Hickman County Board of Education

	Descriptor Term: **Interscholastic Athletics**	Descriptor Code: **4.301**	Issued Date: **08/05/24**
		Rescinds: **4.301**	Issued: **06/05/22**

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise be discriminated against in any athletic program of the school. Equal athletic opportunities shall be provided for members of both sexes.[1] Student athletes shall only be allowed to participate in athletic activities or events that align with the student's sex indicated on his/her original birth certificate.[2] The Director of Schools/designee shall require the parent/guardian to provide the student's original birth certificate prior to participation in any interscholastic athletics. If the original birth certificate is not available or does not indicate the student's sex at the time of birth, the parent/guardian shall provide medical documentation showing evidence of the student's sex at birth.

Interscholastic athletics shall be administered as a part of the regular school program and shall be the principal's responsibility. Principals shall ensure that school regulations regarding participation in a sport are reasonable. Athletic schedules shall be filed in each school principal's office. The principal or his/her designee must accompany an athletic team on trips. Transportation of teams to athletic games is approved by the Board, provided the team's school reimburses the Board for mileage.

Bylaws of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association shall regulate the operation and control of athletics.[3] The Director of Schools shall develop a code of conduct for all coaches to follow in order to ensure the health and safety of athletes.[4]

In the event that the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to an athlete, that athlete must provide proof of independently secured catastrophic coverage and liability coverage, with the school system as a named insured, of not less than the limits set forth in TCA § 29-20-403.[5] It shall be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide health and hospitalization insurance for all students participating in interscholastic athletics.

Prior to participation in interscholastic athletics, every student must complete an annual physical examination.[6] The parents/guardians of each student shall be responsible for covering the cost of the examination, and these records shall be on file in the principal's office. It shall be the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian to provide health and hospitalization insurance for all students participating in interscholastic athletics.

No principal or teacher of any school under the control of the Board shall dismiss his/her school or any group of students for the purpose of attending the practice of any interscholastic sport during the school day without written permission from the Board.[7] This does not prevent the inclusion of regular physical training lessons in the daily school program.

Students shall not be required to attend a school athletic event, or event related to participation on a school athletic team, if the event is on an official school holiday, observed day of worship, or religious

holiday. The student's parent or legal guardian shall notify the coach in writing three (3) full school days prior to the event.[8]

SEVERE WEATHER[4]

Severe weather is any type of weather that could impede the safety of any athlete by compromising the playing conditions of the interscholastic sport. Severe weather includes, but is not limited to, thunder, lightning, and extreme temperatures. When severe weather is forecasted, suspension of play shall be discussed with all players, coaches, and officials, if applicable.

All coaches who oversee or participate in outdoor training, practice, or competition shall annually complete a heat illness prevention course approved by the Tennessee Department of Health as well as receive training on activity modifications based on environmental conditions.

Coaches, employees, and volunteers of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities.[9]

HOME SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION [10]

Home school students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with TSSAA or TMSAA guidelines. If a school is not a member with these organizations, home school students that are zoned for the school shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics to the same extent as other students.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION[11]

Virtual school students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with TSSAA or TMSAA guidelines. If a school is not a member with these organizations, virtual school students that are zoned for the school shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics to the same extent as other students.

Legal References

1. 34 CFR § 106.41; 20 USCA § 1681 *et seq.*
2. TCA 49-6-310(a)
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.08(1)
4. TCA 49-6-3601
5. TCA 29-20-403
6. 20 USCA § 1232h(c); TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.01(1)(a)
7. TCA 49-6-1002(a)
8. TCA 49-6-1002(c)
9. TCA 49-2-120
10. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 658
11. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 173

Cross References

Special Use of School Vehicles 3.402
Student Insurance Program 3.601
Extracurricular Activities 4.300
Attendance 6.200

Hickman County School System

Interscholastic Athletics	4.301AP

Interscholastic Activities

General Provisions:

1. The Principal shall be responsible for the administration and control of the interscholastic athletic program within the school.
2. The Principal or his designee is required to accompany an athletic team on its trips, and all trip requests shall be made according to the procedures established the administration of the Hickman County Schools.
3. Coaches shall follow Hickman County Schools chain of command procedure for any request related to athletics. Coaches must obtain a purchase order prior to committing the district or any school to purchasing any products or service.
4. School athletics are to be coached only by personnel employed/approved by Hickman County Schools. Such coaches are to be compensated only from Board funds, according to the current salary schedule. Coaches shall not receive pay other than from Hickman County Schools for any athletic-related services provided to any student who is or may be participating in that coach's sport except that coaches may participate in school authorized clinics, camps, etc.
5. Any student, except as outlined below, shall be eligible to try out for any athletic team. Academic and citizenship requirements for being a member of an athletic team shall be carefully considered and developed to promote the welfare of the individual student. Only students in grades 6-12 shall engage in interscholastic activities.
6. Recruiting of students is forbidden in any fashion.
7. Students must have a current athletic physical on file, based on TSSAA standards, before being allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity involving athletics in the Hickman County school system. These activities include but are not limited to weight training outside of the instructional day, conditioning, open facilities, tryouts, practices, and athletic contests.
8. No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise be discriminated against in any athletic program of the school. Equal athletic opportunity shall be provided for members of both sexes.
9. Coaches and other employees of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities as part of the athletic program.

High School Interscholastic Athletics

1. The by-laws of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association shall be adopted as a part of the regulation for the operation and control of athletics in the secondary schools in Hickman County.
2. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities during any semester, the high school student shall at least meet current TSSAA standards.

Hickman County School System

Athletics Emergency Action Plan	4.301.6AP

The athletics emergency action plan (AEAP) shall be established, reviewed, and annually rehearsed for responding to serious or life-threatening injuries sustained by students participating in school youth athletic activities.

Coordinated School Health coordinator shall work with the Board and local emergency medical services personnel to establish, in writing, the AEAP. The following factors shall be incorporated:

1. Nationally recognized standards;

2. Address or venue of each school youth athletic activity for the school year;

3. District employees in each school who are responsible for carrying out the AEAP, including their assigned responsibilities and the designated chain of command;

4. Healthcare professionals who may provide medical care during school youth athletic activities;

5. Equipment and supplies that may be needed to respond to a medical emergency at a school youth athletic activity, including the location of each item;

6. Description of the proper procedures to be followed after a serious or life-threatening injury occurs (e.g., responding to the injured individual, summoning emergency medical care, assisting emergency responders, documenting the actions taken during the emergency); and

7. Contact information for emergency medical services and directions to assist emergency personnel in accessing the location of a school youth athletic activity.

The AEAP shall be distributed to all athletics district employees as well as to the employees in each school who are responsible for carrying out the AEAP and any healthcare professionals who may provide medical care during school youth athletic activities.