



Missouri State High School Activities Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MSHSAA Board of Directors Grants Relief of By-Laws

Schools beginning the school year virtually may participate in MSHSAA events.

Columbia, Mo.- The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) Board of Directors met virtually on Tuesday afternoon August 4, 2020. Among the topics discussed were granting relief of two by-laws and a Board Policy; granting relief of the MSHSAA Constitution allowing schools not meeting in-person to participate in MSHSAA activities; allowing virtual competitions in activities with the technological capabilities and modifying the release date for Fall Classification and District Assignments, and other topics. The following changes were for the 2020 – 21 school year only.

The Board discussed a request made by member schools to grant relief of the MSHSAA Constitution, under the Hardship Provision of the MSHSAA Constitution, for the 2020-21 school year only, waving the requirement for member schools to provide instruction in a building or buildings. The Board granted relief of the MSHSAA Constitution which provides a MSHSAA Member School the ability to participate in activities if the school begins the school year or transitions to entirely virtual instruction, provided they are following all health department requirements and phases, if applicable. After a long discussion, the Board determined this should be a local school decision. Upon the approval of the Board, a member school may now determine if its teams will participate in MSHSAA activities while its students are receiving virtual instruction only, while following all requirements and guidelines set forth by their health department officials. Students must meet all requirements of the local school, with the local school having the ability to always be more restrictive. It is a local school decision on what criteria it puts in place in order to earn the privilege to represent the school in interscholastic competition. MSHSAA Member Schools may always be more restrictive than the minimum requirements of the MSHSAA By-Laws put in place by the member schools; however, they cannot be less restrictive.

The Board also took up two requests for relief of By-laws for the 2020-21 school year. The first was concerning By-Law 3.16.6 and in conjunction with Board Policy 23. These two areas of the MSHSAA Handbook define a “preseason jamboree”. The Board granted relief from a portion of the terms and conditions to allow for an additional option of a two-team jamboree. This action was done to help schools wishing to take part in a preseason jamboree.

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“The MSHSAA promotes the value of participation, sportsmanship, team play and personal excellence to develop citizens who make positive contributions to their community and support the democratic principles of our state and nation.”

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The Board also granted relief from By-Law 5.1.2, which deals with postseason eligibility. This by-law states "To be eligible to enter a team or individual in any preliminary or state event, a school must have competed in at least half of the number of contests permitted under the by-law pertaining to that particular sport." Given the sudden changes that may occur during the season, the Board voted to grant relief of this section of the by-law to allow teams that complete less than half of their scheduled contests to remain eligible for the postseason in their sport or activity.

Due to the ever changing procedures on how member schools are handling the start of this school year, the Board discussed and approved moving the release date of the classification and district assignments for the Fall seasons. Originally scheduled to be released on Friday, August 21st, the assignments will now be released on Friday, September 18th. Member schools will now have until September 11th to notify the MSHSAA office if they have a sport that will not be able to participate in the postseason. Those teams that will not be participating in the postseason will be removed from the classification process for that specific sport.

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