

## **TSSAA Middle School Committee Meeting Minutes**

9:30am CT, September 30, 2025

- I. Welcome  
Bryan Brown, Scott Carroll, Tim James, Rob Cummings, Marty Moore, India Weaver, Chris Burgess, Jeff Curtis, Chris Poynter, Keith Young, Chuck Whitlock were present. Sarah Cope joined virtually. Lamar Lee, Richard McWhirter, and Emily Crowell represented TSSAA.
- II. Review of TSSAA Middle School Division Bylaws/Regulations  
Richard McWhirter reviewed TSSAA's current one-time transfer rule and what TSSAA will survey principals about this fall for how this rule looks in the future.  
Committee members discussed how they have seen the new transfer rules play out in their areas of the state. Topics brought up included whether JV participation should count as having an athletic record, and international students whose grade level does not match up. Some committee members are in favor of the current rule, but wish that principals from the sending school were required to provide documentation/description of what the athletic reasons were.  
Committee members requested that the email regarding the one-time transfer student that is sent to the AD includes the name of the transfer student so they know who to talk to their principal about. Additionally they suggested district ADs weighing in in a different way instead of leaving it up to school principals.
- III. TSSAA Middle School Division Classification Discussion
  - a. Co-ops - Emily Crowell reviewed how the staff has ruled on classification appeals. Co-ops with 3 or more schools were automatically moved up, but the host can appeal if the combined enrollments of all schools put them in the lower class.  
Scott Carroll suggested the committee look at limiting co-ops to only 2 schools like high school. The Committee will take a closer look at each sport, because that might eliminate participation opportunities in some sports (girls soccer); will be added to February agenda.
  - b. New Schools - the committee suggested the need for an official deadline for when a school must join TSSAA in order to be added to classification to be able to participate in postseason.  
-Keith Young informed the committee that Rutherford Co. has a brand new MS coming next year that will combine students from Stewarts Creek, Rockvale, and Blackman.
  - c. Scott Carroll & Chris Poynter suggested requiring schools to play everyone in their district, and requiring schools to play in the postseason; doing so would require the creation of a lot more districts to keep schools geographically close - will add to February agenda; one alternative could be making schools check a box saying they will be in postseason on their membership statement, and that indication is binding.

The committee suggested adding back in to postseason guidelines that if a school pulls out once competing in the district tournament, they are ineligible for postseason next year.

It was suggested that the TSSAA office, with the help of committee members, locate who the primary scheduling people are in each district. They could serve as MS coordinators that work with the MS committee. The committee also expressed concerns about larger districts outvoting smaller districts each time and requested some ironclad guidelines from the state office.

- IV. 2025-26 TSSAA Middle School State Championships
  - a. Tennis - September 27-28 at Adams Tennis Complex
  - b. Cross Country - October 4 at Weakley Park
  - c. Volleyball & Girls Soccer - October 9-10 at Brentwood HS/MS
  - d. Cheerleading & Dance - November 6-7 at Knoxville Convention Center
  - e. Wrestling - December 19 at Summit HS
  - f. Basketball - February 13-14 at Rutherford County Schools
  - g. Golf - TBD in May at Harpeth Hills Golf Course
  - h. Baseball - May 12-13 at East Hamilton HS, Ooltewah HS, & Lee University (with private schools as turf backups)
  - i. Softball - May 12-13 at Warner Park in Chattanooga (all turf)
  - j. Boys Soccer - May 13-14 at Richard Siegel Soccer Park in Murfreesboro (turf to grass for championship)
  - k. Track & Field - May 18 at UT Knoxville - 3 classes now, but same number of qualifiers - 4x800m added + a few Unified events

- V. Review District/Region/Section Tournaments
  - a. Fall
  - b. Winter
  - c. Spring

The state office requested to be notified by committee members if more than just district champions advancing; email brackets and updates during tournaments to Lamar Lee to put on MS website.

- VI. Next TMSAA Committee Meeting
  - a. Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 11:00am at Stewarts Creek Middle School
  - b. Hotel needs - committee members send requests to Lamar Lee

- VII. For the Good of the Order

- a. Snowden and Kate Bond want 2 more basketball games added (since their city championship is not a sectional qualifier) -India Weaver will email us separate request, Council would have to approve number of games in sports calendar (add to Feb. agenda).

- b. Nick Tilley at Memphis Rise wants soccer to have 16 districts and advance 2 instead of 32 districts and advance 1 to region; committee can look at addition of districts at Feb. meeting.
- c. Tim James mentioned the early start date for basketball practice; recommended we move first practice date to later by a few weeks (addition of spring practice made it so don't need to have early tryouts); Chris Poynter/Keith Young want firmer MS sports calendar - first contest date set by our office; struggle with football and non-championship sports Suggested changing the Sept date for starting winter sports practice, fall championships should be done before we start winter practice TSSAA staff reminded the committee that we have to keep officials shortages in mind once HS season in full swing. This topic can be discussed more at Feb. meeting.
- d. Issue of officials' associations prioritizing HS invitational tournament or regular season game over the MS Districts, Regions - TSSAA staff will work with our new Director of Officials Services about this when he begins in January.
- e. Request to have schools indicate Fall/Spring on certain sports when they activate them in the Portal - TSSAA staff will work with our Technology Director to see if we can make this happen.