

From: Davis Whitfield <davis@nchsaa.org>
Subject: Re: Composite School thoughts- Ed. and Ath. Committee
Date: April 7, 2014 8:56:01 AM EDT
To: Bobby Guthrie <bobbyguthrie71@gmail.com>, Carolyn Shannonhouse <carolyn@nchsaa.org>

This will need to be a top priority for discussion of the policy committee later this month.....

I think we are getting the numbers right re: realignment, seeding for our various sports, etc....and we are doing it with a lot of hard work from Que and our city/co ad's...we simply need to make sure the rule fits our current practice.

Davis Whitfield

Commissioner

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North Carolina High School Athletic Association
www.nchsaa.org



On Apr 4, 2014, at 11:24 AM, Bobby Guthrie <bobbyguthrie71@gmail.com> wrote:

Davis,

Robbie put together some good information. In WCPSS, we actually have some **Board Policy** on this (see below for part of Board Policy 6860). I know that we were in contact with the NCHSAA many times before taking to the Board for approval. I talked with Carolyn yesterday, and we are going to meet Thursday, April 10th about some of the discussions/issues.

Students enrolled and attending WCPSS Special/Optional Schools (e.g. Longview, Mary Phillips, Mt. Vernon, RiverOaks) may participate in interscholastic athletics at their base school. Students must meet all WCPSS, Department of Public Instruction, and NCHSAA eligibility requirements. The principal of the school in which the student participates shall be responsible for approving participation in athletics and is responsible for certifying their eligibility and having on file all records pertaining to eligibility. **We call our alternative schools Special/Optional Schools. Students eligible for athletics participate at their base school (based on address). We provide Que a breakdown each year of the the number of students that will be based at each WCPSS HS for athletic purposes.**

Students enrolled and attending WCPSS middle or high school programs without interscholastic athletics will have the opportunity to participate in athletics. For each school without interscholastic athletics, the Superintendent/Designee will assign a school for athletic purposes. **Our Leadership Academies (Girls and Boys), Wake Early College, STEM are examples of some of our HS without athletics. These schools enrollments "are included/should be included" in the attendance numbers for the assigned HS for athletic purposes.**

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Davis Whitfield** <davis@nchsaa.org>
Date: Thu, Apr 3, 2014 at 9:35 PM
Subject: Fwd: Composite School thoughts- Ed. and Ath. Committee
To: Bobby Guthrie <bobbyguthrie71@gmail.com>

fvi ..

Davis Whitfield
Commissioner, NCHSAA
Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Robbie Cauley <william_cauley@pender.k12.nc.us>
Date: April 3, 2014 at 8:01:27 AM EDT
To: Davis Whitfield <davis@nchsaa.org>, Que Tucker <que@nchsaa.org>, Rick Strunk <rick@nchsaa.org>
Subject: Composite School thoughts- Ed. and Ath. Committee

Good morning!

Attached is an essay of my thoughts on this discussion that we had on the 26th. It took me a while to put things down and to reflect upon how these concerns can affect the membership and the kids. It is an issue that is important to me, and one that I have dealt with closely. I am or have been a county AD, a traditional high school principal, and an early college principal, so I've seen this from a lot of angles.

Thanks for your consideration, and please feel free to call me if I can be of any help at any time.

--
Robbie Cauley, Ed.D.
Director- Career and Technical Education for Pender County Schools
Director- Athletics for Pender County Schools

"For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack" -- Rudyard Kipling

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Bobby Guthrie
Retired Wake County Schools Athletic Director
NIAAA Certified Master Athletic Administrator
NFHS Coaching Education Accredited Interscholastic Coach
Telephone 919-604-7136

<NCHSAAcompositeteamissue.doc>

From: #10
Robbie Carley, Pendu County Schools
Director of Athletics

NCHSAA- The Composite Team Issue

- (1) P. 119- A high school is composed of grades 9-12 inclusive. No student can be approved for practice or an athletic contest unless he is a regularly enrolled member of those grades at the school submitting his eligibility.
 - (2) P. 120- No administrative unit (county or city) of this state may use students of two or more of its high schools to form a "composite team."
 - (3) P. 124- A student must, at the time of any game in which he or she participates, be a regularly enrolled member of the school's student body, according to local policy. If there is no local policy, "regularly enrolled" is defined as enrolled for at least one half of the "minimum load." It is recommended the student be in school the day of the contest.
 - (4) P. 125- Alternative or extended day school students who meet all other eligibility requirements may participate in athletics for the school to which they would normally be assigned if local policy allows it, provided the alternative/extended day school has no athletic program. The alternative schools referenced here are those operated by the school system itself.
- The definition of a high school has changed dramatically in the last few years. There are early colleges, re-designed high schools, middle colleges, academies, and others. Even the grade span has variations, as many early colleges offer grades 9-13. This evolution in schooling may mean that the definition on page 119 should be changed to define what a high school is as far as the NCHSAA and eligibility is concerned.
 - Based on the rule on composite teams, as it is written, every LEA that allows early college students to participate is playing ineligible players. Early colleges, and there are more than 80 of those in North Carolina, are stand-alone high schools with their own principals and school identifying numbers with NCDPI. Most of these are housed on the campuses of community colleges or universities, but not all. The Wayne School of Engineering in Goldsboro is on the campus of Goldsboro High School, for example. Either way, they are separate high schools in practice and on paper.
 - The eligibility statement from page 124 further enforces that early college students are ineligible. They are not "regularly enrolled" students at the high school at which they participate. They are enrolled at another high school.
 - Early colleges are NOT alternative schools. Although the NCHSAA manual does not define alternative schools, those are typically, within an LEA, schools established to serve students that are assigned to it based on academic or disciplinary concerns. NCDPI

requires that every LEA have an alternative program of some sort. The same requirement is not made of early colleges. If these schools are truly what the NCHSAA means, and I think it is, then “Alternative School” should be defined in the manual. Otherwise, I think an LEA may try to use that proviso to allow early college students to play. Early Colleges are not Alternative Schools; rather, they are alternatives to school.

- Different LEAs have different requirements when it comes to early colleges and academies. Trying to adopt one policy that one LEA uses over another will almost certainly cause heartburn. In the matter of providing examples, consider the following: Pender County does not allow early college students to participate in athletics at another high school. New Hanover County has two early colleges, neither of which is allowed to participate. Cumberland County has three early college programs in which all students are allowed to participate at the high school to which they would normally attend. The early college in Wake County located at NC State allows its students to participate in athletics at Athens Drive High School. Wayne County has two early colleges. The one located at Wayne Community College does not allow its students to participate, while the one located on the campus of Goldsboro High allows its students to participate at Goldsboro High School, even though they live in all areas of Wayne County. Academies within high schools are also handled in a variety of ways, but most allow students to participate at the school where the academy is located as long as they are enrolled in the academy. This is true for Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Onslow.
- I did not find where students at early colleges or alternative programs are to be counted in a school ADM for realignment purposes or for football playoff sub-dividing, although we know that is in policy somewhere. This is important. If that is in writing, then I think the NCHSAA gives implicit permission for those schools’ students to participate. If that is the case, then there is a contradiction with the rules as set out on pages 119, 120, and 124.
- It might not be a bad idea to talk to someone at North Carolina New Schools about the Early College program and the idea of Cooperative Innovative High Schools. That may give some insight into the formation, vision, and progress of those programs. Joyce Loveless, Antonia Johnson, or De McKenzie are good points of contact with NCNS. Those schools were not designed to offer interscholastic athletics. That’s probably why none of them have sought NCHSAA membership, and there are more than 80 in the state. Those schools recruit students from across their respective LEA, and all of them have a screening process, which includes the concept of enrolling students that are “1st generation college students.” The opportunity to participate in athletics is not usually a “selling point” on the early college program, but I can see where that could potentially be

a problem for the NCHSAA and the individual LEA if those opportunities were seen as an advantage to attending an early college or similar program.

- When all is said and done, I think what we want is for the kids to have the opportunity play if they are so inclined to do so. At the same time, it appears that the LEAs need the flexibility to establish guidelines for their academies and early colleges that are the best fit for their district. I think those two ideas can be perpendicular to each other, and writing a policy or policies that will work in every situation for what each LEA wants or currently does is nearly impossible. I do think the topic that brought on this conversation- the “un-consolidation” of the two Northampton schools can be solved for the moment. The statement on composite teams on page 120 should refer to NCHSAA-member schools forming composite teams. Of course, that automatically opens up anyone to end their membership and then combine their teams with a member school. That is what is happening when the early colleges play currently.
- The issue of academies, such as the IB academy at North Mecklenburg HS, can be resolved within the LEA. Those students are “regularly enrolled” at the high school in which they attend their respective academy program, and should be able to play at that school. If they drop from the academy but wish to stay at the school or go back to a home school, then the LEA has its own eligibility guidelines that they enforce. I surmise that LEAs either developed these guidelines or had them in place when they started these programs, since it involves a student transfer. Therefore, I think the current NCHSAA guidelines are sufficient.
- The school-within-a-school concept, such as the one at East Wake HS, basically divides the existing student body of the school into separate areas of focus. Even though each of these individual smaller schools has a principal in practice, there is usually one principal of the school, at least on paper. Several years ago, Scotland County did this with their high school. The principal of Scotland HS was technically one of the district’s assistant superintendent, but there were several divisions within the campus that had their own leadership. They did away with this program a few years ago. Nevertheless, those students are regularly enrolled at East Wake HS- {school of arts, health science, etc.} and can compete for East Wake HS. I think the NCHSAA manual covers this.
- Alternative and Extended Day programs need to be explained and/or defined in the manual. While each LEA has one (it is a statutory requirement), they come in many variations. Some have separate stand-alone schools that have their own principal, school number, and they even graduate from that school. New Hanover County does it this way. On the other hand, many LEAs operate a “school-within-a-school” model where the

students are housed at a school but may remain enrolled at a home school as far as paperwork and data reporting. This is how Pender does it. Dr. Ken Gattis at NCDPI is the expert on alternative programs. This definition would just help separate alternative programs as the NCHSAA intends versus an LEA trying to say an early college or something along those lines is an alternative school just so they can play.

- It all comes back, in my thought process, to the early college model. We need some sort of statement on these schools as far as participation, enrollment counts, and even residency. As mentioned earlier, this program was not started with athletics in mind, so allowing athletic participation has been a work in progress and it is done differently in many areas. It would seem that a standard where the LEA had the power to determine their eligibility would be prudent. Of course, some LEAs have used the “regularly enrolled” statement as meaning the early college kids were ineligible. By strict interpretation, that is the correct ruling, but as we know many LEAs do not follow that. A blanket statement by the NCHSAA giving that power to the LEA would create a need for many local boards of education to create a policy if they don’t already have one. Bottom line, how early college kids are treated across the state is wildly inconsistent. Academies, high school re-designs, and alternative schools are pretty consistent. This is what we need to address, if we want to have any hope of keeping a level playing field and being fair to the kids.
- Therefore, after all of these considerations, here is what I propose: Each LEA that has an early college program, or a program that is a separate school with a school number and its own principal and its own site, will notify the NCHSAA prior to August 1 of the potential athletic eligibility of those students by filling out a simple form. The form can ask if there is a program and if so, will the students be potential student athletes. If not, that is the end of it. If yes, then they will state the name of the school and the member school to which the students will be able to participate by LEA policy. If it is a single school, such as the Wayne School of Engineering in Goldsboro, then the LEA will submit the number of students at the school in order to accurately reflect the ADM for subdividing and realignment. If the students can participate at a variety of schools based on their residence, such as in Cumberland County, then the LEA will submit to the NCHSAA the total number of students at the early college that could play for each of the “home schools.” This way, the kids have the opportunity to play if that is what the LEA wants, there isn’t a need for a drastic change in the manual, and the NCHSAA office will have a file of who does and who does not allow these kids to play, where they’re playing, and how many of them there are.