with the school, including the principal, assistant principals, athletic director, coaches, teachers, any other staff members or employees, students, parents, or any organizations having connection to the school, such as booster clubs. The member school is also responsible for a violation committed by any third party under the direction of the school or anyone associated with it.

**OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 7**

**Sportsmanship**

7.1 **SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES**

7.1.1 **Sportsmanship Requirement.** Players, coaches, administrators, spectators, contest officials and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with a member school shall practice and promote the highest standards of sportsmanship and ethics before, during and after any interscholastic event.

7.1.2 **Principal’s Duty.** It shall be the responsibility of each member school principal to exercise control over all individuals to the extent necessary to ensure safety and fair play for all participants and adherence with these standards.

7.2 **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

7.2.1 **“Unsportsmanlike Conduct” Defined.** A student who commits an act of malicious and hateful nature toward a contest official, an opponent or any other person attending an athletic contest shall be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, profanity, striking or threatening a contest official; physical contact with an opponent which is beyond the normal scope of competition; spitting on a contest official or opponent; directing gender, racial or ethnic slurs toward a contest official, an opponent or any other person attending an athletic contest; or other such acts deemed to be unacceptable conduct according to the principal of the member school the student attends or this Association.

7.2.1.1 **Penalty for Students.** Students who are found to have committed unsportsmanlike conduct will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletic competition for a penalty period up to one or more calendar years.

7.2.1.2 **Restoring Eligibility.** The Executive Director, the Sectional Appeals Committee, or the Board of Directors on appeal, may restore the student’s eligibility prior to the end of the penalty period, when in the discretion of the Executive Director, the student has been properly disciplined and the student signs a written statement of his/her intention to comply with these standards in the future.

7.2.2 **Executive Director’s Powers.** The Executive Director shall have full authority to investigate allegations and incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct and invoke penalties against member schools or individuals involved.
7.2.3 Disqualifications. The disqualification from participation of a coach or student, or removal of a spectator or other representative of a member school due to unsportsmanlike conduct during an interscholastic event will subject the school to the appropriate penalties.

7.2.4 Removal by Coach or Administrator. The removal of a team or individual competitor by a coach or administrator because of their dissatisfaction with contest officials or other conditions of the contest shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will subject the school to the appropriate penalties.

7.2.5 Unsportsmanlike Conduct at Tournaments, Meets, or Contests. The Executive Director, in the event of unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a representative of the member school during an athletic tournament, meet, or contest, shall have the authority to deny further participation at said tournament, meet, or contest, to such team or individual.

7.2.6 Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Human Growth Hormone, Steroids, Performance-Enhancing Drugs, or Schedule 3 Narcotics. The use of human growth hormone, steroids, performance-enhancing drugs, or schedule 3 narcotics by a student is considered to be an act of unsportsmanlike conduct, and as such the student shall be ineligible for competition until such time as medical evidence can be presented that the student’s system is free of human growth hormone, steroids, performance-enhancing drugs, or schedule 3 narcotics.

7.2.6.1 Any student-athlete under the care of a pediatric endocrinologist or an appropriately trained specialist being treated with idiopathic short stature (ISS) as outline by the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) may appeal for exemption and shall provide appropriate medical documentation to the principal prior to competition.

7.2.6.2 Any student-athlete, under the direct care of a physician, who has been prescribed to use any hormone replacement drug shall provide the appropriate medical documentation to the principal prior to competition.

7.2.7 Crowd Control. Any member school whose principal commits unsportsmanlike conduct or whose principal fails to control the conduct of the student body, faculty, and spectators shall be subject to the appropriate penalties, which may include expulsion from membership in this Association.

OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 8

Interscholastic Contests

8.1 INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTEST

8.1.1 Definition of Interscholastic Contest. An interscholastic contest is any competition between organized teams or individuals of different schools in a sport recognized by this Association, and therefore shall be subject to all regulations pertaining to such contests.

8.1.2 Protests. Any decision made by a contest official shall not be contested. The decisions of the contest officials are final.

8.2 RULES OF COMPETITION

8.2.1 NFHS Rules. Unless waived by at least a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, the rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), or those approved by it, shall be the official rules for interscholastic athletic competition in all sports.

8.3 SCHOOLS WITH WHICH CONTESTS MAY BE HELD

8.3.1 Eligible Contestants. Member schools may only engage in interscholastic contests with the following:

(a) Schools which are members of this Association;

(b) Florida schools which are not members of the FHSAA (Non-FHSAA member school), provided:

1. The Non-FHSAA member school must verify that athletic medical, catastrophic accident and catastrophic disability insurance coverage is provided for each of its student athletes (Policy 8). The Non-FHSAA member school must provide general liability insurance for itself (Policy 8). The minimum limits for each type of insurance coverage must be the same as those established for FHSAA member schools (Policy 8). The Non-FHSAA member school principal, or head of school, must provide the member school with copies of certificates of coverage for each of these various insurance types, verifying that the Non-FHSAA member school has purchased the insurance coverage required (Bylaw 3.5.3 and 3.6.1.1.2); and

2. An FHSAA game/contest contract (see Bylaw 8.4.1) has been fully executed by all participating schools; and

3. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, meet the eligibility criteria listed in Florida Statutes for student athletes of FHSAA member schools(§ 1006.15, F.S.); and

4. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, have appropriate insurance as specified in § 1006.16, F.S.; and
5. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, must satisfactorily pass a medical evaluation as specified in § 1006.20(2)(c), F.S., and

6. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, must have on file a signed consent and release form (waiver of liability and parent permission to participate) as specified in § 1006.20(2)(k), F.S., and

7. Non-FHSAA member schools must agree to abide by the NFHS and FHSAA rules for the contest or event being conducted (Bylaw 8.2.1).

(c) Out-of-state schools which are members in good standing of associations that are members of the NFHS or affiliate members of the NFHS and regulate interscholastic athletics for schools within their state. They must follow comparable eligibility guidelines and the season for the sport involved must run concurrently with that of the Florida High School Athletic Association.

(d) Out-of-State schools which are not members of the NFHS or affiliate members of the NFHS may be contracted by participating FHSAA member schools, provided:

1. An FHSAA game/contest contract (see Bylaw 8.4.1) has been fully executed by all participating schools; and

2. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, meet the eligibility criteria listed in Florida Statutes for student athletes of FHSAA member schools (§ 1006.15, F.S.) and FHSAA Bylaws; and

3. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, have appropriate insurance as specified in § 1006.16, F.S.; and

4. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, must satisfactorily pass a medical evaluation as specified in § 1006.20(2)(c), F.S., and

5. All student-athletes in the Non-FHSAA member school, who will be competing in the contest or event, must have on file a signed consent and release form (waiver of liability and parent permission to participate) as specified in § 1006.20(2)(k), F.S., and

6. Non-FHSAA member schools must agree to abide by the NFHS and FHSAA rules for the contest or event being conducted (Bylaw 8.2.1), and

7. Multi-Team events and tournaments must meet the provision of Policy 7.

(e) Member schools shall not participate in athletic contests or contractually obligate themselves to participate in any tournament, meet or contest in which any schools which do not meet these criteria are scheduled to participate, or with non-school teams, groups or club teams.

(f) Competition involving middle schools (grades 6-8), combination middle school programs (grades 6-8) and junior high schools (grades 7-9) must be between middle schools, combination middle school programs and junior high schools, respectively, as well as between middle schools and combination middle school programs.

8.4 CONTRACTS

8.4.1 General Principles. Contracts are required for all interscholastic athletic contests involving member schools and/or non-FHSAA member Florida schools, excluding the Florida High School State Championship Series. The designated FHSAA Representative must execute such contracts.

8.4.1.1 Forms. In order to be valid, the contracts shall be executed utilizing the official Association process, as approved by the Executive Director.

8.4.1.2 Time Constraints. Member schools may not enter into a contract which purports to bind those schools for interscholastic athletic competition longer than three (3) years from the date on which it was executed.

8.4.1.3 Contract Terms. Details must be specific. Definite dates, sites, financial arrangements, process for selecting officials, and other items of interest to both parties should be specified, including if the contract is a multi-year home and away contract. All parties agree to have the appropriate limits of catastrophic and liability insurance coverage.

8.4.2 Cancellation of Contract. Contracts may be canceled by mutual consent any time at least seven (7) days prior to the event.

8.4.2.1 Disputed Cancellation. If the parties fail to reach agreement on contract cancellation, the matter will be referred to the Executive Director for adjudication.

8.4.2.1.1 Appealing of Decision. If the Executive Director’s decision is appealed, the decision of the Sectional Appeals Committee or Board of Directors shall be final.

8.4.2.1.2 Failure to Comply. Non-compliance with the final decision by either principal shall subject the school to a penalty, which may include expulsion.

8.4.2.2 Use of Ineligible Athletes. Contracts between member schools shall be subject to cancellation whenever either party proposes to allow the use of ineligible students. Member schools are prohibited from competing with schools which propose to use ineligible students. FHSAA member schools will be held accountable for complying with FHSAA bylaws, policies, rules and regulations, when competing with non-FHSAA member schools.
8.4.2.3 Suspended or Expelled Schools. When a member school is placed on suspension probation or expelled from membership, all contracts which the principal has executed shall be null and void. The contract may be renewed when the penalized school’s punishment has ended if those dates have not yet been filled.

8.4.3 Failure to Meet Contractual Obligations. Any school which does not fulfill the terms of any valid contract or enters into an invitational tournament and does not compete until elimination shall be subjected to a financial penalty at the discretion of the Executive Director.

8.5 CATEGORIZATION OF SPORTS

8.5.1 Sports May be Categorized as Recognized or Sanctioned. All sports which are not recognized or sanctioned by the Board of Directors shall be considered club sports and are not under the jurisdiction of this Association.

8.5.1.1 “Recognized” Sports. Recognized sports require that participants abide by Association bylaws, policies, rules and contest regulations with regard to student eligibility and sportsmanship in interscholastic contests.

8.5.1.2 “Sanctioned” Sports. Sanctioned sports may require participants to adhere to stricter guidelines established by the Board of Directors. Sanctioned sports may be eligible for the Florida High School State Championship Series status pursuant to Bylaw 8.8.1.

8.6 PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

8.6.1 Girls on Boys’ Teams. Girls may play on a boys’ team in a sport if the school does not sponsor a girls’ team in that sport.

8.6.2 Boys on Girls’ Teams. Boys may not participate on a girls’ team in any sport if the school’s overall boys’ athletic program equals or exceeds the girls’ overall athletic program.

8.6.3 Mixed Gender Teams. Team sports that have both boys and girls are required to compete in the boys division in that sport.

8.6.4 Florida High School State Championship Series. In an individual sport, girls may not participate on boys’ teams in the Florida High School State Championship Series when a sport is offered in the Florida High School State Championship Series for girls.

8.7 FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

8.7.1 Florida High School State Championship Series. For the purpose of determining the official state champion(s) in those sports that are recognized or sanctioned by the Board of Directors, this Association may conduct a Florida High School State Championship Series.

8.7.1.1 Determining Which Schools Are Eligible. Participation is limited to member senior high schools, combination schools and home education co-ops only. This excludes member middle or junior high schools and non-member senior high schools.

8.7.1.2 Determining Which Sports Are Eligible. The Board of Directors shall determine which sports will conduct a Florida High School State Championship Series and shall set the terms and conditions of each series.

8.7.1.3 Commitment Form. Member schools choosing to participate in the Florida High School State Championship Series must complete and submit to the Association a binding “Commitment Form.”

8.7.2 Disbursement of Funds Raised. Member schools which host a Florida High School State Championship Series shall disperse funds in accordance with conditions established by the Board of Directors. Failure to do so will result in restrictive probation for all sports until proper remuneration is made.

8.7.3 Officials Assignments. The assignment of officials to officiate during the Florida High School State Championship Series will be made by the assignment officer of the local association at the district level and by the FHSAA Office at the regional and state level. The officials assigned to these contests are independent contractors and are not employees of the local associations or the FHSAA.

8.8 SEASON LIMITATIONS

8.8.1 General Principles. The Board of Directors shall adopt season limitations in each sport which conducts a Florida High School State Championship Series. These limitations shall establish the earliest and latest permissible dates for practice and competition, as well as the maximum number of regular season contests in each sport. The limitation on boys and girls will be the same for common sports. Member schools shall not conduct practice or competition in a sport during the established off-season for that sport.

8.8.2 Off-Season. The Board of Directors shall establish guidelines to govern interactions between member schools and student-athletes during the off-season. The off-season is the period of time outside the season limitations for a sport but during the school year.
8.9 USE OF REGISTERED OFFICIALS
8.9.1 Sports Requiring the Use of Registered Officials. All officials for interscholastic contests in the sports of baseball, basketball, football (flag and tackle), lacrosse, soccer, softball, volleyball, water polo and wrestling must be registered with this Association in the sport the individual is to officiate.

8.9.2 Registration Policies. The Board of Directors shall establish the policies and procedures for the registration of officials, who shall be independent contractors. Registered officials must be members of an officials association which is sanctioned by this Association.

8.9.3 Failure to Use Registered Officials. It shall be the responsibility of the hosting member school principal for contracting registered officials through the officials association sanctioned by this Association. Violation of this regulation shall subject the school to a financial penalty.

8.9.4 Failure to Provide Registered Officials. Failure of the sanctioned officials association to provide registered officials as contracted shall subject the officials association to a financial penalty.

8.9.5 Conflicts of Interest. Coaches or other persons connected with competing schools shall not officiate in contests except with the consent of all competing schools. The principal, athletic director or team coach from all competing schools may grant consent.

OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 9

Student Eligibility

9.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES
9.1.1 Participation in Interscholastic Athletics a Privilege. Participation in interscholastic athletic programs by a student is a privilege, not a right. Students who participate are required to meet the requirements established in state law, FHSAA regulations, and by their respective schools.

9.1.1.1 Local Rules May Be More Stringent. Schools and /or school districts may adopt more stringent rules for the students under their supervision. No school or school district, however, may adopt rules that are less stringent than those of the FHSAA.

9.1.2 School Responsible to Ensure Student Eligibility. A school must not permit a student to represent it in interscholastic athletic competition unless the student meets all eligibility requirements and the school has certified the student’s eligibility to the FHSAA Office utilizing the official Association process as approved by the Executive Director.

9.1.2.1 Ineligible Student. An ineligible student shall not be allowed on the players’ bench, in the team box or on the field of play wearing any portion of a team uniform.

9.1.2.2 Falsification of Information. A student and/or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction who falsifies information to gain eligibility shall be declared ineligible to represent any member school for a period of one year from the date of discovery.

9.1.2.3 Eligibility of Recruited Students. A student may be declared ineligible based on violation of recruiting rules if (§ 1006.20(2)(b)4, F.S.):
(a) The student or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction has falsified any enrollment or eligibility document; or
(b) The student or parent/legal guardian appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction accepted any benefit or any promise of benefit if such benefit is not generally available to the school’s students or family members; or
(c) The student accepted any benefit if such benefit is not generally available to all of the school’s students or family members or is based in any way on athletic interest, potential, or performance.

9.1.3 Rationale for Eligibility Standards. Eligibility rules are necessary for participation in interscholastic athletics because:
(a) They protect the opportunities of qualified students to participate; and
(b) They promote competitive equity among schools; and
(c) They encourage academic achievement by student-athletes.

9.2 ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS
9.2.1 Student May Participate at School he/she First Attends Each School Year. A student must attend school and is immediately eligible to participate in the interscholastic athletic programs sponsored by the school he/she attends each school year, which is either: (§ 1006.20(2)(a), F.S.)
(a) The school where the student first attends classes (i.e. establishes school residency); or
(b) The school where the student first participates in athletic activities on or after the official start date of that sport season before he/she attends classes at any school (i.e. establishes school residency); or
(c) The school the student transfers to after previously attending another school (reference Bylaw 9.3.2).

9.2.1.1 Definition of “Attend School.” A student attends school if he/she is present in a school classroom on a regular basis or is a “Non-Traditional” student participating for a member school. A student can attend only one school at a time for the purposes of interscholastic athletic eligibility.

9.2.1.2 Definition of “Interscholastic Athletic Programs.” Interscholastic athletic programs encompass all activities relating to competitive sport contests involving individual students or teams of students from one school against individual students or teams of students from another school. Eligible to participate includes, but are not limited to, tryouts, off-season conditioning, summer workouts, preseason conditioning, in-season practice and contests. This does not mean that a student must be placed on any specific team (§ 1006.15(3)(a), F.S.).

9.2.1.3 Students with Multiple Residences. A student who, through the actions of a court of competent jurisdiction, is required to have multiple physical residences will establish his/her school residence as per Bylaw 9.2.1.

9.2.2 Attendance Exceptions

9.2.2.1 Home Education Student. A legally registered home education student may participate at one of the following: (§ 1006.15(3)(c), F.S.)

(a) The student’s home zoned public school; or
(b) The public school the student could choose to attend according to the controlled open enrollment provisions pursuant to § 1002.31, F.S.; or
(c) A charter/lab or private school that will accept the student for participation; or
(d) A home education cooperative to which the student belongs.

9.2.2.1.1 Home Education Student Requirements. To participate in interscholastic athletics, a home education student must: (§ 1006.15(3)(c)1-7, F.S.)

(a) register as a home education student with the district school superintendent of the county in which he/she resides; and
(b) register with the school of his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school before participation; and
(c) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as the school requires of other participating students; and
(d) certify to the school at the end of each semester that he/she has the minimum cumulative grade point average required for participation; and
(e) meet all other FHSAA eligibility requirements; and
(f) must be registered with the FHSAA Office each year using a form provided by the Association.

9.2.2.2 Charter School Student. A student who attends a charter school that does not sponsor an interscholastic athletic program in one or more sports may participate in the sport or sports not sponsored by the charter school at one of the following schools: (§ 1006.15(3)(d), F.S.)

(a) The student’s home zoned public school; or
(b) The public school the student could choose to attend according to the controlled open enrollment provisions pursuant to § 1002.33, F.S.
(c) Another charter/lab school that will accept the student for participation.

9.2.2.2.1 Charter School Student Requirements. To participate in interscholastic athletics, a charter school student must: (§ 1006.15(3)(d)1-7, F.S.)

(a) meet the requirements of the charter school education program as determined by the charter school governing board; and
(b) meet the minimum grade point average standards that are required of all students; and
(c) meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he/she participates; and
(d) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance that are required of other students in interscholastic athletics; and
(e) register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school before participation; and
(f) meet all other FHSAA eligibility requirements; and
(g) must be registered with the FHSAA Office each year using a form provided by the Association.
9.2.2.3 **Students in Alternative or Special Schools.** A student who attends an alternative school or other special school operated by a school district, which is not a member of the FHSAA, and does not sponsor an interscholastic athletic program may participate at:

(a) The student’s home zoned public school; or
(b) The public school the student could choose to attend according to the controlled open enrollment provisions pursuant to § 1002.31, F.S.
(c) A charter/lab school that will accept the student for participation.

9.2.2.3.1 **Alternative or Special School Student Requirements.** To participate in interscholastic athletics, an alternative or special school:

(a) Must be reported by the district superintendent or district athletic director as a school qualified to allow students to participate under this bylaw; and
(b) The student must register his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school before participation; and
(c) The student must meet all other FHSAA eligibility requirements.

9.2.2.4 **Non-member Private School Students.** A student who attends a private school shall be eligible to participate in an interscholastic or intrascholastic sport at a public high school, a public middle school, or a combination public school that the student is zoned to attend or the public school the student could choose to attend according to the controlled open enrollment provisions pursuant to § 1002.31, F.S., provided: (HB 1109 & § 1006.15(8), F.S.)

(a) The private school in which the student is enrolled is not a member of the FHSAA; and
(b) The private school does not offer the sport in which the student wishes to participate: and
(c) The private school enrollment consists of 125 students or fewer.

9.2.2.4.1 **Non-member Private School Student Requirements.** To participate in interscholastic athletics, a non-member private school student must: (§ 1006.15(8), F.S.)

(a) make all student records, including, but not limited to, academic, financial, disciplinary, and attendance records, available upon request of the FHSAA; and
(b) meet the minimum grade point average standards that are required of all students; and
(c) meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he/she participates; and
(d) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance that are required of other students in interscholastic athletics; and
(e) register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school on or before the beginning date of the season for the sport in which he/she wishes to participate; and
(f) meet all other FHSAA eligibility requirements; and
(g) must be registered with the FHSAA Office each year using a form provided by the Association.

9.2.2.5 **Florida Virtual School – Full Time Program (FLVS-FT) Students.** A student of the Florida Virtual School full-time program may participate in interscholastic athletics at:

(a) The student’s home zoned public school; or
(b) The public school the student could choose to attend according to the controlled open enrollment provisions pursuant to § 1002.31, F.S.
(c) A charter/lab school that will accept the student for participation.

9.2.2.5.1 **FLVS-FT Student Requirement.** To participate in interscholastic athletics, an FLVS-FT student must: (§ 1006.15(3)(e)1-5, F.S.)

(a) meet any additional requirements as determined by the board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School; and
(b) meet the minimum grade point average standards that are required of all students; and
(c) meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he/she participates; and
(d) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance that are required of other students in interscholastic athletics; and
(e) register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school before participation; and
(f) meet all other FHSAA eligibility requirements; and
(g) must be registered with the FHSAA Office each year using a form provided by the Association.

9.2.2.6 **Middle School Students Attending Non-member Public Schools.** A student in grades 6 through 8 who attends a public school that is not a member of this Association and has no athletic program due to low student population may represent a member public school that is part of the same school district in interscholastic competition, provided
such participation is at the junior high or middle school level. In the event the member public school is a combination school, i.e., grades k-12 or 6-12, the student may represent that school in interscholastic competition at the varsity level (NOTE: these students are considered “Non-Traditional” students and must be reported to the association as such; Alternative/Special School students).

9.2.2.7 Students in Dual Enrollment and Early Admission Programs. A student who attends a dual enrollment or early admission program operated by a community college or university may participate at the school the student attends or at which records are being kept if:

(a) The school awards credit toward graduation for the work the student completes at the community college or university; and
(b) The community college or university officially issues grades on the same schedule as the school’s semester; and
(c) The student has not met the graduation requirements as specified by the school’s or school district’s student progression plan for high school graduation; and
(d) The student does not participate in the intercollegiate athletic programs of the community college or university; and
(e) The student meets all other FHSAA eligibility requirements (no form or letter is required).

9.2.3 Attendance Within First 10 Days of Semester Required. A student must attend classes within the first 10 school days of a semester. Otherwise, the student will not be eligible until:

(a) The student has made up all class work missed during his/her absence; and
(b) The student has attended one school day for each school day missed.

9.2.4 Ineligible Student Cannot Change Schools to Become Eligible. A student who is deemed ineligible for a period of time cannot change schools and become eligible. Attending a new school at the beginning of the school year does not decrease or eliminate the period of ineligibility.

9.3 TRANSFER REGULATIONS

9.3.1 “Transfer” Defined. A transfer occurs when a student makes any change in schools after he/she establishes residency, as defined in Bylaw 9.2.1, at a school each year.

9.3.2 Transfer Eligibility. A student who transfers from one school to another will be eligible at the new school provided the student qualifies under one of the following:

9.3.2.1 Transfer before Starting a Sport. A student who has not started a sport may seek to immediately join an existing team if the roster for the specific interscholastic or intrascholastic extracurricular activity has not reached that activity’s identified maximum size, provided the coach for the activity determines that the student has the requisite skill and ability to participate (§ 1006.15(9)(a), F.S.). The student may not be declared ineligible because the student did not have the opportunity to comply with qualifying requirements.

9.3.2.2 Transfer after Starting a Sport. A student may not participate in a sport if the student participated in that same sport at another school during that school year, unless the student meets one of the following criteria (§ 1006.15(9)(b), F.S.):

(a) Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders.
(b) Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone.
(c) Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent.
(d) Authorized for good cause in district, private or charter school board policy.

9.3.3 Qualifying Transfer Student Becomes Eligible on Sixth Day of Attendance. A student who qualifies under Bylaw 9.3.2 will be eligible for competition on the sixth school day of attendance at the new school if:

(a) The school has received and evaluated the student’s official transcript provided by his/her former school; and
(b) The school has determined that the student meets all eligibility requirements.

9.3.3.1 Transfer Student Must Provide Academic Records. A student who transfers to a member school from a non-member school after beginning high school must provide the member school with an official sealed transcript showing all grades he/she has received at all schools attended since beginning eighth grade. The student must also provide the school with all information the school needs to determine the student’s eligibility using the scale in Bylaw 9.4.2. The student cannot be declared academically eligible by the member school until all such information is received to its satisfaction. Final grades previously earned by the student shall not be converted using the scale in Bylaw 9.4.2.

9.3.3.2 Transfer Student’s Former School Must Verify Eligibility Status Upon Request. The member school formerly attended by a transfer student must verify the student’s eligibility status if requested to do so by the student’s new school.
9.3.3.3 Transfer Student Not Eligible for One Full Semester if Transcript Cannot be Obtained. A transfer student whose former school cannot or will not provide an official sealed transcript will not be eligible in the new school until he/she has been in attendance for one full semester and has established a cumulative GPA. The school must submit a written report to the FHSAA Office that includes the student’s name, date of first attendance in the school, and the beginning and ending dates of the previous semester.

9.3.4 Ineligible Student Cannot Transfer to Become Eligible. A transfer student who is deemed ineligible for a period of time cannot transfer schools and become eligible. Attending a new school at the beginning of the school year does not decrease or eliminate the period of ineligibility.

9.3.4.1 Students Under Disciplinary Action. A student who has been expelled or is under disciplinary action by a school district or school (which would render the student ineligible) shall not be considered eligible at any member school during the length of the disciplinary action. A student who is under disciplinary action chooses not to attend an alternative school, if offered by the school district or school, shall be ineligible to represent a member school for the next two consecutive “full” semesters. Attending a new school at the beginning of the school year does not decrease or eliminate the period of ineligibility.

9.3.5 Transfer Students Who Are Not Eligible. The following transfer students are not eligible in their new school even if they otherwise qualify under Bylaw 9.3.2.1.

9.3.5.1 Student Who Transfers After the Florida High School State Championship Series in a Sport Begins. A student who transfers to any school after the Florida High School State Championship Series in a sport begins will not be eligible to participate in that sport through the conclusion of the Florida High School State Championship Series.

9.3.5.2 Student Who Participated in a State Championship Series in Another State. A student who attends a member school after having participated in a state championship series in a sport in another state is ineligible to participate in that sport for that school year.

9.4 ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

9.4.1 2.0 GPA Required for Academic Eligibility. A middle/junior high student must have 2.0 GPA, or the equivalent of a 2.0 GPA based on a 4.0 scale, at the conclusion of each semester. A high school student must have a cumulative 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 unweighted scale, or its equivalent, at the conclusion of each semester to be academically eligible during the next semester (§ 1006.15(3)(a)1, F.S.). Final grades previously earned by the student from another school shall not be converted using the scale in Bylaw 9.4.2.

9.4.1.1 Courses to be Used in Calculating GPA. The grades from all courses that a student takes, including those high school level courses taken by the student before he/she begins high school, must be included in the calculation of the student’s cumulative GPA at the conclusion of each semester. For public school students, this includes the courses listed in § 1003.4282, F.S..

9.4.1.2 Academic Eligibility/Ineligibility is for a Semester. A student who is academically eligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically eligible for that entire semester. Likewise, a student who is academically ineligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically ineligible for that entire semester, except as provided in Bylaw 9.4.5.1.2. The student’s academic eligibility for each successive semester will depend upon his/her cumulative GPA at the conclusion of the previous semester.

9.4.1.3 Attendance During Previous Two Consecutive Semesters Required. A student cannot be academically eligible if he/she has not attended school and received grades for all courses taken during the previous two consecutive full semesters.

9.4.1.3.1 Exception. A student who begins the school year at a FHSAA member school, after completing the full school year in their former country coinciding with the end of the first semester of the FHSAA member school’s previous academic year, may be eligible.

9.4.1.4 Exception – First Semester Attendance. A first-year 6th grade student attending a middle school or combination school beginning with the 6th grade, a first year 7th grade student attending a junior high school or combination school beginning with the 7th grade or any student, entering the ninth grade for the first time, is academically eligible during his/her first semester of middle school, junior high school or high school attendance. The student, however, must meet the provisions of Bylaw 9.4.1 at the conclusion of his/her first semester of attendance to be academically eligible to participate during his/her next semester of attendance.

9.4.1.5 Academic Performance Contract. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.0, or its equivalent, on a 4.0 scale in the courses required by § 1003.4282, F.S., must execute and fulfill the requirements of an Academic Performance Contract between the student, the school, and the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) duly appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, which at a minimum must require that the student attend summer school, or its graded equivalent (i.e. adult education, Florida Virtual School, etc.), between grades 9 and 10 or grades 10 and 11, as necessary. (§ 1006.15(3)(a)2, F.S.).

9.4.1.5.1 Students who qualify for an academic performance contract must have sat out of competition the full semester immediately following becoming academically ineligible, regardless of the level of participation (i.e. varsity, sub-varsity, middle school, etc.); during which time, or thereafter, the student must have entered into and fulfilled the requirements of the contract before participating in interscholastic competition the subsequent semester.
9.4.1.6 **Using Semester GPA for Ninth and Tenth Grade.** A student who is academically ineligible during the second semester of ninth grade (i.e., became ineligible at the conclusion of the first semester of ninth grade) or during the first semester of tenth grade (i.e., became ineligible at the conclusion of the second semester of ninth grade) and does not regain a cumulative 2.0 GPA at the conclusion of the semester of ineligibility may be granted academic eligibility for the next semester if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The student signs an academic performance contract with his/her school as per Bylaw 9.4.1.5; and
(b) The student sits out the semester of ineligibility; and
(c) The student earns a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 unweighted scale in all courses taken during the semester of ineligibility.

9.4.1.7 **No Exceptions During the 11th and 12th Grade.** Once a student has completed 10th grade, he/she must have the cumulative 2.0 GPA as required by Bylaw 9.4.1 for the remainder of his/her high school career (§ 1006.15(3)(a), F.S.).

9.4.1.8 **Students in Dual Enrollment or Early Admission Programs.** Students who participate in dual enrollment programs or early admission programs must have the cumulative 2.0 GPA as required in Bylaw 9.4.1 to be academically eligible.

9.4.1.9 **Student Not Eligible for One Full Semester if Transcript Cannot be Obtained.** A student whose former school cannot or will not provide an official sealed transcript will not be eligible in the new school until he/she has been in attendance for one full semester and has established a cumulative GPA. The school must submit a written report to the FHSAA Office that includes the student’s name, date of first attendance in the school, and the beginning and ending dates of the previous semester.

9.4.2 **Mandatory Grading Scale to be used in Calculating GPA.** All member schools must use the following alphabetical grading scale as mandated in § 1003.437, F.S., when calculating the grade point averages of high school students to determine their academic eligibility:

- Grade “A” is 90 to 100 percent and has a GPA value of 4;
- Grade “B” is 80 to 89 percent and has a GPA value of 3;
- Grade “C” is 70 to 79 percent and has a GPA value of 2;
- Grade “D” is 60 to 69 percent and has a GPA value of 1; and
- Grade “F” is 59 percent or less and has a GPA value of 0.

9.4.2.1 **Incomplete Grade is a Failure.** An incomplete grade must be counted as a failure (Grade “F”) when calculating a student’s cumulative GPA.

9.4.3 **Effect of Summer School or its Graded Equivalent Courses on Cumulative GPA.** A student may raise or lower his/her cumulative GPA by attending summer school or its graded equivalent if:

(a) The summer school or its graded equivalent is regularly scheduled and regularly organized under the direction of a district school board or private school;
(b) All coursework taken by the student is completed before the first day of classes in the subsequent semester; and
(c) All courses taken by the student, in which he/she receives a grade, whether during the regular academic year or summer school, or its graded equivalent, must be used to calculate the student’s cumulative GPA.

9.4.3.1 **“Forgiveness.”** If a student repeats a course, regardless of whether he/she passed or failed the course on the first attempt in which the student earned a “D” or “F,” or the equivalent of a grade of “D” or “F,” the grade may be replaced with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher, provided for required courses the course is the same or comparable course, or with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher for an elective course and that grade will be used to calculate the student’s cumulative GPA (§ 1003.4282(5), note, F.S.).

9.4.3.1.1 **Grade GPA Calculation.** For the purposes of GPA calculation, each subsequent unsuccessful attempt on a course taken for forgiveness will not be computed in the calculations. One successful attempt will over write the original grade and all previous unsuccessful attempts.

9.4.3.2 **Course Taught by Private Tutor Cannot be Used to Raise GPA.** A school cannot accept a grade received by a student in a class conducted by a private certified tutor to raise his/her cumulative GPA for academic eligibility purposes.

9.4.4 **Determination of Academic Eligibility at Conclusion of Each Semester.** A school must calculate the cumulative GPA of a student at the conclusion of each semester to determine the student’s academic eligibility for the next semester. Only those grades that are first reported by the student’s teachers at the conclusion of the semester can be used to calculate the student’s cumulative GPA.

9.4.4.1 **Definition of “First Reported.”** “First reported” means the grades that are originally submitted by the student’s teachers at the conclusion of the semester. Changes to grades that are first reported by a student’s teachers may only be made according to the published policies of the school.
9.4.5 Course Work must be Completed by First Day of Next Semester. A student must complete all work required to earn credit in a course taken during a semester by the first day of the next semester. A grade of “incomplete” must be considered a failing grade when calculating a student’s cumulative GPA.

9.4.5.1 Considerations

9.4.5.1.1 Special Course Work That Cannot be Completed by First Day of Next Semester. An exception to Bylaw 9.4.5 is made for students taking courses such as agriculture, which have special projects that cannot be completed until late summer.

9.4.5.1.2 Work Not Completed Due to Illness or Excused Absence. A student who is academically ineligible because of a failure to complete his/her course work by the first day of the next semester due to an extended illness, supported by a physician’s report, or other excused absence may have his/her academic eligibility restored once the course work is completed and the student receives a passing grade that raises his/her cumulative GPA to 2.0 or above. A school must notify the FHSAA Office in writing whenever this occurs.

9.4.6 Change in Eligibility Status. If a student’s academic eligibility changes at the end of a semester, the student will become eligible or ineligible on the sixth school day of the next semester as published on the school’s official calendar for that school year. Even if the last day of the semester coincides with the last day of school for the winter holidays, the student will not become eligible or ineligible until the sixth school day of the next semester that follows the winter holidays as published on the school’s official calendar for that school year.

9.4.7 Student Must be an Undergraduate. A student must not have completed the terminal grade of high school in the secondary education system of the U.S. or any other country. The terminal grade of the student is based on the graduation requirements of the country the student last attended school, including the completion of the GED or its equivalent.

9.5 LIMIT OF ELIGIBILITY

9.5.1 High School Student Has Eight Semesters of Eligibility. A student is limited to eight consecutive semesters of eligibility beginning with semester he/she begins ninth grade for the first time. This does not imply that the student has eight semesters of participation. After eight consecutive semesters, the student is permanently ineligible.

9.5.1.1 Student Whose Limit of Eligibility Expires During Sports Season. A student whose eight-semiter limit of eligibility expires during the season of a sport in which the student is participating may complete the season if the student continues to meet all other eligibility requirements. The student, however, will not be permitted to participate in any other sport that begins after his/her limit of eligibility has expired.

9.5.1.2 Participation Prior to High School Does Not Affect Limit of Eligibility. A student’s eight-semiter limit of high school eligibility is not affected by the student’s participation in interscholastic athletics before beginning the ninth grade for the first time.

9.5.1.3 Exception. A student who begins the school year at a FHSAA member school, after completing the full school year in their former country coinciding with the end of the first semester of the FHSAA member school’s previous academic year, will not have their limit of eligibility impacted by the missed semester.

9.5.2 A 6th, 7th or 8th Grade Student Has 1-Year Limit of Eligibility in Each Grade. A 6th, 7th or 8th grade student may participate during their first year in each grade level. A 6th, 7th or 8th grade student who repeats a grade will not be eligible during the grade being repeated.

9.6 AGE

9.6.1 High School Age Limit. A student who reaches the age of 19 prior to September 1st shall become permanently ineligible.

9.6.2 Junior High School Age Limit. A student who reaches the age of 16 prior to September 1st shall become ineligible to participate at the junior high level.

9.6.2.1 When Junior High Age Limit Applies. The 16 year junior high school age limit applies to a participating student only when:

(a) Teams representing junior high schools compete against each other; or

(b) Teams representing the junior high school departments of combination junior-senior high schools compete against each other.

9.6.3 Middle School Age Limit. A student who reaches the age of 15 prior to September 1st shall become ineligible to participate at the middle school level.

9.6.3.1 When Middle School Age Limit Applies. The 15 year middle school age limit applies to a participating student only when:

(a) Teams representing middle schools compete against each other; or

(b) Teams representing the middle school departments of combination middle-senior high schools compete against each other.
9.6.4 School Must Verify Age of Student. A school must verify the age of each student who represents it in interscholastic athletic competition. The student must provide documented proof of his/her age for this purpose. A student who is unable to provide documented proof of his/her age cannot participate.

9.6.4.1 What is Documented Proof of Age? Documented proof of age is one or more of the following:

(a) An original birth certificate issued by the office of vital records in the country, province, state, county or city where the student was born;

(b) A passport, visa, “green card” or “Employment Authorization Document” (EAD Card) that lists the student’s date of birth; or

(c) An official record of birth from the hospital in which the student was born.

9.7 PHYSICAL EVALUATION (FHSAA Form EL2 – Pre-participation Physical Examination)

9.7.1 Student Must Have a Physical Evaluation Each Year. A student must have a physical evaluation each year and be certified as being physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletic programs prior to participating in interscholastic athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student’s candidacy for an interscholastic team. A physical evaluation shall be valid for a period not to exceed one calendar year from the date of practitioner’s signature. The student cannot be allowed to participate in any activity related to interscholastic athletic programs until the fully executed physical evaluation form is on file in the school (§ 1002.20(17)(b), F.S.).

9.7.2 Qualified Practitioners. The annual physical evaluation must be administered either by a licensed physician, a licensed osteopathic physician, a licensed chiropractic physician, a licensed physician assistant, or a certified advanced registered nurse practitioner.

9.7.3 Filing Requirements. The student-athlete shall be required to file with the principal or his/her designee a fully executed physical evaluation form signed by the practitioner and medical history questionnaire signed by the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

9.7.4 Evaluation Requirements. The Board of Directors shall adopt minimum requirements for the physical evaluation to which each member school shall adhere.

9.8 CONSENT AND RELEASE (FHSAA Form EL3 – Consent and Release from Liability Certificate)

9.8.1 Student Must Provide School with Signed Consent and Release Form to Participate. A student must have the consent of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to participate in interscholastic athletic programs at a member school prior to participating in interscholastic athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student’s candidacy for an interscholastic team. The student and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must also release the FHSAA, its member schools and contest officials from all liability for any injury or claim that may result from the student’s participation in interscholastic athletics. This consent and release from liability must be provided in writing on a form developed by this Association for that purpose. The form must be signed by the student and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The student cannot be allowed to participate in any activity related to interscholastic athletic programs until the fully executed consent form is on file in the school.

9.8.1.1 Board of Directors to Adopt Language for Consent and Release Form. The Board of Directors will adopt the language that must be contained in the consent and release form, which, at a minimum, will include the following:

(a) A statement acknowledging that participation in interscholastic athletics may require the student to miss classes;

(b) A statement authorizing the school to provide to the FHSAA for inspection the student’s academic, attendance and financial assistance records when requested;

(c) A statement warning of the health risks, including permanent disability and loss of life, involved in participating in interscholastic athletics (including, but not limited to, concussions, heat related illness, sudden cardiac arrest, etc.);

(d) A statement authorizing the use or disclosure of the student’s individually identifiable health information should treatment for illness or injury become necessary; and

(e) A statement granting to the released parties the right to photograph and videotape the student and to use his/her name, face, likeness, voice and appearance in connection with exhibitions, publicity, advertising, promotional and commercial materials without reservation or limitation.
9.9 AMATEURISM

9.9.1 General Principles. A student may not participate in an athletic activity of this Association unless he/she is an amateur. An amateur is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived from the activity.

9.9.2 Forfeiture of Amateur Status. A student-athlete forfeits amateur status in a particular sport for one year by:
(a) Competing for money or other monetary compensations;
(b) Receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the FHSAA;
(c) Capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of a monetary nature;
(d) Signing a professional playing contract in any sport or hiring an agent to manage his/her athletic career;
(e) Competing under an assumed name.

9.9.3 Permissible Awards, Gifts, or Other Compensation. A student-athlete will not forfeit his/her amateur status for accepting:
(a) Symbolic awards such as school letters, medals, trophies, plaques, pins, keys, or ribbons of small monetary value purchased from an established awards company;
(b) Rings, sweaters, jackets, or award blankets provided that they are presented by the school which they represent and do not exceed the value of the purchase price from an established awards company;
(c) Remuneration of “essential expenses” for any game in which he/she participates as a player; limited to meals, lodging, and transportation;
(d) A college scholarship offer.

9.9.3.1 Amateur Sports Guidelines. The FHSAA uses the guidelines of the national governing body of a particular sport, when applicable, to determine the types and amounts of benefits an amateur may receive.

9.9.4 Violations. Violation of the amateur rule in one sport does not make a student ineligible in all other sports.

9.10 ATHLETIC CONTEST PARTICIPATION

9.10.1 Athletic Contest Participation Defined. A student in athletic uniform during an athletic contest is defined as having participated in that contest. Any member school which allows a student to participate in interscholastic athletic competition (dress in any part of the full uniform worn for that contest with the exception of a cap) in violation of the regulations of this Association will be held guilty of using an ineligible student and subject to the penalties assessed.

OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 10

Compliance and Enforcement

10.1 PRINCIPLES AND PENALTIES

10.1.1 General Principles. The Executive Director shall have the authority to direct audits and compliance reviews and to investigate all alleged violations of this Association’s Bylaws, as well as regulations, guidelines, policies or procedures established by the Board of Directors. The procedures outlined in Policy 39 (Policy on Investigative Procedures), which shall be in full compliance with Florida Statute 1006.20(2)(g), will be followed for such investigations. All findings shall be disclosed to the member school in writing, setting forth the findings of fact and specific violation upon which the decision is based.

10.1.2 Penalties and Sanctions. The Executive Director shall have full authority to invoke one or more of the following penalties and/or sanctions against the violating school or person:
(a) REPRIMAND—An official letter of censure to the concerned party in regard to the offense committed which warns against further violations. This letter will be kept on file for future reference.
(b) FINE—A monetary payment.
(c) FORFEIT—The forfeiture of an interscholastic athletic contest.
(d) PROBATION—Types of probation that may be imposed are as follows:
   1) Administrative Probation—The school or person is reprimanded, fined and served notice that it is in a period of warning for a minimum of one calendar year. Additional violations during this time will result in increased penalties which may include expulsion.
   2) Restrictive Probation—The school or person faces the same penalties as administrative probation, with the additional consequence of restriction from participation in championship competition in one or more sports, or other restrictions deemed appropriate by the Executive Director, for one or more calendar years.
3) Suspension Probation—The school or person faces the same penalties as administrative probation, with the additional consequence of suspension from one or more sports for one or more calendar years.

(e) EXPULSION—Involuntary termination of a school’s membership in the Association for one or more calendar years. Any member school that competes with a currently expelled school may subject itself to expulsion from the Association for one calendar year.

**10.1.2 Reimbursement of Expenses.** A member school found to have committed a violation shall pay to this Association any expenses incurred related to such violation, including, but not limited to, the costs of the investigation, attorney’s fees and legal costs, and all other related costs.

- **10.1.2.1** If a member school is assessed a financial penalty as a result of a coach committing a major violation, the coach shall reimburse the member school before being allowed to coach, participate in, or attend any athletic activity sponsored, recognized, or sanctioned by the FHSAA and a member school (§ 1006.20(2)(f)3, F.S.).

- **10.1.3 Sanctions on Coaches.** Sanctions placed upon an individual coach may include, but are not limited to, prohibiting or suspending the coach from coaching, participating in, or attending any athletic activity sponsored, recognized, or sanctioned by the FHSAA and the member school for which the coach committed the violation. If a coach is sanctioned by the FHSAA and the coach transfers to another member school, those sanctions remain in full force and effect during the term of the sanction (§ 1006.20(2)(f)2, F.S.).

- **10.1.4 Court Injunctions.** If a member school or student, in violation of or noncompliance with any provisions of this Association’s rules, competes based on an injunction or restraining order which is later voluntarily vacated, stayed or reversed, or it is determined that injunctive relief is not or was not justified, they will still be subject to the penalties listed in 10.1.2.

**10.2 FORFEITURE OF CONTEST**

- **10.2.1 General Principle.** If an ineligible student is intentionally permitted to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest, forfeiture of the game and honors shall be automatic and mandatory. If an ineligible student is inadvertently permitted to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest, forfeiture of the game and honors shall be automatic and mandatory if the coach or school administrator knew or should have known that such use would be a violation of the association’s rules and regulations (§ 1006.20(2)(i), F.S.).

- **10.2.1.1 Team or Individual Sports.** In team sports, the contest and honors shall be forfeited. In individual sports, the points won by the ineligible student, individually or as the member of a relay team shall be forfeited. If an ineligible student participates on a relay team, the relay team shall be disqualified.

- **10.2.1.2 Procedures.** If an ineligible student is allowed to participate in an athletic contest, the principal shall notify the Executive Director the dates of the competition and provide copies of the letters of forfeiture to the opposing school(s) the student participated against.

- **10.2.1.3 Intentional Use of Ineligible Students.** The Executive Director shall have full authority to invoke additional penalties against a member school that in his/her determination intentionally permits an ineligible student to participate.

- **10.2.1.4 Prospective Contests.** The association will not limit the competition of student athletes prospectively for rule violations of the school by its coaches or other representatives of the school’s athletic interests. The association will not unfairly punish student athletes for eligibility or recruiting violations perpetrated by a teammate, coach, administrator or other representatives of the school’s athletic interests. Contests will not be forfeited for other eligibility or recruiting violations in excess of the number of contests that the coaches or other representatives of the school’s athletic interests responsible for the violations are prospectively suspended (§ 1006.20(2)(i), F.S.).

**10.3 PROTEST PROCEDURE**

- **10.3.1 Protesting Actions of Another School.** Any member school filing a protest over the eligibility of a student or the actions of a member school shall submit to the Executive Director in writing a full statement of the facts signed by the principal. The Executive Director shall provide the accused party or parties with a copy of the accusation and determine if the allegations warrant an investigation. If allegations concerning the eligibility of a student warrant an investigation, The procedures outlined in Policy 39 (Policy on Investigative Procedures), which shall be in full compliance with § 1006.20(2)(g), F.S. will be followed for such investigations.

- **10.3.2 Protesting Actions of Contest Officials.** The decisions of contest officials shall be final and not subject to review. Member schools should file reports with the Executive Director of unsatisfactory performance by contest officials which may be due to alleged lack of knowledge of the rules, errors in judgment or improper conduct.

**10.4 DUE PROCESS**

- **10.4.1 Eligibility Appeals.** When a student is determined to be ineligible by a member school and/or is ruled ineligible by the Executive Director or his/her designee, the member school principal may appeal the ruling of the Executive Director if he/she or
the student takes issue with it, and must do so at the student’s request. If possible, such disposition of the appeal is to be made before the end of the applicable sport season, the next scheduled Section Appeal Committee meeting or the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting, whichever is the earliest (§ 1006.20(2)(g), F.S.).

10.4.1.1 Ineligibility must be established by a preponderance of the evidence (§ 1006.20(2)(g)1, F.S.).

10.4.2 Rules Violations Appeals. Any student athlete, coach or member school who is found to be in violation of the rules of this Association may appeal the finding of the Executive Director, or his/her designee, if he/she takes issue with it, or may appeal the penalty imposed if he/she believes it to be too severe, and must be done if requested.

10.4.3 Disputes Between Member Schools Appeals. A member school principal may appeal the findings by the Executive Director which arise from a dispute between one or more member schools.

10.4.4 Undue Hardship Waivers. A member school principal may file a request for undue hardship waiver on behalf of the student when enforcement of the provision(s) which render(s) the student ineligible places an undue hardship upon the student, and must do so at the student’s request.

10.4.4.1 Basic Principle. The eligibility rules of this Association are designed to promote academic achievement and to encourage students to advance with their graduating class. Unless a student exerts every reasonable effort to make up credit not earned, such effort including attendance at summer school or other alternative programs, an undue hardship request seeking a waiver of the limit of eligibility shall not be granted.

10.4.4.2 Criteria for an Undue Hardship Waiver Determination. By seeking an undue hardship waiver, the student and the member school accept the fact that the student is ineligible under the FHSAA Bylaws and/or Policies but are asking for a waiver of those Bylaws and/or Policies. For the purpose of determining whether to grant or deny an undue hardship waiver the Sectional Appeals Committees and the Board of Directions shall be guided by the following criteria, other criteria contained in these Bylaws and FHSAA Policies, and their respective experience related to high school athletics.

10.4.4.2.1 Insufficient Grounds for Undue Hardship Waiver. The fact that a student is retained in a lower grade shall not be sufficient grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver if the student fails to pass the required number of courses, or is voluntarily withdrawn from school, or repeats a lower grade to gain physical, social or emotional maturity.

10.4.4.2.2 Potentially Sufficient Grounds for Undue Hardship Waiver. The fact that a student is unable or desires to participate in interscholastic athletics shall not, in and of itself, be grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver request. The fact that a student is retained in a lower grade because he/she misses school for a prolonged period of time due to serious injury or illness, which must be supported by a physician’s record indicating that the absence was directly and solely related to such injury or illness, or events which were beyond the control of the student and/or the parent or guardian which causes the student to miss school for a prolonged period of time causing the student to repeat a grade, may be grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver request.

10.4.5 Mediation of Decisions. The principal of a member school, on behalf of a student, may request that the Executive Director mediate the decision of the Sectional Appeals Committee regarding the student’s eligibility.

10.4.6 Waiver of Bylaws Due to Special Circumstances. The principal of a member school or his/her designee may request a waiver of any Bylaw or other regulation, guideline, policy or procedure of this Association not directly related to student eligibility when special circumstances, in the opinion of the person or entity making the appeal, call for a relief from or a modification to the effects of the rule.

10.4.7 Appeals of Executive Director’s Findings. The principal of a member school or his/her designee, or any other individual, who is found to be in violation of the rules of this Association by the Executive Director, whether or not such finding results in the imposition of penalty, may appeal the finding of the Executive Director if he/she takes issue with it, or may appeal the penalty imposed, if any, if he/she, while not disagreeing with the finding, believes the penalty to be too severe.

10.4.8 No Appeal or Waiver of Florida Statutes. The Sectional Appeals Committee, the Infraction Appeals Committee and the Board of Directors do not have the authority to waive a provision of the Florida Statutes.

10.5 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR APPEALS AND REQUESTS FOR WAIVER

10.5.1 Cost of Appeal. The cost of an appeal, if any, including the Association’s attorney fees, shall be borne by the person or entity making the appeal if the finding of the Executive Director or the penalty imposed is upheld or if the request for waiver is denied as in Bylaw 10.4.1.

10.5.2 Burden Of Proof. The burden of showing error in the determination of ineligibility or in showing why a waiver should be granted is on the person or entity making the appeal. Such proof shall include, as a minimum, a brief statement of the facts involved, the specific bylaw(s) or policy(s) involved and argument in support of the relief requested. This statement shall be supported by any relevant documentary evidence available.

10.5.3 Complete and Accurate Submissions. The person or entity making the appeal must ensure that the information submitted to support such appeal or request is complete and accurate. Additional information may be submitted and heard at the time of the appeal, for student eligibility cases (§ 1006.20(7)(g), F.S.). In the event a decision by the Sectional Appeals Committee or the Board of Directors was made based on incomplete or inaccurate information, the decision shall be withdrawn and the sanctions provided by these bylaws shall apply.
10.5.3.1 Eligibility Appeal Process. A school or student athlete filing an eligibility appeal is permitted to present information or evidence that was not available at the time of the initial determination of eligibility. The appeal committee hearing the appeal (§ 1006.20(7)(g), F.S.):

(a) may consider the new information or evidence during the appeal and render a decision; or
(b) may suspend the determination of the appeal and remand the appeal to the Executive Director for a new determination; and
(c) the decision on the appeal must be made in writing, setting forth the findings of fact and the specific violation(s) upon which the decision is based.

10.5.4 Request for Eligibility Ruling. Each member school principal or his/her designee having reasonable cause to believe that a student is ineligible to participate in, or continue to participate in, interscholastic athletic competition under any provision of these regulations may request an official ruling on the student’s eligibility from the Executive Director on a form to be provided by this Association, and must do so at the student’s request. The Executive Director or his/her designee, through the use of clear and convincing evidence and in consideration of the undue hardship principals in Bylaw 10.4.4, shall issue a ruling based on the statement of facts and any other additional information made available to the Executive Director or his designee, such additional information shall be included in the official ruling related to the student’s eligibility. In the event the Executive Director later determines that incomplete or inaccurate information has been included in the statement supporting the member schools request for an eligibility ruling, the ruling may be retracted and such penalties as deemed appropriate may be imposed by the Executive Director against the member school requesting the ruling. The Executive Director or his/her designee cannot provide rulings on eligibility matters that may or will occur in a future school year. Rulings will only be made on eligibility matters for the current school year.

10.5.5 Initial Appeals or Requests for Waivers. Initial appeals or requests for waivers will be heard by the Sectional Appeals Committee. The Sectional Appeals Committee cannot provide rulings on eligibility matters that may or will occur in a future school year. Rulings will only be made on eligibility matters for the current school year.

10.5.5.1 Exception. Eligibility matters involving Limit of Eligibility and Age may be appealed in the month of April in the school year prior to the student becoming ineligible.

10.5.6 Subsequent Appeals or Requests for Waivers. Unfavorable decision found on the initial appeal or request for waiver rendered by the Sectional Appeals Committee will be heard by:

(a) The Sectional Appeals Committee, provided new information is provided, or
(b) The Board of Directors, which will consider any evidence that was presented to the Sectional Appeals Committee, and decisions will be final.

10.5.7 Appeals of Major Violations. Appeals of major violations will be heard by the Infraction Appeals Committee. Decisions of the Infraction Appeals Committee can be appealed to the Board of Directors. Decisions by the Board of Directors will be final.

10.5.7.1 Infraction Appeals Committee

10.5.7.1.1 Purpose of Committee. The Board of Directors appoints an Infraction Appeals Committee to hear and act upon appeals of schools found to have committed major violations.

10.5.7.1.2 Composition of Committee. The committee is composed of five members as follows:

(a) One public school member, who must be a school-based administrator;
(b) One public school member, who must be either a school-based administrator or a district-level administrator;
(c) One private school member, who must be a school-based administrator;
(d) One private school member, who must be either a school-based administrator or a regional or state-level administrator in a private school accrediting organization that is recognized by the FHSAA; and
(e) One attorney who within the last five years has been a member in good standing of the Florida Bar or the bar of any other state in the union, and who cannot be connected with any member school, public school district or private school accrediting organization, or represent student-athletes, coaches or athletic directors in any manner.

10.5.7.1.2.1 Restrictions on Appointments. No member of the Board of Directors or any Sectional Appeals Committee can serve on the Infractions Appeals Committee. The two public school members cannot be from the same public school district. The two private school members cannot be from the same private school accrediting organization. Otherwise, there are no restrictions on who may be appointed to the committee.

10.5.7.1.2.2 Quorum and Alternate Members. A quorum of the committee is four members. The Board of Directors will designate alternates the Executive Director may call as substitutes to ensure a quorum when regular committee members are absent.

10.5.7.1.2.3 Attorney Serves as Committee Chair. The attorney member chairs the committee, and is the only committee member who may have contact with the FHSAA staff regarding any case. The committee elects from among its remaining four members a vice chair who presides when the chair is absent or unable to act.

10.5.7.1.3 Term of Service. A member serves a term of three years, except as stipulated in paragraph 10.5.7.1.3.1 below. A member may be reappointed to a second term, but cannot serve more than six years on the committee.
10.5.7.1.3.1 **Initial Terms of Service to Establish Rotation.** To ensure that the terms of all members of the committee do not expire at the same time, each member initially appointed to the committee will serve the following initial terms of service:

(a) The attorney will serve an initial term of five years and may be reappointed to a second term of three years;
(b) One of the public school administrators and one of the private school administrators, selected at random by the Board of Directors, will serve an initial term of four years and may be reappointed to a second term of three years; and
(c) The remaining public school administrator and private school administrator will serve an initial term of three years and may be reappointed to a second term of three years.

10.5.7.1.4 **Authority and Duties of Committee.** The committee:

(a) Hears and acts upon appeals of schools found to have committed major violations; or
(b) Hears and acts on appeals arising from a situation involving or affecting member schools in more than one administrative section; or
(c) Hears and acts on requests of waiver of a rule that, if granted, would affect member schools in more than one administrative section; or
(d) Makes recommendations to the Board of Directors and FHSAA staff relative to the formulation and revision of FHSAA enforcement policies and procedures.

10.5.7.1.5 **Committee to Meet as Needed.** The committee meets as needed upon call of the chair in consultation with the Executive Director.

10.5.8 **Emergency Hearings.** The President of the Association may conduct an emergency meeting of the Board of Directors by teleconference if, and only if, a decision made by the Executive Director or a Sectional Appeals Committee would eliminate a school, in a team sport, or an individual, in an individual sport, from a Florida High School State Championship Series contest before the next meeting of the Board of Directors. The President shall not conduct an emergency meeting of the Board of Directors to consider undue hardship cases, or other cases, affecting a student’s eligibility unless such student’s eligibility would eliminate a school, in a team sport, or the student, in an individual sport, from a Florida High School State Championship Series contest before the next meeting of the Board of Directors. In the event a member school requests an emergency hearing before the Board of Directors, requesting such hearing the member school consents to the hearing being conducted by teleconference and agrees to pay all expense including expenses such as the cost of the teleconference and the costs of the stenographic recording of such hearing.

10.5.9 **Emergency Appeals Committee**

10.5.9.1 **Purpose of Committee.** The Executive Director authorizes an Emergency Appeals Committee solely to decide those issues normally decided by the Sectional Appeals Committee or the Board of Directors in which elimination from the Florida High School State Championship Series has occurred.

10.5.9.2 **Composition of Committee.** The committee will be composed of five ad hoc members as follows:

(a) One non-attorney member from each of the four Sectional Appeals Committees; and
(b) One attorney member from one of the four Sectional Appeals Committees. The attorney member shall chair the Emergency Appeals Committee.

10.5.9.3 **Selection of Committee Members.** When requested by the Executive Director, the Emergency Appeal Committee members will be selected as follows:

(a) Each non-lawyer member will be designated by the Chairperson of the respective Sectional Appeals Committees; and
(b) The attorney member, who will serve as the chair of the committee, will be designated by the Executive Director.

10.5.9.4 **Authority and Duties of Committee.** The committee:

(a) Shall decide those issues normally decided by the Sectional Appeals Committee or the Board of Directors when a school, in team sport, or an individual, in an individual sport, would be eliminated from a Florida High School State Championship Series contest before the next meeting of the Sectional Appeals Committee or Board of Directors;
(b) Shall not be called upon to decide undue hardship cases, or other cases, affecting a student’s eligibility unless such student’s eligibility would eliminate a school, in a team sport, or the student, in an individual sport, from a Florida High School State Championship Series contest before the next meeting of the appropriate Sectional Appeals Committee or the Board of Directors.

10.5.9.5 **Committee to Meet as Needed.** The committee meets as needed upon call by the Executive Director.

10.5.9.6 **Appeal of Decisions.** The decision of the Emergency Appeals Committee can be appealed by the member school or the Executive Director at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.
10.6 APPEAL AND REQUEST FOR WAIVER PROCEDURES

10.6.1 Filing an Initial Appeal or Request for Waiver. An appeal or request for waiver must be filed with the Executive Director in the format provided by this Association and must be accompanied by all necessary documentation. The appeal or request, including all required documentation, must be signed by the principal and received in the office of this Association not later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time on the filing dates established by the Board of Directors and printed in the FHSAA Planning Calendar. Appeals and requests received after the deadline date will not be considered at that Sectional Appeals Committee meeting, but will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting. Incomplete appeals or requests for waiver will be returned to the person or entity making the appeal for an opportunity to resubmit with all the necessary information prior to the deadline, if time allows. The Sectional Appeals Committee cannot provide rulings on eligibility matters that may or will occur in a future school year. Rulings will only be made on eligibility matters for the current school year.

10.6.2 Filing an Appeal or Request for Waiver to the Board of Directors. The request for an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors must be made in writing to the Executive Director, must be signed by the member school principal or his/her designee and must be received in the office of this Association within five (5) business days following the date of the Sectional Appeals Committee meeting or the Infraction Appeals Committee meeting. Failure to file a request for an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors within the five (5) business days following the date of the Sectional Appeals Committee meeting or the Infraction Appeals Committee meeting shall be deemed a waiver of the right of an appeal as granted herein. The Board of Directors cannot provide rulings on eligibility matters that may or will occur in a future school year. Rulings will only be made on eligibility matters for the current school year.

10.6.3 Appearances Before Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee, Emergency Appeals Committee and/or Board of Directors. The person or entity making the appeal has the opportunity to appear before the Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee, Emergency Appeals Committee and/or the Board of Directors if he/she so chooses. The person or entity making the appeal must give notice of their choice to appear at the time the appeal or request for waiver is filed. Appearance by the student and a school representative, in person or through video teleconference, is mandatory for an appeal or request for undue hardship waiver involving age, limit of eligibility and unsportsmanlike conduct provisions when heard by the Sectional Appeals Committee, and is optional when heard by the Board of Directors.

10.6.3.1 Appeal Hearing Option. The person or entity requesting an appeal has the opportunity to appear before the Sectional, Infractions or Emergency Appeals Committee at the site of the hearing or via Teleconference. The choice of the method of appearance must be indicated on the form provided by the association.

10.6.3.2 Appeal Hearings via Teleconference
10.6.3.2.1 Teleconference Hearings. By requesting an Appeal Hearing via Teleconference, the member school and the student consents to such a hearing being conducted via appropriate teleconference methods (i.e. tele/video conferencing, webinar, Skype, etc.). It is the responsibility of the school requesting a hearing before an Appeal Committee via Teleconference to provide the appropriate teleconference equipment to participate in the hearing and to have a notary public present at the time and location where the appealing school and student will be located. Filing an appeal through the Teleconference option must meet the same standards as indicated in Bylaw 10.6.1.

10.6.3.2.2 Teleconference Requirements. The teleconference shall be stenographically recorded and shall be conducted in such a manner that any member of the public shall have access to the telephone conference by telephone. The notice shall provide the information necessary to allow public access by telephone to the telephone conference meeting.

10.6.3.3 Procedure for Appearance. A person or entity making the appeal who is required, or who chooses, to appear before the Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee and/or the Board of Directors will be assigned a time for the appearance. A twenty (20)-minute block will be allotted for each case involving an appearance.

10.6.3.4 Student Appearance. A student who is required, or chooses, to appear before the Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee and/or the Board of Directors must be accompanied by a school representative and may be accompanied by his/her parent(s) or other individuals with whom he/she lives. The school representative who is required to accompany the student must be a full-time employee of the school and must be identified on the form at the time of filing. The student may be represented by an attorney. Such representation will not excuse the appearance of a student when that appearance is required.

10.6.3.5 Additional Information. Additional information may be submitted and heard at the time of the appeal, for student eligibility cases (§ 1006.20(7)(g), F.S.).

10.6.4 Appeals of Executive Director’s Findings. To appeal the finding of the Executive Director, the appeal must be filed so that it is received in the office of this Association within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the Executive Director’s finding and/or notification of the imposition of penalty. Failure to file an appeal so that it is received in the office of this Association within the ten (10) business days allowed shall be deemed a waiver of the right to appeal as granted herein.

10.6.5 Mediation
10.6.5.1 Written Notice. The request for mediation must be made in writing to the Executive Director on the form(s) provided by the Association, must be signed by the member school principal or his/her designee and must be received in the office of this Association within five (5) business days following the date of the Sectional Appeals Committee hearing. The request must include a declaration of what the member school, as the representative of the student, is seeking as a successful mediation of the
If mediation is set, the mediator shall be selected from a panel of experienced mediators designated by the Board of Directors for the purpose of mediating eligibility decisions.

10.6.5.2 Mediators. If mediation is set, the mediator shall be selected from a panel of experienced mediators designated by the Board of Directors for the purpose of mediating eligibility decisions.

10.6.5.3 Parties to the Mediation. The parties to the mediation shall be the Executive Director, or his/her designee on behalf of the Association, and a representative from the member school and the student and/or parent(s) on behalf of the student.

10.6.5.4 Mediation Date. Mediation hearings, if needed, will be scheduled monthly. Mediation hearings will not be scheduled for cases that are in conflict with state statutes.

10.6.5.5 Mediation Procedures. Mediation sessions should not require more than twenty (20) minutes per session. However, if the mediator determines that the mediation is proceeding toward a positive resolution, the mediation session may be extended. Mediation shall be held at the FHSAA building unless the parties and the mediator agree to a telephonic/electronic mediation.

10.6.5.6 Terms from Mediation. If the parties reach an agreement at mediation, then the member school and student waive all rights to further appeals of this matter. If the parties do not reach an agreement at mediation, then the member school may proceed with an appeal to the Board of Directors. Notice of appeal must be in writing and received within 5 business days following the mediation session.

10.6.5.7 Cost of Mediation. The cost of mediation shall be shared equally by both parties.

10.6.6 Appeals Procedure

10.6.6.1 Written Notice of Appeal. To be considered by the appropriate appeals committee, the school’s written notice of appeal of the findings of fact or the penalty imposed, or both, must be received in the FHSAA Office not later than 10 business days from the date that the school receives the FHSAA staff’s decision in secondary cases, or confirms its receipt of the infractions report in major cases. The notice of appeal must indicate whether the school will submit its appeal in writing only or whether it will appear before the appeals committee at the time the appeal is considered. The school must submit supporting information for its appeal, if any, to the FHSAA Office by the deadline established by the FHSAA.

10.6.6.1.1 Appeal of Secondary Violations. Sectional Appeals Committees hear and act on appeals of secondary cases.

10.6.6.1.2 Appeal of Major Violations. The Infractions Appeals Committee hears and acts on appeals of major cases.

10.6.6.2 Basis for Granting an Appeal

10.6.6.2.1 Appeal of Findings. An appeals committee may set aside findings of fact and violations arrived at ONLY if the school shows that:

(a) The finding of the FHSAA staff is clearly not supported by evidence that is credible, persuasive and of a kind on which reasonably prudent persons rely in the conduct of serious affairs;

(b) The school’s actions do not constitute a violation of FHSAA rules; or

(c) A procedural error affected the reliability of the information that was used to support the FHSAA staff’s finding. In this case, the school must demonstrate how it contends the staff was in error.

10.6.6.2.2 Appeal of Penalties. An appeals committee may set aside a penalty imposed by the FHSAA staff if the appeals committee determines that the penalty is excessive or inappropriate based on all the evidence and circumstances.

10.6.6.2.3 Committee Acts on Basis of Record in Case. An appeals committee can act only on the basis of the record in the case. This record consists of the notice of inquiry and/or allegations to the school, the report of the investigator and the written response by the school.

10.6.6.2.3.1 New Evidence. The appeals committee may stay an appeal when new information is introduced and refer the case back to the FHSAA staff for review if the committee concludes that:

(a) The new information was not available, and through the exercise of reasonable due diligence could not have been available, at the time the FHSAA staff issued its finding; and

(b) The new information is demonstrably relevant to the findings of the staff.

10.6.6.3 Appeal of Unfavorable Decision by Appeals Committee. A school that is unsuccessful in its appeal to the Sectional Appeals Committee or Infractions Appeals Committee may appeal the committee’s decision to the FHSAA Board of Directors. The school’s written notice of appeal of the committee’s decision must be received in the FHSAA Office not later than five business days from the date of the hearing before the appeals committee. The notice of appeal must indicate whether the school will submit its appeal in writing only, or whether it will appear before the Board of Directors at the time the appeal is considered.

10.6.6.3.1 Board Acts on Basis of Record in Case. The Board of Directors can act only on the basis of the record in the case. This record consists of the information that was available to the appeals committee at the time it rendered its decision. The Board of Directors may stay an appeal when new information is introduced and refer the case back to the FHSAA staff for review per the conditions of paragraph 10.6.6.2.3.1.
10.6.7 **Emergency Appeals Committee Appeals Procedures**

**10.6.7.1 Request for an Emergency Appeal.** A request for an emergency appeal shall be filed with the Executive Director within 48 hours after the member school learns that there is a need for a decision before the matter can be considered at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Sectional Appeals Committee. Failure to file a request within 48 hours shall be deemed a waiver of the right of an emergency appeal.

**10.6.7.2 Teleconference.** By requesting a hearing by the Emergency Appeals Committee, the member school consents to such a hearing being conducted by teleconference and shall be governed by Bylaw 4.1.3.1.

**10.6.7.3 Cost of Emergency Appeal.** By requesting a hearing by the Emergency Appeals Committee, the member school agrees to pay all expense including expenses such as the cost of the teleconference and the costs of the stenographic recording of such hearing.

**10.6.8 Recording of Appellate Hearings.** All appellate hearings shall be under oath and stenographically recorded by a bona fide court reporter.

10.7 **EMPOWERMENT**

**10.7.1 Sectional Appeals Committee Powers.** The Sectional Appeals Committee is empowered to consider a request from member schools seeking exceptions to Bylaws and regulations, to hear undue hardship eligibility cases filed by member schools on behalf of student-athletes, and to hear appeals filed by member schools or other individuals. The decision in each case shall be by majority vote and may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

**10.7.1.1 Reliance on a Sectional Appeals Committee Decision.** A school that allows a student to participate in accordance with a Sectional Appeals Committee decision that is later reversed by the Board of Directors will not be subject to the penalties normally assessed a school that allows participation by an ineligible student.

**10.7.2 Infraction Appeals Committee Powers.** The Infraction Appeals Committee is empowered to hear and act upon appeals of schools found to have committed major violations and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors and FHSAA staff relative to the formulation and revision of FHSAA enforcement policies and procedures. The decision in each case shall be by majority vote and may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

**10.7.3 Board of Directors Powers.** The Board of Directors is empowered to review appeals and requests for waivers and sustain, modify or overturn the decision of the Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee and/or the Executive Director in each case that comes before it.

**10.7.3.1 Finality of Ruling.** The decision of the Board of Directors in each case shall be by majority vote and shall be final.

**10.7.4 Executive Director’s Powers**

**10.7.4.1 Executive Director Initiated Reviews.** The Executive Director may refer to the Board of Directors for review a decision of a Sectional Appeals Committee that directly conflicts with decisions of other Sectional Appeals Committees or of the Board of Directors on the same question or rule; or that, in the opinion of the Executive Director, is rendered in conflict with the rules of the Association or will have a great effect on the proper administration of the interscholastic athletic programs throughout the Association. The Executive Director will notify a member school in writing when a decision rendered by Sectional Appeals Committee will be referred to the Board of Directors for review.

**10.7.4.2 Appeal of Infraction Appeals Committee Decisions.** The Executive Director is empowered to appeal any decisions made by the Infraction Appeals Committee to the Board of Directors.

10.8 **PROCEDURE IN CASES OF EXPULSION**

**10.8.1 Procedures.** When the Executive Director believes that his/her findings in any investigation into any violation of any rule of this Association warrants the expulsion of a member school or a restriction of its membership privileges, the following procedure must be followed:

(a) **Notice.** The Executive Director will notify in writing the principal of the school of the date, time and site of the Board of Directors meeting at which a hearing on the school’s membership status will be conducted. The notice must state the findings of the Executive Director and must advise the principal of his/her obligation to represent his/her school at the hearing. This notice must be received by the principal of the school not fewer than 10 business days in advance of the date of the hearing.

(b) **Hearings.** During the hearing before the Board of Directors, the school may have an attorney present, may present witnesses, testimony, and any other relevant evidence or information for consideration by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director may also present witnesses, testimony, and any other relevant evidence or information for consideration by the Board of Directors.

(c) **Final Decision.** Following the presentation of evidence and arguments, the Board of Directors will render its decision by majority vote. The Board of Directors is empowered to sustain, modify or reject the findings and recommendation of the Executive Director. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.
10.8.2 Applying for Reinstatement. A school that has been expelled or has had its membership privileges restricted for a period of one or more calendar years may apply for readmission or reinstatement of its membership privileges after a period of one calendar year and then yearly thereafter. The principal of the school must notify the Executive Director in writing that he/she intends to apply for readmission or reinstatement and request to be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The principal will make a verbal appeal for readmission or reinstatement before the Board of Directors at that meeting. A school that has been expelled or has had its membership privileges restricted may be readmitted or have its membership privileges reinstated only upon approval by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

10.9 COMPLIANCE WITH DECISIONS
The administrative decisions of the Board of Directors, Infraction Appeals Committee, Sectional Appeals Committee and Executive Director shall be accepted in good faith by all member schools. The principal of any member school who, by any act or attitude, shall refuse to accept, or shall hold in contempt or derision, or shall permit or acquiesce in such contempt or derision on the part of any group or individual associated with his/her school, shall subject his/her school to expulsion from this Association. These provisions are not to be construed as preventing the principal of a member school from exercising his/her school’s right to due process by appealing decisions of the Executive Director to the Sectional Appeals Committee, Infraction Appeals Committee and/or the Board of Directors.