

EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET
Kentucky Board of Education
Department of Education
(Amendment)

702 KAR 7:065. Designation of agent to manage middle and high school interscholastic athletics.

RELATES TO: KRS 61.805 - 61.850, 156.070(2), 158.162, 160.380, 160.445, 20 U.S.C. 1681

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 156.070(1), (2)

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 156.070(1) requires the Kentucky Board of Education to manage and control the common schools, including interscholastic athletics in the schools. KRS 156.070(2) authorizes the board to designate an agency to manage athletics. This administrative regulation designates an agent for middle and high school athletics; establishes the financial planning and review processes for the agent; and incorporates by reference the bylaws, procedures, and rules of the agent.

Section 1. Definitions.

- (1) "Contact Drill" means that drills are run at Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5.
- (2) "KBE" means Kentucky Board of Education.
- (3) "KHSAA" means Kentucky High School Athletics Association.
- (4) "Level 0" or "air" means that players run a drill unopposed without contact.
- (5) "Level 1" or "bags" means that a drill is run with a bag or against another soft contact surface.
- (6) "Level 2" or "control" means that:
 - (a) A drill is run at an assigned speed until the moment of contact;
 - (b) One (1) player is predetermined the winner by the coach;
 - (c) Contact remains above the waist; and
 - (d) Players stay on their feet.
- (7) "Level 3" or "Control to Ground" means that:
 - (a) A drill is run at an assigned non-competitive speed or with players pre-engaged;
 - (b) There is a pre-determined winner; and
 - (c) Players are allowed to take their opponent to the ground in a controlled manner.
- (8) "Level 4" or "thud" means that:
 - (a) A drill is run at a competitive speed through the moment of contact;
 - (b) There is no predetermined winner;
 - (c) Contact is above the waist;
 - (d) Players stay on their feet; and
 - (e) A quick whistle ends the drill.
- (9) "Level 5" or "live" means that a drill is run at a competitive speed in game-like conditions.
- (10) "Non-Contact Drill" means that drills are run at Level 0, Level 1, or Level 2.
- (11) "OCR" means the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Section 2. The KHSAA shall be the Kentucky Board of Education's agent to manage interscholastic athletics at the middle and high school level in the common schools and private schools desiring to associate with KHSAA or to compete with a common school.

Section 3. To remain eligible to maintain the designation as the agent to manage interscholastic high school athletics, the KHSAA shall:

- (1) Accept four (4) at-large members appointed by the Kentucky Board of Education to its high school Board of Control;
- (2) Sponsor an annual meeting of its member high schools;
- (3) Provide for each member high school to have a vote on the KHSAA Constitution and bylaw changes submitted for consideration;
- (4) Provide for high school regional postseason tournament net revenues to be distributed to the member high schools in that region participating in that sport, utilizing a share approach determined by the high schools within that region playing that sport;
- (5) Provide for students desiring to participate at the high school level (regardless of the level of play) to be enrolled in at least grade 7;
- (6) Require its governing body to annually establish goals and objectives for its commissioner and perform a self-assessment and submit the results annually to the KBE by December 31;
- (7) Advise the Department of Education of all legal action brought against the KHSAA;
- (8) Permit a board of control member to serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive four (4) year terms with no region represented for more than eight (8) consecutive years;
- (9) Employ a commissioner and evaluate that person's performance annually by October 31, and establish all staff positions upon recommendation of the commissioner;
- (10) Permit the commissioner to employ other personnel necessary to perform the staff responsibilities;
- (11) Permit the Board of Control to assess fines on a member high school;
- (12) Utilize a trained independent hearing officer instead of an eligibility committee for a high school athletic eligibility appeal;
- (13) Establish a philosophical statement of principles to use as a guide in a high school eligibility case;
- (14) Conduct continual cycles of field audits of the association's entire high school membership, which provides that each high school is audited regarding each school's compliance with 20 U.S.C. Section 1681 (Title IX) and submit annual summary reports, including the highlighting of any potential deficiencies in OCR compliance to the Kentucky Board of Education;
- (15) As a condition precedent to high school membership, require each member high school and superintendent to annually submit a written certification of compliance with 20 U.S.C. Section 1681 (Title IX);
- (16) Conduct all meetings related to high school athletics in accordance with KRS 61.805 through 61.850;
- (17) Provide written reports of any investigations into possible violations of statute, administrative regulation, KHSAA Constitution, KHSAA Bylaws, or other rules governing the conduct of high school interscholastic athletics conducted by KHSAA or their designees to the superintendent and principal of the involved school district and school before being made public;
- (18) Not punish or sanction, in any manner, a school, student, coach, or administrator for allowing a student to play in an athletic contest or practice with the team during a time when an order of a court of competent jurisdiction permits the student to participate or otherwise stays or enjoins enforcement of a KHSAA final decision on eligibility;
- (19) Require any student enrolled initially in grade 7-12 who is repeating a grade for any reason, to be ineligible, during the school year that the grade is repeated, to compete in an interscholastic athletics competition at any level; and
- (20) Produce a public report or reports of member schools' compliance with submitting the required member school application and the required training aspects of KRS 158.162 and KRS 160.445 regarding emergency and cardiac action plans related to interscholastic athletics.

Section 4. To remain eligible to maintain the designation as the agent to manage interscholastic athletics at the middle school level, the KHSAA shall implement the following requirements for all participants in middle school interscholastic athletics, distribute these requirements to all middle schools, and publish on the KHSAA Web site:

(1) Require that these provisions apply to all middle school interscholastic athletics. The following indicates that a team is representative of a school and classified as middle school athletics:

- (a) The contest, event, or tournament is sponsored by a school or combined group of schools;
- (b) Competitors wear a school-issued uniform;
- (c) The contest, event, or tournament is sponsored by an outside entity as a school entry event, which is advertised or promoted as a school event, whether or not an entry fee is required;
- (d) A school entity pays an entry fee, for the student or team, including payment by booster organizations;
- (e) A school representative accompanies the student-athlete or transports the student-athlete to the contest, event, or tournament;
- (f) A designated or hired member of a school coaching staff, whether paid or unpaid, is present and offering instruction, advice, evaluation, or refinement of skills or exercising other duties defined as coaching within the sport rules;
- (g) Transportation to or from the contest, event, or tournament utilizes school provided or approved transportation;
- (h) Competitors in the contest, event, or tournament wear apparel identifying them by the name of the school, including the formal name, informal name, or team nickname;
- (i) Competitors in the contest, event, or tournament are provided promotional or other resources by the school including school media recognition, signage, and items indicative of school representation;
- (j) Competition in a contest, event, or tournament has, in any form, jurisdiction of the local school board or school-based decision-making body, including financial or other approval control; or
- (k) Competition in a contest, event, or tournament is covered by any school or school system provided or procured insurance policy;

(2) Require that any head or assistant coach, whether paid or unpaid, desiring to coach interscholastic athletics at the middle school level:

- (a) Meet the requirements of KRS 156.070(2)(h)2.;
- (b) Meet the requirements of KRS 160.380(5) and (6); and
- (c) Provide to the school documentation of successful completion of a C.P.R. course including the use of an automatic external defibrillator and the first aid training, conducted by an instructor or program approved by a college or university, the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or other bona fide accrediting agency that is approved by the KHSAA based upon industry standards. The certification shall be updated as required by the approving agency;

(3) Require adherence to the following items regarding safety, sports medicine, and risk minimization for all interscholastic athletics at the middle school level:

- (a) Each student, before trying for a place on a middle school athletic team, shall provide an annual medical examination, in accordance with KRS 156.070(2)(e), and shall use the KHSAA form MS-01;
- (b) All participants at the middle school level shall adhere to all sports medicine and risk minimization policies in use at the high school level that may be supplemented by the school, school district, conference, or association including:
 - 1. Heat index and heat illness programs;
 - 2. Wrestling weight management programs;

3. Concussion and other head injury policies including policies for minimizing impact exposure and concussion risks;
 4. The following football equipment drill work and practice activity limitations:
 - a. Football contact and non-contact practice shall use the appropriate clothing and equipment for the level of drill, including:
 - (i) A drill conducted in helmets-only shall be a Level 0, or Level 1;
 - (ii) A drill conducted in shells (shorts, shoulder pads, and helmets) shall be a non-contact drill; and
 - (iii) A contact drill shall be conducted in full equipment;
 - b. Middle school football shall practice a minimum of eleven (11) days before engaging another group or opponent in full contact, using the following minimum schedule:
 - (i) Five (5) days in helmets;
 - (ii) Followed by three (3) days in helmets and shoulder pads; and
 - (iii) Concluding with three (3) days in full equipment practice; and
 - c. Contact drills shall not be conducted more than twenty-one (21) days before the first regular-season contest;
 - d. The first regular season interscholastic contest shall not be played before the Saturday preceding week seven (7) of the National Federation of High Schools Standardized Procedure for Numbering Calendar Weeks; and
 - e. All middle schools shall maintain protective helmets in accordance with manufacturer's warranty guidelines for recertification;
 5. The following baseball pitching limitations shall apply to all interscholastic play at the middle school level including scrimmages, regular season, and post season games:
 - a. The pitch count shall be based on pitches thrown for strikes (including foul balls), balls, balls in play, and outs;
 - b. Warm-up pitches allowed before each inning, warm-up pitches allowed by the umpire in case of injury or game delay, and plays attempted against the batter-runner or any runner at first, second, or third base shall not count against this limit;
 - c. A pitcher at any level who reaches the pitch count limit in the middle of an at-bat shall be allowed to finish that hitter;
 - d. The required calendar rest shall begin on the day following the date on which the game began, or a resumed game began regardless of the conclusion time of the game; and
 - e. The rest periods shall be based on the following total pitches:
 - (i) Maximum pitches - eighty-five (85);
 - (ii) Fifty-six (56) pitches or more - three (3) calendar days rest;
 - (iii) Thirty-six (36) to fifty-five (55) pitches - two (2) calendar days rest;
 - (iv) Twenty (20) to thirty-five (35) pitches - one (1) calendar day rest; and
 - (v) One (1) to nineteen (19) pitches - no mandated rest;
 6. Students seeking to play or practice, including scrimmages, regular season, and post season games, in the sport of fastpitch softball, shall be required to wear face protection, commercially manufactured for softball facial protection and worn as intended by the manufacturer, when playing the positions of first base, third base, and pitcher; and
 7. Teams participating in middle school athletics as defined by subsection (1) of this section shall use KHSAA licensed officials in the sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, soccer, softball, and volleyball;
- (4) Create a permanent Middle School Athletics Advisory Committee. This committee shall:

- (a) Report regularly, not less than annually to the Board of Control of the KHSAA with the Board of Control obligated to make a recommendation to the Kentucky Board of Education with respect to annually proposed regulatory changes;
 - (b) Be composed of no less than three (3) middle school representatives from each Supreme Court district as well as no less than three (3) at large representatives from throughout the state;
 - (c) Provide an opportunity for nonprofit athletic groups, parents, and others to participate and provide input on the sport, athletic event, or athletes involved in interscholastic activities through local school districts;
 - (d) Meet not less than twice annually to review current programs and policies, make recommendations for improvements to and participation in middle school interscholastic activities, as well as any changes in statute, administrative regulation, or policy related to middle school interscholastic athletics, and assist in the development of model guidelines for schools, districts, conferences, and associations to be used in implementing a middle school athletic program; and
 - (e) Report regularly, not less than annually, to the commissioner of the KHSAA and issue, in conjunction with the commissioner, a formal written report annually to the KBE with recommendations for changes in statute, administrative regulation, or policy;
- (5) Require any organization conducting a school-based event at the middle school level to submit the following, which shall be published and listed on the KHSAA Web site:
- (a) Annual financial reports of all sanctioned and approved events sponsored by the organization; and
 - (b) Documentation of financial accountability including verification of federal status and tax documents including an annual IRS Form 990;
- (6) Provide notice to the middle schools related to any program conducted by KHSAA related to educating school administrators about the provisions of 20 U.S.C. 1681, Title IX;
- (7) Provide educational materials and a mechanism to facilitate the monitoring and tracking capabilities for the middle schools to ensure compliance with the provisions of KRS 160.445 and other requirements for coaches at the middle school level;
- (8) Require that any student who turns:
- (a) Fifteen (15) years of age before August 1 of the current school year shall not be eligible for interscholastic athletics in Kentucky in competition against students exclusively enrolled in grades 8 and below;
 - (b) Fourteen (14) years of age before August 1 of the current year shall not be eligible for interscholastic athletics in Kentucky in competition against students exclusively enrolled in grades 7 and below; and
 - (c) Thirteen (13) years of age before August 1 of the current school year shall not be eligible for interscholastic athletics in Kentucky in competition against students exclusively enrolled in grades 6 and below;
- (9) Require each school, school district, conference, or association of schools to develop rules and limitations regarding student participation at the middle school level to include:
- (a) A defined age limitation for participating students;
 - (b) A policy regarding the participation of students below grade 6;
 - (c) A limitation on practice time before the season in any sport or sport activity which shall not exceed the practice time adopted for play at the high school level;
 - (d) A limitation on the number of school-based scrimmages and regular season, school based contests in each sport or sport-activity, which shall not include post season contests and shall not exceed the allowable number of contests for that sport or sport-activity at the high school level; and

- (e) A limitation on the length of the regular competitive season in each sport or sport-activity, not including any post season activities, which shall not exceed the length for that sport or sport-activity at the high school level;
- (10) Conduct all meetings related to middle school athletics in accordance with KRS 61.805 through 61.850;
- (11) Issue an annual report to the KBE on the status of interscholastic athletics at the middle school level, including any recommendations for changes in statute, administrative regulation, or policy;
- (12) Allow a school or school district to join a conference or association that has developed rules for any particular sport or sport-activity to satisfy the requirements of this administrative regulation; and
- (13) The period of June 25 to July 9, inclusive, shall be a dead period for middle school athletics. During the dead period:
 - (a) Students shall not receive coaching or training from school personnel, whether salaried or non-salaried;
 - (b) School facilities, uniforms, nicknames, transportation, or equipment shall not be used;
 - (c) School funds shall not be expended in support of interscholastic athletics; and
 - (d) A postseason wrap-up activity, celebration, or recognition event relating to a spring sports team at a school may be held.

Section 5. Financial Planning and Review Requirements.

- (1) KHSAA shall annually submit the following documents to the KBE by October 31:
 - (a) Draft budget for the next two (2) fiscal years, including the current year;
 - (b) End-of-year budget status report for the previous fiscal year;
 - (c) Revisions to the KHSAA Strategic Plan as a result of an annual review of the plan by the KHSAA governing body;
 - (d) A summary report of operations including summaries of financial, legal, and administrative actions taken and other items ongoing within KHSAA. This report shall also include a summary of items affecting:
 - 1. Athletic appeals and their disposition, including the name of the individual, grade, school, and the action taken by KHSAA;
 - 2. Eligibility rules;
 - 3. Duties of school officials;
 - 4. Contests and contest limitations;
 - 5. Requirements for officials and coaches; and
 - 6. Results of a biennial review of its bylaws that results in a recommendation for a change, directing any proposals for change in association rules to be considered for a vote by the member schools at the next legislative opportunity; and
 - (e) A review of all items which have been submitted to the membership for approval through the processes established in the KHSAA Constitution and the result of the voting on those issues.
- (2) The KHSAA shall annually submit at the next meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education following receipt and adoption by the Board of Control, audited financial statements with the KHSAA Commissioner's letter addressing exceptions or notes contained in management correspondence if any.

Section 6. Forms. The forms incorporated by reference in this administrative regulation shall be filed:

- (1) Using the paper form; or
- (2) Using the electronic forms found on the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Web site at www.khsaa.org.

Section 7. Incorporation by Reference.

- (1) The following material is incorporated by reference:
 - (a) "KHSAA Constitution", 5/2025;
 - (b) "KHSAA Bylaws", 1/2026;
 - (c) "KHSAA Due Process Procedure", 5/2025;
 - (d) "KHSAA Board of Control Adopted Policies", 1/2026;
 - (e) KHSAA Form BA101- Baseball Pitching Limitation", 6/2016;
 - (f) KHSAA Form GE01, "Application for Membership", 7/2023;
 - (g) KHSAA Form GE04, "Athletic Participation Form, Parental and Student Consent and Release for High School Level (grades 9 - 12) Participation", 5/2025;
 - (h) KHSAA Form DP02, "Request for Statutory Waiver of Bylaw 2", 6/2018;
 - (i) KHSAA Form DP06, "Application for Athletic Eligibility for Domestic Students", 1/2026;
 - (j) KHSAA Form DP07, "Application for Athletic Eligibility for Non-Domestic Students", 5/2025;
 - (k) KHSAA Form DP16, "Request for Waiver of 20 Day Notice", 6/2018;
 - (l) KHSAA Form DP17, "Add. Info for Appeal", 6/2018;
 - (m) KHSAA Form DP18 "Waiver – 15 Day Exceptions", 6/2018;
 - (n) "KHSAA Form GE14- Contract for Athletic Contests", 5/2025;
 - (o) "KHSAA Form GE19-Title IX Procedures Verification", 5/2011;
 - (p) KHSAA Form GE110, "Wet Bulb Globe Measurement and Record", 6/2023; and
 - (q) "KHSAA Form MS01- Athletic Participation Parental and Student Consent and Release for Middle School (grades 5-8) Participation", 5/2025.
- (2) This material may be inspected, copied, or obtained, subject to applicable copyright law, at the Office of Legal Services, Department of Education, 5th Floor, 300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.(702 KAR 007:065. 13 Ky.R. 835; eff. 11-11-1986; 14 Ky.R. 989;This is to certify that the chief state school officer has reviewed and recommended this administrative regulation prior to its adoption by the Kentucky Department of Education, as required by KRS 156.070(5).

DR. ROBBIE FLETCHER, Commissioner of Education
DR. SHARON PORTER ROBINSON, Chairperson

APPROVED BY AGENCY: February 9, 2026

FILED WITH LRC: February 10, 2026 at 12:15 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT PERIOD: A public hearing on this proposed administrative regulation shall be held on April 29, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the State Board Room, 5th Floor, 300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, Kentucky. Individuals interested in being heard at this meeting shall notify this agency in writing five working days prior to the hearing, of their intent to attend. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing is received by that date, the hearing may be canceled. This hearing is open to the public. Any person who wishes to be heard will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed administrative regulation. A transcript of the public hearing will not be made unless a written request for a transcript is made. If you do not wish to be heard at the public hearing, you may submit written comments on the proposed administrative regulation. Written comments shall be accepted through April 30, 2026.

CONTACT PERSON: Todd Allen, General Counsel, Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard, 5th Floor, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, phone 502-564-4474, fax 502-564-9321; email regcomments@education.ky.gov