2026-27 TSSAA Handbook

WRESTLING REGULATIONS

I. GENERAL REGULATIONS

TSSAA schools shall be divided into two classes (Division I and Division II) for wrestling competition. Division I shall have two classes for both Individual and Dual Meet Competition, Class A and Class AA, with eight regions. Division II shall have one class for Individual Competition with two regions and two classes for Dual Meet Competition, Class A-AA and Class AAA, with two regions.

A. The allowance of videotaping, filming, or streaming of regular season contests is left to the discretion of the administration of the host school (or the game administrator if there is no host school). Videotaping, filming, or streaming of postseason contests must be in accordance with the TSSAA Media Regulations and must be approved by the Tournament Director.

B. A school must file a schedule online prior to the date of the first contest allowed by the Sports Calendar with the state office. Contests added after a school submits their schedule online may be subject to approval by TSSAA. No school will be allowed to schedule a wrestling meet or tournament after the dates of the state dual meet championships.

C. It is recommended that during the regular season no air horns, cow bells or individual type noisemakers be allowed.

D. A Medical Doctor (M.D.), Osteopathic Physician (D.O.), Certified Nurse Practitioner, or Physician's Assistant may be used to sign the NFHS Medical Release for wrestlers to participate with skin lesions. They may also be used as designated, on-site meet appropriate health care professionals who have the authority to overrule the diagnosis of the appropriate health care professional who has signed the medical release form for a wrestler to participate or not participate with a particular skin condition as stated in NFHS Rule 4-2-4.

E. There shall be 14 weight classes: 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 157, 165, 175, 190, 215, 285.

II. INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

A. For the purposes of the TSSAA Wrestling Regulations, an invitational tournament only refers to an Individual Tournament or Combination Tournament as defined in the NFHS Wrestling Rules Book. Two day Invitational tournaments must be approved in writing by the Executive Director. The tournament must be approved in writing prior to the start of the tournament (Contact Kim Alley – kalley@tssaa.org).

B. Participation in an invitational tournament shall count in the total number of dates in which a member school is allowed to participate during the regular season. If a school wishes to order TSSAA plaques and medals for their tournament, they will be invoiced the cost of the awards through the TSSAA portal.

III. REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

A. Selection of a tournament site, employment of officials, financial arrangements and other plans for conducting the regional tournaments shall be made by representatives of the schools in the region.

B. All schools entering regional tournaments must submit a pre-match weigh in sheet generated by USA Bracketing to the tournament director at the time the seeding meeting is held. Schools that do not file by this deadline may be charged by the tournament director $25.00 for each day they are late in order to enter the meet. The penalty check shall go to the meet director in order to cover tournament expenses. The pre-match weigh in sheet shall also serve as the entry form for the regional tournament.

C. In Division I, Wrestlers that finish 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th in the region tournament shall advance to the sectional tournament. It is recommended that each region place up to 6 wrestlers. In the event that one region has less than four medalists, wrestlers who finish fifth or sixth from the corresponding region tournament will be used to fill the sectional tournament bracket in the place of a region's vacant position(s).

D. In Division II, Wrestlers that finish 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, or 6th in the region tournament shall advance to the state tournament.

IV. SECTIONAL TOURNAMENTS (Division I)

A. Selection of a tournament site, employment of officials, financial arrangements and other plans for conducting the sectional tournaments shall be made by representatives of the schools in the section. Priority for hosting is given to schools in odd numbered regions for odd years and even numbered regions for even years.

B. The region champion shall wrestle the corresponding region's 4th place wrestler in the first round of the sectional tournament. The region runner up shall wrestle the corresponding region's 3rd place wrestler in the first round of the sectional tournament. The top four wrestlers from each section shall advance to the state tournament. The format for the sectional tournament shall be double elimination, wrestleback to 3rd with no True 4th or True 2nd options. In the event a wrestler who has qualified for the sectional tournament cannot compete due to injury or by not making weight, shall be treated as a forfeit and the bracket shall not be redrawn. Any other open spots in the sectional bracket due too few qualifiers from each region shall be treated as a bye.

V. STATE TOURNAMENT (Division I)

A. The draw for the state tournament shall be made by the state office and shall be released after the completion of all sectional wrestling tournaments.

B. Wrestlers who meet the qualification shall be placed in each weight division in the state tournament. In order to be placed, a wrestler must be a sectional champion and must have been a state place finisher during his high school career. The criteria for placing shall be as follows:

1. Separate all state champions (includes state champions from other states).

2. The following criteria shall be used to separate state champions: **(a)** state champion at same weight, **(b)** state champion at higher weight, **(c)** state champion at lower weight. (If there are two state champions at the same weight the state champion from Tennessee will receive the higher seed.)

3. Follow the same procedure as #2 above for 2nd place from previous year, 3rd place from previous year,

4. Items #2 and #3 shall be applied in order to wrestlers who placed in the state tournament two years prior.

5. Blind draw.

C. After the brackets have been released, if a school suspects that an error has been made in the application of the criteria, the school should email Joe Blair, jblair@tssaa.org. If an error has been made, the state office will correct the error.

VI. STATE TOURNAMENT (Division II)

A. Wrestlers will be placed in their brackets according to their order of finish in the regional qualifying tournament.

VII. DUAL MEET REGIONAL AND SECTIONAL QUALIFYING EVENTS

A. In Division I Class A and Class AA, each district may determine which teams advance to the regional dual meet tournament by any method the district selects. Each region shall determine a champion and runner-up by any method the region selects. If the region uses a dual meet tournament to select its champion and runner-up, both districts must be represented. The format and seeding for the regional dual meet tournament shall be determined by the method the region selects. District coaches shall select their regional tournament site on a rotation basis. In odd-numbered years, the odd-numbered districts shall select the regional site and in even-numbered years, the even-numbered districts shall select the regional site. The regional dual meet champion and runner-up shall be determined by the Friday of NFHS Week 29 (January 22, 2027).

B. Each region champion and runner up shall advance to the sectional round which must be completed by Saturday NFHS Week 29 (January 23, 2027). Region 1 shall be paired with Region 2, Region 3 shall be paired with Region 4, Region 5 shall be paired with Region 6, Region 7 shall be paired with Region 8. The region champion shall host the region runner up from the corresponding region with the winner advancing to the Dual Meet State Championships.

C. In Division I Class A and Class AA, the draw for the tournaments will be released following the completion of all qualifying meets. Teams which qualify for the state dual tournament as regional and sectional champions who placed in the top four in the previous year's state dual tournament, shall be seeded according to their previous year's finish.

D. In Division II Class A-AA and Class AAA, two teams from the East Region and two teams from the West Region shall advance to the Division II State Dual Meet Tournament. The #1 qualifying teams shall wrestle the #2 qualifying teams in their respective class in the first round of the DII State Dual Meet Tournament.

VIII. SKIN CHECKS

A. Before the dual meet begins, the official shall perform skin checks or verify skin checks have been performed by an appropriate health care professional. Coaches may conduct weigh-ins, but cannot conduct skin checks to clear athletes for competition.

B. **Authorized to Perform Skin Checks:** Physician (MD, DO), Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, or Certified Athletic Trainer. The decision on whether to use an appropriate health care professional or the referee for skin checks shall lie with the school hosting the event.

C. The official or Certified Athletic Trainer performing skin checks shall not disqualify a wrestler if the NFHS Skin Release Form is properly completed by a Physician (MD, DO), Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant.

IX. GENERAL TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

No air horns, cow bells, or individual type noise makers will be allowed at regional, sectional, and state tournaments. The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities or tournament management system is not adequate to host a state qualifying event.

X. OFFICIALS

State tournament officials shall be selected by the TSSAA state office.

2026-27 WRESTLING WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Schools are required to follow the provisions of the weight certification program established by the association for all wrestlers competing in varsity and junior varsity programs.

The establishment of a minimum wrestling weight based on 7% body fat for males and 19% for females will be mandatory for all senior high school wrestlers. The TSSAA does not advocate that a wrestler's established minimum weight is the athlete's best weight, but simply the minimum weight at which the athlete will be allowed to compete.

I. Establishing Minimum Weights

A. Bioelectrical impedance (BIA) measurements will be utilized to determine each wrestler's body fat percentage. They will be taken using the Tanita TBF-300WA Body Composition Analyzer.

If the Tanita gives an "Error" reading on two consecutive readings with a wrestler, then skinfold measurements will be used to determine body fat percentage. Lange calipers shall be used at three specific sites to measure skin fold (Lohman sites, Abdominal, Tricep, and Subscapularis).

B. The BIA measurements will be preceded by hydration assessment. A wrestler must pass a specific gravity assessment with less than or equal to 1.025. If the wrestler fails the specific gravity assessment with greater than 1.025, the wrestler must rehydrate and wait at least 48 hours to retest. Digital fiber optic refractometers shall be used to determine hydration.

Provided the wrestler passes the hydration test, the results of his/her body composition assessment will be entered into the USA Bracketing database Weight Management in order to obtain a wrestler's minimum competitive weight based on the parameters in I.A. above.

C. Once a wrestler passes the hydration assessment, the measurement process has begun. If a wrestler is removed at any point after the hydration assessment, his/her only route of assessment is through the appeals process.

D. The lowest weight class in which a wrestler may compete will be determined as follows:

1. If the predicted weight, at 7% body fat for males and 19% for females, less 2% of that weight, is exactly that of one of the weight classes that shall be the wrestler's minimum weight class.

2. If the predicted weight, at 7% body fat for males and 19% for females, less 2% of that weight, falls between two weight classes, they must wrestle at the higher weight class.

II. Time Period for BIA Measurements

A. Regardless of when a wrestler first participates in a practice session, he/she may not compete during the regular season at the varsity or junior varsity level (exhibition matches) until his/her minimum weight has been determined and his/her name and data have been entered into the Weight Management program. (If there are problems in data entry into the Weight Management program, an exception may be made by the TSSAA state office, provided all information has been forwarded to the state office.)

B. BIA measurements may be conducted on or after September 15th of each year.

C. The controlled weight loss starting date ("Alpha date") will be the date on which BIA measurements are completed.

D. The deadline for all wrestlers to complete all BIA measurements and appeals is January 15th.

III. Who May Conduct Measurements of the TSSAA Weight Management Program?

Any properly licensed doctor of medicine, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, certified nurse practitioner, or Certified State Licensed Athletic Trainer who has been approved through a TSSAA training program. All names, cities, and telephone numbers will be listed on the TSSAA website.

IV. Growth Allowance

A two-pound growth allowance shall be added to each weight class after December 26th. Wrestlers whose predicted weight falls within 2 pounds of the scratch weight may become eligible for that weight class once the two pound growth allowance goes into effect on December 26th.

V. Weekly Weight Loss Monitoring

All wrestlers will be limited to losing no more than 1.5% of their body weight per week as they make their descent toward their predetermined minimum wrestling weight. This rule will be monitored as follows:

A. At each weigh-in, all coaches must present a pre-match weigh-in form of their team to the host administrator/coach and the head official. The head official shall place the pre-match weigh in sheet at the scorer's table. All of this can be obtained from the USA Bracketing website. If a school does not have a pre-match weigh in form, the referee shall report this to TSSAA.

B. All head coaches of participating teams in dual meets and tournaments will be required to record their actual weigh-in weights for dual meet and tournament competition. This applies to all levels of competition (varsity, JV, 9th grade, exhibition, etc.). The weigh-in sheet is established prior to competition and actual weights are recorded following competition. Actual weights must be recorded for all individuals who weigh in, regardless of whether or not the wrestler competed in a match.

C. Each participating school should complete the dual meet result section which is on the USA Bracketing website. This should be done immediately following competition. Match results not recorded should not be used for seeding purposes at the individual region tournaments.

D. In the event that any wrestler exceeds the 1.5% weekly weight loss rule, he/she will not be permitted to be entered on the pre-match weigh-in form. **If a wrestler competes at a lower weight class than her/she is eligible, then his/her win will be forfeited. When a team wrestles with an ineligible athlete in a TSSAA Dual Meet postseason tournament, the entire contest is forfeited, the team is removed from the tournament, and no team replaces that team in the tournament series.** If a wrestler violates the 1.5% weekly weight loss program but does not change weight classes, then there is no violation.

VI. Appeal Process

Any wrestler may appeal their body fat composition calculations. Results obtained at any step are automatically accepted. The weight class for which the wrestler qualifies shall be determined by the appeal. The steps of the appeal process are as follows:

A. Appeal – Any wrestler may make a request to a TSSAA Assessor for a complete retest within 14 days of measurement and the retest must also occur within 14 days of the first measurement. If skinfold measurement was used, a complete retest of the wrestler must be conducted by the same certified measurer of the first test. Bio-impedance will be used first. Included must be the athlete's name, date of measurement, and site of measurement.

Schools shall be assessed $30.00 per appeal. This will be added to each school's weight management invoice. The certified athletic trainer conducting the appeal may choose to charge additional fees to the school for conducting the retest.

B. Final Appeal – Must be completed by January 15 unless approved in writing by TSSAA.

1. DEXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometer)

a. Test is a test where bone density is measured through a type of x-ray machine that can very accurately determine body fat percentages.

b. The test is paid for by the wrestler or school and not the facility.

c. The results of this test are deemed final and completely binding.

2. Final Appeal Testing Site – Middle Tennessee State University

a. Appointments will need to be made through MTSU.

b. Contact TSSAA and Wade Bartlett at (931)-334-5958 for further information.

VII. Costs

TSSAA will pay for the cost of each school team's membership fees to NWCA for access to the Weight Management Calculator ($30 per boys team, $10 per girls team). An invoice will be issued to each school with a

fee of $5.00 per student-athlete as well as any appeals for that school to offset the costs of the Weight Management Program. Schools will be invoiced based on the number of wrestlers who appear on the school's USA Bracketing record. No fees shall be collected by TSSAA Assessors who are testing wrestlers at mass testing sites. Assessors may charge additional fees for the testing of wrestlers outside of a mass testing site. All fees for the testing of wrestlers that occur outside a mass testing site will be in addition to the $10.00 per student athlete that TSSAA charges for each wrestler appearing on the school's USA Bracketing report.