TSSAA Middle School Committee Meeting
9:30am CT, October 20, 2026

I. Welcome - Marty Moore, Keith Young, India Weaver, Brian Webb, Chuck Whitlock, Bryan Brown, Scott Carroll, Chris Burgess, Sarah Cope, Jeff Curtis, Lamar Lee, Richard McWhirter, and Emily Crowell attended in person. Rob Cummings, Tim James, and Chris Poynter joined virtually.

II. Review of TSSAA Middle School Division Bylaws/Regulations
   a. Cooperative Agreement Rule
      i. The Committee discussed a co-op proposal to submit to the Legislative Council in December that would align the middle school and high school cooperative agreement stipulations and impact on classification.
      ii. The Committee noted the value of establishing a deadline for a school to declare if they will co-op or have a team and was reminded that this is part of the membership statement each summer.
   b. Independent-Game Participation Rule
      i. The Committee discussed whether the independent-game participation rule is needed anymore for middle school basketball and football.
         1. The state office noted that we already let every other team sports have its athletes participate on independent teams and the rule itself is impossible for the state office to enforce. The TSSAA staff is constantly receiving anonymous emails to investigate. The rule only applies to independent games (not practices) and the penalty is that the student becomes ineligible at the varsity level once an infraction is discovered.
            a. 5 committee members would like it removed.
         2. Some Committee members expressed interest in expanding the rule to be the same as the high school rule, applying it to all team sports. There was some discussion about concerns with baseball and pitch count limits.
            a. 5 committee members would like it extended to all team sports.
         3. Making no change to the rule was also discussed, emphasizing that basketball and football are used to it.
            a. 3 committee members do not wish to change the rule.
         4. This will be added to February's Middle School Committee agenda.
            a. Committee members agreed to discuss with their schools before the next meeting.
            b. The TSSAA office will survey all schools via an emailed survey link prior to the next meeting.

III. TSSAA Middle School Division Classification Discussion

a. New enrollments
    i. An emailed form will be sent out in December to all middle school principals/ADs for schools to indicate if they wish to move up in classification in a sport. This information will be used to set the new district and region alignments which will be finalized at the February meeting.
b. District alignments and size limits - The Committee did not want to put a specific maximum or minimum number on district sizes, but instead will look at each sport's alignment individually in February.
c. Cross country qualifiers
    i. The number of team and individual qualifiers coming from each part of the state was discussed for the Cross Country State Championships. The Committee agreed that 8 individuals should qualify from each section for each class, but no change should be made to the number of qualifying teams from each section.
d. Co-ops
    i. Madisonville MS submitted a request to change its baseball classification (Supplement #1)
        1. Carroll- Brown to deny. Motion carries 13-0.
e. The following new schools have applied for membership in the TSSAA middle school division and will be put in classification in February.
    i. Harmony Independent - Memphis (Supplement #2)
    ii. Grace Baptist - Springfield (Supplement #3)
f. Appeals - The following classification appeals were heard, claiming declines in enrollment since the ADM enrollment numbers being used for 2027-28 classification and beyond were gathered:
    i. Sullivan Central MS (Supplement #4)
        1. Brown-Whitlock to deny. Motion carries 12-0-1.
    ii. Church Hill MS (Supplement #5)
        1. Carroll-Brown to deny. Motion carries 12-0-1.
    iii. Knox Doss MS (Supplement #6)
        1. Young-Cope to deny. Motion carries 13-0.

IV. The 2026-27 TSSAA Middle School State Championship schedule and locations were reviewed:

a. Tennis - September 25-27 at Adams Tennis Complex
b. Cross Country - October 3 at Weakley Park
c. Volleyball & Girls Soccer - October 8-9 at Siegel HS/MS
d. Cheerleading & Dance - November 12-13 at Knoxville Convention Center
e. Wrestling - December 18 at Siegel HS
f. Basketball - February 12-13 at Rutherford County Schools
g. Golf - TBD in May at Harpeth Hills Golf Course

h. Baseball - May 18-19 at East Hamilton HS, Ooltewah HS, & Lee University
i. Softball - May 18-19 at Warner Park in Chattanooga
j. Boys Soccer - May 19-20 at Richard Siegel Soccer Park in Murfreesboro
k. Track & Field - May 24 at UT Knoxville
    i. The 4x800m really was added last school year, but the state office recommended that these 6 races need to take place during a set time while the field events are ongoing to end the meet at a reasonable time.
        1. Brown-Curtis to move the 4x800m races to during the field events. Motion carries 12-0.

V. District/Region/Section Tournaments
a. The Committee reviewed Fall postseason events in cross country, girls soccer, and volleyball.
    i. Request to move Class AA Section 1 Cross Country meet to Oak Ridge Mounds Course (Supplement #7)
        1. Committee members will clarify, believe this is for a separate region meet
b. The Committee discussed postseason preparations for Winter & Spring sports.
    i. The Committee was reminded that if brackets are different then just taking the District #1 to the region, then send those brackets to Lamar Lee to update the TSSAA MS website.
    ii. Track & Field sectional dates and locations were reviewed.
        1. It was noted that the date that MS Sectionals need to be completed should be moved up to Saturday, May 8th to avoid interfering with high school postseason track events.
        2. It was suggested that the Track & Field Advisory Committee come up with MS standards that could be used for entering regions.
c. The TSSAA office is still working to establish Middle School Coordinators for postseason assistance in all sports.
    i. The Committee was given a deadline of Oct. 31 to submit names of potential middle school coordinators.
d. Postseason Financial Reports Requirement
    i. The Committee agreed that the TSSAA state office should recommend to the Legislative Council that region and sectional postseason events should submit 18% in all sports back to TSSAA, but not districts.

VI. School-submitted Items
a. The Committee continued discussion on a Football Sectional, indicating that areas of West and Middle TN are already doing it or working on getting it started.

b. A proposal was submitted to consider limiting artificial noisemakers at outdoor sports (Supplement #8)
    i. The TSSAA state office reminded the committee that NFHS playing rules are followed and there are not any rules limiting artificial noisemakers at outdoor sports
        1. Such a limitation would be very difficult for officials to enforce.
        2. Lighting and PA guidelines do exist in football and some other outdoor sports.
        3. School administrators have control over what comes in their stadium at home events.
        4. Need to emphasize at game administrators meetings at middle school level.

VII. The next Middle School Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 11th, 2027 at 1:00pm at the TSSAA Office in Hermitage.

VIII. For the Good of the Order
a. Bryan Brown asked if the state office would consider backing up the Cross Country State Championships due to climate concerns and how hot it has become during practices at the beginning of the school year. It was suggested the state meet be in late October. TSSAA will take the matter to the Cross Country Advisory Committee in November.
    i. There was also some discussion about the fall season being shorter than others and would there be a desire to combine MS state championships with HS state championships for fall sports.
b. The Middle School Wrestling State Tournament format, specifically whether to have a dual or individual tournament for boys, was discussed. The TSSAA office will survey participating schools at state this year and to all schools via email survey and bring that information to the Committee to vote on it in February.