



**Bylaws of the  
Sunshine Independent  
Athletic Association, Inc.  
2023-2024 Edition**

**The Sunshine Independent Athletic Association**

**Board of Directors**

**2023-2024**

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**President Elect**

**Mr. Justin Harden**

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**Mr. Stephen McLaughlin**

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**Mr. Barry Dufae**

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**Mr. Matt Panaggio**

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**Mr. Carlos Morales**

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## **CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 1**

### **Name, Purpose, Objectives, General Terms and Fundamental Beliefs**

#### **1.1 NAME**

The name of this corporation is “Sunshine Independent Athletic Association 1.”

**1.1.1 Common References.** This organization is commonly referred to as the “Sunshine Independent Athletic Association,” or the “SIAA.”

**1.1.2 Type of Organization.** The SIAA is a voluntary association of middle/junior high schools, senior high schools, combination schools (K-12, K-8, 6-12, etc.) and home education cooperatives that are physically located in Florida. It operates as a not-for-profit corporation.

**1.1.3 National Affiliation.** The SIAA has no national affiliation.

#### **1.2 PURPOSE**

The SIAA provides leadership for the development, supervision and promotion of interscholastic athletic programs sponsored by its member schools. Participation in these programs enriches the educational experience of qualified student-athletes by providing them with opportunities to compete in an equitable, sportsmanlike and wholesome manner.

#### **1.3 OBJECTIVES**

To achieve its purpose, the SIAA will:

(A) Strive for interscholastic athletics to be an integral part of the educational program;

(B) Ensure the equitable conduct of interscholastic athletic competitions;

(C) Promote an understanding that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege earned by those who meet the established requirements;

(D) Provide rules for administrative control of, and responsibility for, interscholastic athletic programs that is consistent with the rules of the Association;

(E) Recognize the outstanding accomplishments of student-athletes, coaches, teams and schools;

(F) Protect member schools from exploitation by organizations and individuals whose purposes are not consistent with educational athletics;

(G) Encourage cooperation, friendship and sportsmanship among student-athletes, coaches and member schools; and

(H) Cooperate with the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Education in governing interscholastic athletics.

## **1.4 GENERAL TERMS**

**1.4.1 Bylaws or SIAA Bylaws** – refers to the rules and regulations of this Association that have been adopted by a majority vote of the Representative Assembly of this Association.

**1.4.2 Policies or SIAA Policies** – refers to the rules and regulations of this Association that have been adopted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

**1.4.3 Regulations or SIAA Regulations** – refers to the SIAA Bylaws and Policies.

**1.4.4 School Year** – refers to the period of time that begins on July 1 and continues to June 30.

**1.4.5 Academic/Athletic Year** – refers to the period of time which begins with the first day of practice for the fall sports or the first day of classes, whichever comes first for an individual school, and continues until the last day of classes for an individual school.

**1.4.6 Summer** – refers to the period of time which begins on the first day following the last day of classes for an individual school and continues through the Saturday preceding the first of day of practice for the fall sports.

**1.4.7 Permissible Contact** – refers to the time in which a coach is allowed to meet with athletes for the purpose of conducting tryouts, demonstrating and instructing sport-specific skills and techniques, and practices for a given sport.

**1.4.8 Start of a Sports Season** – commences with the first day of permissible contact for the given sport as determined in the SIAA Planning Calendar.

**1.4.9 End of a Sports Season** – concludes with the last contest for the given that a school has on its schedule for an individual sport. .

**1.4.10 Fiscal Year** – refers to the period of time that begins on July 1 and continues to June 30.

**1.4.11 Calendar Year** – refers to 365 continuous days.

**1.4.12 Standardized Calendar** – refers to the calendar in which each week is numbered 1 through 52, with Week 1 beginning the first Sunday in July.

**1.4.13 Semester** – refers to that period of time approximately equal to one-half of an academic year (approximately 90 days), with August through December/January as the first semester and January through May/June as the second semester.

**1.4.14 One Full Semester** – defined as being in attendance and earning a grade for an entire semester period (i.e., August through December/January as the first semester and January through May/June as the second semester).

**1.4.15 Team Sport** – refers to any sport in which competition is held between two collective groups of individuals in which winning or losing is by the group as opposed to by individuals (i.e., baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, volleyball, etc.). Team and individual honors may be awarded in team sports.

**1.4.16 Individual Sport** – refers to any sport in which competition is held between or among individuals in which winning or losing is by individuals (i.e. cross country, golf, tennis, track & field, weightlifting, wrestling, etc.). Team and individual honors may be awarded in individual sports.

**1.4.17 Athletic Activities** – refers to contact between coaches and student-athletes including, but not limited to: conditioning, weightlifting, tryouts, practices, intra-squad scrimmages and contests.

**1.4.18 Representative of a School's Athletic Interests** – “Representative of a school's athletic interests” refers to any independent person, business, organization or group that participates in, assists with and/or promotes that school's interscholastic athletic program. This includes:

(A) A student-athlete or other student participant in the athletic program, such as a team manager, student trainer, etc., at that school;

(B) The parents, guardians or other family members of a student-athlete or other student participant in the athletic program at that school;

(C) Relatives of a coach or other member of the athletic department staff at that school;

- (D) A volunteer worker in that school or that school's athletic program;
- (E) An athletic booster organization of that school;
- (F) A member of an athletic booster organization of that school;
- (G) A person, business, organization or group that makes financial or in-kind contributions to the athletic department or to an athletic booster organization of that school; and
- (H) Any other person, business, organization or group that is otherwise involved in promoting the school's interscholastic athletic program.

**1.4.19 Grading Period** – A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days).

**1.4.20 Member School** – A “member school” is a senior high school, middle/junior high school, a combination school or home education cooperative that is provisionally admitted or duly elected to membership in the Association.

**1.4.21 Secondary Violations** – Secondary violations are those that are isolated or inadvertent in nature, or provide little or no competitive advantage.

**1.4.22 Major Violations** – Major violations are those that are committed intentionally, or that provide a significant competitive advantage, or are committed due to a lack of administrative control of the interscholastic athletic program regardless of whether the school claims ignorance of the rule(s) violated. Multiple secondary violations may together be considered a major violation. A secondary violation committed by a school already on probation may be considered a major violation.

**1.4.23 Residence** – Residence as used throughout the rules and regulations of this association is used in two contexts; “school residence,” meaning the school at which student attends or represents and “physical residence,” meaning the location at which a student lives with his/her parent or guardian.

**1.4.24 Athletic Activities Affiliated with a School** – Athletic activities affiliated with a school are any athletic activities not sponsored by the school but are organized, coached and/or supervised by a school employee, athletic department staff member, or representative of the school's athletic interests or in which the majority of participants are students who attend the school.

## **1.5 FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF**

Interscholastic athletic programs play a vital role in the education of students who participate in them. Through their participation in inter-scholastic athletics, students are provided character-building opportunities to demonstrate honesty, integrity, respect, caring, cooperation, trustworthiness, leadership, tolerance and personal responsibility. These fundamental values enable participants to realize and fulfill their potential as students, as athletes, as individuals and as citizens.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 2**

### **Principles for the Conduct of Interscholastic Athletics**

SIAA rules governing the conduct of interscholastic athletic programs are designed to advance one or more basic principles, including the following, to which member schools are committed. In some instances, a delicate balance of these principles is necessary to help achieve the objectives of the Association.

#### **2.1 EDUCATIONAL NATURE OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Interscholastic athletic programs are designed to enhance the educational experience. The student-athlete is a student first, an athlete second; and each and every practice and competition is an extension of the classroom.

#### **2.2 PARTICIPATION IS A PRIVILEGE**

Participation in interscholastic athletics by a student is a privilege, not a right. To earn this privilege, students must abide by the rules and meet standards of academic performance and personal behavior that are related to school purposes.

#### **2.3 SPORTSMANSHIP AND ETHICAL CONDUCT**

Interscholastic athletic programs must encourage good character, enhance the integrity of education and promote civility in society. Student-athletes, coaches and all others associated with interscholastic athletic programs, as well as those who attend interscholastic athletic events, should adhere to the fundamental values of honesty, integrity, respect, caring, cooperation, trustworthiness, leadership, tolerance and personal responsibility. Each school is responsible for:

(A) Establishing policies for sportsmanship and ethical conduct in its interscholastic athletic programs that are consistent with the educational mission and goals of the school; and

(B) Educating, on an ongoing basis, all individuals associated with the school's

interscholastic athletic programs and events about those policies.

## **2.4 GENDER EQUITY**

The SIAA will conduct its activities in a manner free of gender bias and will adopt rules that enhance schools' efforts to comply with applicable gender-equity laws.

## **2.5 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Each school must control its interscholastic athletic programs by SIAA rules and regulations. The principal, who is ultimately responsible for the administration of all aspects of the school's interscholastic athletic programs, is responsible for ensuring this control, which extends to and includes responsibility for and control over the actions of:

- (A) The administration and faculty;
- (B) The athletic department staff and student-athletes;
- (C) The student body, parents and other spectators at athletic events; and
- (D) Any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.

## **2.6 COMPLIANCE WITH RULES**

Each school must comply with all applicable SIAA rules. The SIAA will assist schools in their efforts to achieve full compliance with all rules and will establish fair procedures for addressing alleged or identified failures in compliance. A school found to have violated SIAA rules will be subject to such disciplinary and corrective actions as may be determined to be appropriate by the Association.

## **2.7 NONDISCRIMINATION AND DIVERSITY**

The SIAA will promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. The Association will not discriminate in its governance policies, programs and employment practices on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, creed, sexual orientation or educational choice. The SIAA will promote diversity of representation within its governance structure and substructures. Each school is responsible to determine independently its own policies regarding nondiscrimination and diversity.

## **2.8 COMPETITIVE EQUITY**

SIAA rules will promote the opportunity for equity in competition to assure that



individual student-athletes and school teams will not be prevented unfairly from achieving the benefits possible through participation in interscholastic athletics.

## **2.9 ELIGIBILITY RULES**

The SIAA will adopt and enforce eligibility rules that assure proper emphasis on educational objectives and promote competitive equity among schools.

## **2.10 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES COMPETITION**

This Association may conduct state championship series to determine the official state champion(s) in those sports that are sanctioned by the Board of Directors. The privilege to participate in state championship series will be limited only to those schools that are duly elected to full membership in this Association. The Board of Directors will determine the sports in which state championship series are to be conducted and will establish the terms and conditions for each state championship series.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 3**

### **Membership**

#### **3.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**3.1.1 Opportunity for Membership.** A senior high school, a middle/junior high school, a combination school or a home education cooperative located in Florida may be a member of the SIAA if it meets the qualifications, conditions and obligations of membership.

**3.1.2 Deadlines.** When deadline dates fall on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday as established by Florida Law, the deadline will be the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

**3.1.3 Termination of Membership.** All privileges of a member school will cease immediately when its membership ends.

#### **3.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

**3.2.1 Member School.** A “member school” is a senior high school, middle/junior high school, a combination school or home education cooperative that is provisionally admitted or duly elected to membership in the Association. Member school not only refers to the institution, but also to its administration, faculty,

athletic staff, student-athletes, student body, and any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.

**3.2.1.1 Restricted Member.** A “restricted member”, otherwise known as a probationary member, is a member school that has its membership privileges restricted in some manner because it fails to meet the qualifications, conditions and obligations of membership.

**3.2.1.2 Full Member.** A full member will enjoy all privileges of membership, unless otherwise specifically withheld according to these bylaws. Membership privileges include, but are not limited to, the privilege to compete in SIAA championships, the privilege to vote in Association elections, the privilege to seek election to positions in the SIAA governance structure and sub-structures, and the privilege to make application for and serve as host of state series events.

### **3.2.2 Types of Member Schools.**

**3.2.2.1 Senior High School.** A “senior high school” is any school that provides instruction to students at one or more grade levels from 9 through 12.

**3.2.2.2 Middle/Junior High School.** A “middle/junior high school” is any school that provides instruction to students in middle school configurations (grades 6 through 8) or junior high school configurations (grades 7 through 9).

**3.2.2.3 Combination School.** A “combination school” is any school that provides instruction to students in both middle/junior high school grades and/or senior high school grades (i.e. K-12, K-8, 6-12, 7-12, etc.) under the direction of a single principal.

**3.2.2.4 Home Education Cooperative.** A “home education cooperative” is a parent-directed group of individual home education students that provides opportunities for interscholastic athletic competition to those students and may include students in grades 6–12.

## **3.3 QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

**3.3.1 Schools.** A senior high school, middle/junior high school or combination school located in the state of Florida may become a member if:

- (A) The school applies for membership on a form provided for that purpose;
- (B) The school is registered with the Florida Department of Education;
- (C) The school is accredited by an agency approved by the Association;

(D) The governing body of the school adopts these bylaws annually as the rules governing its interscholastic athletic programs;

(E) The school pays all dues and other fees required of member schools;

(F) The school maintains the insurance coverage required of member schools;

(G) The school provides the principal, the SIAA representative and the athletic director with the appropriate modes of communication;

(H) The school, if applicable, successfully completes its provisional period; and

(I) The Board of Directors elects the school to membership.

(J) The Board considers potential members based on a simple criterion of credibility & sustainability; is entry good for the school and the league.

**3.3.1.1 Loss of Accreditation.** A member school that loses its accreditation will have a maximum of three (3) years to regain accreditation. Privileges of membership can be withheld during this three-year period.

**3.3.1.2 Exemption from Accreditation Requirement.** A middle/junior high school is exempt from the accreditation requirement.

**3.3.2 Home Education Cooperatives.** A home education cooperative located in the state of Florida may become a member if:

(A) The principal applies for membership on a form provided for that purpose;

(B) The governing board of the cooperative adopts these bylaws annually as the rules governing its interscholastic athletic programs;

(C) The cooperative pays all dues and other fees required of member schools;

(D) The cooperative maintains the insurance coverage required of member schools;

(E) The cooperative successfully completes its provisional period;

(F) The cooperative provides the principal, the SIAA representative and the athletic director with the appropriate modes of communication; and

(G) The Board of Directors elects the cooperative to membership.

### **3.4 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

**3.4.1 Administrative Control.** A member school must control its interscholastic athletic programs in accordance with the regulations of the Association. Responsibility for this control rests with the designated representative, who is responsible for the administration of all aspects of communication for the school's interscholastic athletic programs with the SIAA.

**3.4.1.1 Scope of Responsibility.** Responsibility for control of a school's interscholastic athletic programs extends to and includes the education of, responsibility for and control over the actions of the school's administration, faculty, athletic staff, student-athletes, student body, and any other individual or group engaged in activities representing, supporting or promoting the athletic interests of the school.

**3.4.2 Compliance with Rules.** A member school must comply with all bylaws and other rules of the Association. The school must monitor its athletic programs to assure compliance with all bylaws and regulations must identify and report to the SIAA Office instances in which compliance has not been achieved, and must take appropriate corrective actions regarding such instances of non-compliance. Staff members, student-athletes and other individuals and groups representing, supporting or promoting the school's athletic interests must comply with applicable bylaws and rules. The school is responsible for such compliance.

**3.4.2.1 Eligibility of Student-Athletes.** A member school must certify the eligibility of all student-athletes. The school must not permit a student-athlete to participate in interscholastic competition unless the student-athlete meets all eligibility requirements.

**3.4.2.2 Cooperation with Association.** A member school must fully cooperate in the investigation of any alleged violation of the bylaws or other rules of the Association. A school that refuses to permit the interview of any individual, to grant access to and inspection of pertinent records, to submit relevant information to the Association upon request, or otherwise interferes with or obstructs the investigation, will be in violation of this provision.

**3.4.2.3 Compliance Review.** The SIAA Office may review member schools to verify compliance with bylaws and other rules of the Association. A school selected for review must fully cooperate with the review. A school that interferes with or obstructs the review, will be in violation of this provision.

**3.4.3 Insurance Coverage.** A member school must verify that athletic accident medical insurance coverage, catastrophic accident insurance coverage, and catastrophic disability insurance coverage is provided for each of its student-athletes. The school also must provide general liability insurance coverage for itself. The Board of Directors will establish the minimum limits for

each type of insurance coverage.

**3.4.4 Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct.** A member school must establish policies that promote sportsmanship and ethical conduct in its interscholastic athletic programs. These policies must require student-athletes, coaches and all other individuals associated with the school's interscholastic athletic programs to adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. The school must educate, on a continuing basis, all staff members, student-athletes, student body, and other individuals and groups representing, supporting or promoting the school's athletic interests about these policies.

### **3.5 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**3.5.1 First-Time Membership.** A school applying for first-time membership must submit a complete application packet as provided by this association. The application packet must be received in the SIAA Office on or before June 1<sup>st</sup> as established by the Board of Directors for the school to be considered for admission in the following school year.

**3.5.1.1 Application Form.** The application form must be obtained from the SIAA Office. The form must be fully completed and signed by the principal.

**3.5.1.2 Insurance Coverage.** The principal must provide photocopies of insurance certificates showing that the school has purchased the insurance coverage required of member schools.

**3.5.2 Continuing Membership.** A school must communicate its desire to continue as a member to the SIAA Office by June 1<sup>st</sup> as established by the Board of Directors. A school that does not communicate by the deadline may not be considered for reelection to membership for the following school year.

**3.5.2.1 Insurance Coverage.** A member school continuing its membership must provide photocopies of insurance certificates showing that the school has purchased the insurance coverage required of member schools.

**3.5.2.2 Good Standing.** A member school must be in good standing with the Association to continue its membership without restriction. Good standing requires the school to satisfy all outstanding obligations to the Association by the conclusion of the current school year.

### **3.6 PROCEDURES FOR ADMITTANCE AND ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP**

**3.6.1 Election to Full Membership.** The Board of Directors, at its final meeting of each school year, will determine whether to elect to full membership a school

that has applied for first-time full membership or has applied to continue its full membership for the following school year.

**3.6.1.1 Continuing Membership.** A member school that applies to continue its membership will be considered for reelection to full membership. The SIAA Office will report to the Board of Directors whether the school continues to meet fully the qualifications and conditions of membership and is a member in good standing. The SIAA Office also will recommend whether the school should be reelected to full membership.

**3.6.2 Advance Notice of Unfavorable Recommendation.** The SIAA Office will provide advance notice in writing to the principal of a school that will not be recommended for admittance, election or reelection to membership. The notice must contain the reason for the unfavorable recommendation. The principal will be advised that he or she may appear before the Board of Directors at the meeting to explain why the school should be admitted, elected or reelected to membership.

**3.6.3 Decision of Board of Directors.** The decision of the Board of Directors whether to admit, elect or reelect a school to membership must be by majority vote. The decision will be final.

**3.6.3.1 Reconsideration of Decision.** A school that is not admitted, elected or reelected to membership by the Board of Directors may request that the decision be reconsidered. The Board of Directors may reconsider the decision at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The school, however, will not be permitted to compete in the state series until it is admitted, elected or reelected to membership.

## **3.7 MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES**

**3.7.1 Annual Dues.** The Board of Directors will determine the annual dues to be assessed each member school.

**3.7.2 Membership Fees.** The Board of Directors may assess additional membership fees to be paid by each member school.

**3.7.3 Payment.** Dues and fees are payable each year in accordance with the deadline set by the Board of Directors. For 2023-2024, the membership dues are \$2000 per school plus an additional \$250 fee for each team in which a school chooses to participate in the state tournament.

**3.7.4 Due Date.** Dues and fees must be paid in full by November 1st. A Level 3 fine will be assessed to a school each week that the dues and fees are not received. All dues, fees, and fines must be paid by December 19th to ensure

eligibility in any state tournament. New members must pay at least 50% of dues by September 14th.

### **3.8 PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATIONS**

**3.8.1 Privileges of Full Membership.** A full member will enjoy all privileges of membership, unless otherwise specifically withheld according to these bylaws. Membership privileges include, but are not limited to, the privilege to compete in SIAA championships; the privilege to vote in Association elections; the privilege to seek election to positions in the SIAA governance structure and sub-structures; and the privilege to make application for and serve as host of multi-school events that require SIAA Office approval.

**3.8.1.1 Full Member Schools Not Eligible for SIAA Championships.** Only Restricted Member Schools and Member Schools who have not paid annual dues or membership fees are not permitted the privilege of participation in SIAA championships in the National Division. Restricted Members who elect to participate in Regional, Sunshine or Coastal Divisions are permitted to compete in the State Championships. Restricted Member Schools who have not paid annual dues are also not permitted to play in any Division State Tournament.

#### **3.8.2 Division Designations:**

- (A) All Full Member schools who are in good standing with the league and have retained a majority of their own school members including ownership, athletic administration staff, coaching staff, support staff and student-athletes for the following season, are eligible for competition in any division
- (B) All Full Member Schools who are either not in good standing with the league or have not retained a majority of their own school members including ownership, athletic administration staff, coaching staff, support staff and student-athletes for the following season, will assume the designation as a Restricted Member
- (C) Restricted Member Schools can compete in any Division, but cannot compete in the National Division State Tournament. Restricted Members are able to compete in all other Division State Tournaments.
- (D) All New Member Schools and New Athletic Programs are Restricted Members for the period of 1 season. Restricted Members are eligible to play in any division, however, may not compete for a State Championship in the National Division only.
- (E) All New Member Schools and New Athletic Programs are able to choose what division they want to compete, but must receive Board approval. The Board has the right to designate a Restricted Member to any Division and that designation is final.



**3.8.3 Completion of Probationary Period for Restricted Schools.** At the conclusion of the New Athletic Program's or Restricted Member's probationary season, the Board will vote to make permanent a School's Membership, assuming said School is in good standing with the league

**3.8.3.1 Designation.** Once a school is considered a Full Member, the Board will vote on the Division that Full Member School may compete in during the following season. All Restricted Member Schools must in writing express interest in moving to a different division if that is desired. If a New Athletic Program desires to stay in the same Division, no notification is necessary.

**\*Automatic Bids**

**(A) Teams competing in the Regional Division.** A winning record, Semi-Final Berth in the State Tournament and no league violations during the probationary season.

**(B) Teams Competing in the National Division.** A winning record, Finishing Top 2 in the Regular Season SIAA Conference Standings and no league violations during the probationary season.

**3.8.3.2 Designation Appeal.** If the Board votes unfavorably toward any Member School wanting to participate in the National Division, that Member School may request a Division Vote. The current National Division Teams will all receive one vote and a Member School may nullify the Board decision with the support of 75% of all National Division Members. The President will call for and preside over the public vote during a convened phone call of National Division Members.

## **3.9 TERMINATION AND RESTRICTION OF MEMBERSHIP**

**3.9.1 Suspension.** The SIAA Office may suspend a member school that fails to meet one or more of the qualifications, conditions and/or obligations of membership until the deficiency is corrected.

**3.9.1.1 Failure to Pay Dues and Fees.** A member school that does not pay its dues and fees by the deadline set by the Board of Directors (November 1<sup>st</sup>) will be subject to fines assessed by the League. Any Member School who fails to pay dues in full by December 19 will be suspended from play beginning at 12:01am on Dec 20. The suspended school may be reinstated at any time prior to January 1<sup>st</sup> by paying its dues, fees, and fines, and potentially an additional reactivation fee. Membership is terminated if the suspended school fails to pay in full its dues, fees, and fines by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**3.9.1.2 Failure to Provide Proof of Insurance.** A member that fails to provide



the SIAA Office with proof that it has the required insurance coverage will be suspended until the proof of insurance coverage is provided.

**3.9.2 Expulsion.** The Board of Directors may expel a member school that fails to meet one or more of the qualifications, conditions and/or obligations of membership, or fails to support and adhere to the purposes and policies of the Association.

**3.9.2.1 Restricted Membership.** The Board of Directors, instead of expulsion, may restrict one, more or all of the membership privileges of the school. The school remains a member even if all of its membership privileges are restricted.

**3.9.3 Cessation of Privileges.** All privileges of a member school will cease immediately upon any termination of its membership.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 4**

### **Organization and Governance**

#### **4.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**4.1.1 Form of Government.** The SIAA is a representative democracy.

**4.1.2 Governance.** These bylaws, administrative policies and other regulations, as well as Florida Statutes pertaining to the SIAA or interscholastic athletics in general, govern the Association.

**4.1.2.1 Constitutional Bylaws.** Constitutional bylaws establish the name, purpose, membership requirements and structure of the Association, as well as the more important principles for the conduct of interscholastic athletic programs. Only the Representative Assembly may adopt or amend constitutional bylaws.

**4.1.2.2 Operating Bylaws.** Operating bylaws govern the responsibilities of school administrations in conducting interscholastic athletic programs, the obligations of and relationships between schools in interscholastic contests, the eligibility of student-athletes, the penalties for rules infractions, and the procedures for appeals. Only the Representative Assembly may adopt or amend operating bylaws.

**4.1.2.3 Administrative Policies.** Administrative policies are adopted by the Board of Directors and are the basis for the regulations that govern the various SIAA programs. Only the Board of Directors may adopt or amend administrative policies.

**4.1.3 Florida Statutes.** The SIAA cannot waive any provision of Florida Statutes.

## **4.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

**4.2.1 Year of Service.** A person who serves on a body in the SIAA governance structure has served one year of his/her term of service if he/she was elected or appointed in advance of the first regularly scheduled meeting of the body in a school year. A person who is appointed to fill a vacant seat on a body after it has held at least one meeting in a school year will not be considered to have served a full year.

## **4.3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**4.3.1 Composition.** The Board of Directors is composed of the following members:

(A) Founding school representatives, The Potter's House Christian Academy, The Rock School, West Oaks Academy;

(B) And if decided necessary, non-founding school representatives elected by their constituents and approved of by the Board of Directors;

- Victory Rock Prep, DME Academy; Academy of Central Florida

(C) And if decided necessary, two community representatives elected by their constituents and approved by the Board of Directors.

**4.3.1.1 Quorum.** A quorum of the Board of Directors consists of three members.

**4.3.1.2 Passage.** A majority of votes cast by board members voting is required to pass any measure.

**4.3.2 Duties and Responsibilities.** The Board of Directors:

(A) Adopts and amends administrative policies and regulations to govern the Association's programs;

(B) Employs the Association's President;

(C) Approves and oversees the Association's budget;

(D) Assesses annual membership dues and other fees;

(E) Provides strategic planning for the Association;

(F) Serves as the highest and final appellate authority of the Association.

**4.3.2.1 Budget and Audit.** The Board of Directors at its final regularly scheduled meeting of a school year approves a preliminary budget for the next school year. It approves a final budget for the school year at its first regularly scheduled meeting of that school year.

**4.3.2.2 Appellate Authority.** The Board of Directors interprets and renders a final decision on all questions and appeals that result from the Association's supervision of interscholastic athletic programs. It has administrative responsibility and rulemaking authority for the Association's appellate branch. As such, the Board:

(A) Reviews, at the President's request, and

(B) Renders an advisory opinion addressing issues as provided by rule, at the President's request.

**4.3.2.3 Delegation of Duties and Responsibilities.** The Board of Directors, when it deems appropriate, may assign for recommendation specific matters to committees that it creates for those purposes. The Board of Directors will make a final determination based on the committee's recommendation.

**4.3.3 Meetings.** The Board of Directors meets a minimum of three times each school year. It sets the date and place of each meeting. The president may call additional meetings if needed.

#### **4.3.4 Selection/Term of Service.**

**4.3.4.1 Selection.** Each constituent group selects its representatives to the Board of Directors. The school representatives who represent each administrative section are elected by a majority of votes cast by all school representatives within the administrative section.

**4.3.4.2 Term of Service.** The term of service for a board member is indefinite, beginning July 1 following his/ her election or appointment. Board members may be voted out if all other board members and president voted unanimously to do so. This, however, does not apply to the founding schools of The Potter's House Christian Academy, The Rock School, and West Oaks Academy.

**4.3.5 Officers.** The officers of the Board of Directors are a president (and vice-president if necessary). Each serves a term of one school year, which runs concurrent with one year of his/her term of service on the board.

**4.3.5.1 President.** The president presides over all meetings of the Board of Directors and performs other duties of the office.

- Scott Golden is the President-Elect (2023 - )

**4.3.5.2 Vice President.** The vice president assists the president during all meetings of the Board of Directors.

**4.3.5.3 Vacancies.**

(A) If the president vacates the office before the end of his/her term, the vice president will serve as president for the remainder of the vacated term.

(B) If the vice president vacates the office before the end of his/her term, the Board of Directors elects a new vice president during its next regularly scheduled meeting.

(C) If both the president and vice president vacate the offices before their terms end, the Board elects an acting president and acting vice president for the remainder of the school year at its next regularly scheduled meeting. A new president and vice president for the following school year then will be elected at the final regularly scheduled meeting of the year.

## **4.4 REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**4.4.1 Composition.** The Representative Assembly is composed of the following delegates:

(A) One representative from each school.

**4.4.1.1 Diversity Appointments.** The Board of Directors may appoint additional delegates if necessary to ensure racial and gender diversity in the Representative Assembly.

**4.4.1.2 Quorum.** A quorum of the Representative Assembly consists of one more than half of its member delegates.

**4.4.1.3 Passage.** A majority of votes cast by delegates present and voting is required to pass any proposed amendment.

**4.4.2 Duties and Responsibilities.** The Representative Assembly's only duty and responsibility is to act on proposed amendments to the bylaws of the Association that are submitted for its consideration. The assembly can propose an amendment for consideration.

**4.4.2.1 Meetings.** The Representative Assembly meets one time each school year. The Board of Directors sets the date and place of each meeting. The president of the Board of Directors can call additional meetings if needed.

#### **4.4.3 Selection/Term of Service.**

**4.4.3.1 Selection.** Each member group selects its delegates to the Representative Assembly.

**4.4.3.2 Term of Service.** The term of service for a Representative Assembly delegate is two school years. A delegate may be reelected or re-appointed to additional two-year terms.

**4.4.4 Officers.** The officers of the Representative Assembly are a chairperson and a vice chairperson. The assembly elects both from among its members at the beginning of its meeting. Both may be reelected to their offices at consecutive meetings if they continue to serve as delegates to the assembly.

**4.4.4.1 Chairperson.** The chairperson presides over the meeting of the Representative Assembly at which he/she is elected.

**4.4.4.2 Vice Chairperson.** The vice chairperson performs the duties of the chairperson if he/she is absent or unable to act.

### **4.5 APPEALS COMMITTEES**

**4.5.1 Composition.** The Appeals Committee will consist of the Board of Directors plus two (2) additional members that are elected at the time of appeal.

#### **4.5.1.1 Committee Officers.**

**4.5.1.1.1 Chairperson.** An elected member serves as chairperson and presides over all meetings of the committee.

**4.5.1.1.2 Vice Chairperson.** The committee elects a vice chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of each school year. The vice chairperson presides over meetings of the committee when the chairperson is absent or unable to act.

**4.5.1.1.3 Vacancies.** If the chairperson vacates the office before the end of the term of service, the Board of Directors will appoint a replacement during its next regularly scheduled meeting. The vice chairperson, meanwhile, will serve as chairperson until a replacement is appointed. If the vice chairperson vacates the office before the end of the term of service, the committee will elect a new vice chairperson during its next regularly scheduled meeting.

**4.5.1.2 Conflict of Interest.** A member of the Appeals Committee who is associated with a school that files an appeal to the committee must disqualify himself or herself from hearing the case to avoid any conflict of interest.

**4.5.1.3 Quorum.** A quorum of an Appeals Committee will be four members. The President will appoint a qualified person or persons to serve as substitute members to ensure the presence of a quorum when it is known a committee member or members will not be present.

**4.5.1.4 Passage.** A majority of votes cast by committee members voting will be required to pass any measure.

**4.5.2 Duties and Responsibilities.** The Appeals Committee will:

(A) Decide requests by schools seeking exceptions to bylaws and regulations of the Association;

(B) Decide undue hardship eligibility cases that are filed by schools on behalf of students; and

(C) Decide appeals of decisions rendered by the President that are filed by member schools. The Appeals Committee can only sustain or overturn the decision, but cannot modify the decision.

**4.5.2.1 Florida Statutes.** A Sectional Appeals Committee will not have the authority to waive any provision of Florida Statutes.

**4.5.2.2 Meetings.** The Appeals Committee will meet as needed to carry out its duties and responsibilities. The President will notify the Chairperson of the need for an Appeals Committee in which the Chairperson will be responsible for setting the meeting date and time.

**4.5.3 Selection/Term of Service.**

**4.5.3.1 Term of Service.** The term of service for a member of the Appeals Committee will be one school year. A committee member may be appointed to a second one-year term.

## **4.6 PRESIDENT ELECT**

**4.6.1 Employment.** The President is the Association's chief executive officer. The Board of Directors selects and employs the President by written contract for a stated period of time. This contract of employment may be renewed under conditions that are mutually satisfactory to the President and the Board of Directors.

**4.6.1.1 Staff.** The President is authorized to employ additional persons as needed to efficiently conduct the business of the Association. Such additional persons shall report directly to the President or his/her designee.

#### **4.6.2 Duties and Responsibilities. The President:**

- (A) Manages and directs the affairs of the Association;
- (B) Administers and enforces SIAA rules and impose sanctions when he/she finds that violations have occurred;
- (C) Presents an operating budget to the Board of Directors each year for approval, acts as custodian of all Association funds, and updates the Board of Directors on the Association's financial status at each of its meetings;
- (D) Waives bylaws in order to comply with changes to Florida Statutes;
- (E) Prepares and issues to schools any necessary materials;
- (F) Receives and checks all reports and materials submitted by schools;
- (G) Rules on the eligibility of all student-athletes who participate in interscholastic athletic programs in the sports recognized by the Association;
- (H) Calls upon the Board of Directors for advice and assistance, and performs such duties as may be necessary and expedient;
- (I) Keeps a record of all meetings of the Representative Assembly and Board of Directors;
- (J) Mediates controversies between schools at their request;
- (K) Refers any of his/her decisions or rulings to the Appeals Committee and the Board of Directors upon the request of a school; and
- (L) Performs any other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

**4.6.2.1 Emergency Power to Grant Provisional Eligibility.** The President's office may grant provisional eligibility to a student-athlete who suddenly becomes ineligible if, in its opinion:

- (A) The circumstances that cause the student-athlete to be ineligible are of a sudden and extraordinary nature and are completely beyond the control of the student-athlete, his/her parents, or school; and
- (B) The student-athlete will miss all or most of the sport season in which he/she participates if required to wait for the opportunity for a hearing before the Appeals Committee.

**4.6.2.1.1 Period of Provisional Eligibility.** Any period of provisional eligibility

granted to a student-athlete will end with the next regularly scheduled Appeals Committee meeting, during which his/her undue hardship waiver request will be considered. The student-athlete will immediately become ineligible for further competition if the Appeals Committee does not grant the waiver. The school that permitted the student-athlete to participate during the period of provisional eligibility, however, will not be penalized unless it is determined that provisional eligibility was granted on the basis of erroneous information provided by the student-athlete, his/her parents, or school.

## **4.7 ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES**

### **4.7.1 Elections.**

**4.7.1.1 Positions Held by School Representatives.** The SIAA Office will conduct elections for school representative positions on the Board of Directors each year in each administrative section as follows:

**4.7.1.1.1 Declaration of Candidacy.** A school representative who wants to run in a particular race and is eligible to do so must communicate with the SIAA Office. The representative must designate which position he/she would like to hold. Communication with the SIAA Office must take place prior to the day of elections. A school representative who wants to run in more than one race may do so, but must file the appropriate form for each race.

**4.7.1.1.2 General Election.** The school representative may vote for only one candidate in each race. The candidate in each race receiving the majority of votes cast will be the winner.

**4.7.1.1.2 Tie in Elections.** The Board of Directors, by majority vote during its final regularly scheduled meeting of the school year, will determine a winner in any election that ends in a tie. Each candidate shall have the opportunity to submit a resume to the Board of Directors for its consideration.

### **4.7.2 Vacancies.**

**4.7.2.1 Positions Held by School Representatives.** The Board of Directors will appoint an eligible person to fill a Board of Directors position when the person holding the position vacates before the end of his/her term of service. The person appointed to the position will serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 5**



## **Amendments**

### **5.1 SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS**

**5.1.1 Submission.** Each member school representative, the Board of Directors acting as a whole or as members acting individually, any advisory committee to be established by the Association acting as a whole, and the Association's President are empowered to propose amendments to the Bylaws. Any other individual may propose an amendment by securing the sponsorship of any of the above-mentioned individuals or bodies. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted to the President not less than sixty (60) days prior to consideration by the Representative Assembly. All proposed amendments received by the deadline shall be submitted by the President directly to the Representative Assembly for its consideration.

### **5.2 ACTION BY REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**5.2.1 Action.** The Representative Assembly shall consider, adopt, or reject any proposed amendments to these Bylaws. The Representative Assembly may be allowed to propose any amendment for its own consideration. Any revision to a proposed amendment by the Representative Assembly shall require the written authorization of its original sponsor(s). Such revisions shall require a majority of the votes cast by delegates present at the Assembly.

**5.2.2 Passage.** A majority of the votes cast by delegates present is required for passage of any proposal. A vote on the final passage of any proposal shall be by roll call or signed ballot with the vote cast by each delegate reported to the member schools.

### **5.3 EFFECTIVE DATE OF AMENDMENTS**

**5.3.1 Effective Date.** An amendment shall become effective on the first day of July following its adoption unless otherwise specified.

## **OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 6**

### **Authority and Responsibilities of the Principal or Head of School**

#### **6.1 DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY**

**6.1.1 Responsibilities.** The principal's responsibilities include the following:

(A) Enforce the Association's bylaws and policies in his/her school.

(B) Maintain institutional control of all phases of interscholastic athletic activities within a member school, including the activities of its student-athletes, coaches, booster clubs, parent groups, etc.

(C) Keep on file all records required by this Association for the current school year.

**6.1.2 Delegation of Responsibilities.** The principal may delegate his/her duties as the official representative to this Association to another member of his/her staff (i.e., an Athletic Director). This does not relieve the principal of the obligation to ensure that these bylaws and policies are adhered to.

**6.1.3 Other Designations for Principal.** The term principal shall be replaced by head of school, owner, or school administrator whenever necessary so as not to create any misunderstanding based on the administrative structure at an individual school.

## **6.2 CERTIFICATION OF STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

**6.2.1 Eligibility Reports.** The principal or designee must be prepared to submit eligibility reports if necessary.

**6.2.1.1 Accuracy.** The principal or designee shall certify that the information provided to the Association is accurate, and that the students named in the report are eligible in accordance with these bylaws.

**6.2.2 Principal is Unavailable.** An assistant principal designated by the principal or the school's representative to the Association, if other than the principal, may submit eligibility reports if the principal is unavailable, provided that the circumstances are noted on the report or correspondence.

## **6.3 RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS**

**6.3.1 General Principle.** Recruitment or attempted recruitment of students for athletic purposes from an SIAA member school is an act of unsportsmanlike conduct and is expressly forbidden.

**6.3.2 Definition of Recruiting.** Recruiting is the use of undue influence or special inducement by a school in an attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.

**6.3.2.1 "Undue Influence and Special Inducement" Defined.** The Board of Directors shall establish and maintain a policy, which defines undue influence

and special inducement; lists examples of violations; establishes penalties; and regulates academic recruitment and financial aid programs. Refer to Policy on Athletic Recruiting for details.

**6.3.3 Liability for Recruitment.** A member school is responsible for any violation of this bylaw and/or the recruiting policies committed by any person associated with the school, including the principal, assistant principals, school administrators, athletic director, coaches, or any other athletic program staff members.

## **OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 7**

### **Sportsmanship**

#### **7.1 SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES**

**7.1.1 Sportsmanship Requirement.** Players, coaches, administrators, spectators, contest officials and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with a member school shall practice and promote the highest standards of sportsmanship and ethics before, during and after any interscholastic event.

**7.1.2 Principal's Duty.** It shall be the responsibility of each member school representative to exercise control over all individuals to the extent necessary to ensure safety and fair play for all participants and adherence with these standards.

#### **7.2 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

**7.2.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct Defined.** A student who commits an act of malicious and hateful nature toward a contest official, an opponent or any other person attending an athletic contest shall be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, profanity, striking or threatening a contest official; physical contact with an opponent which is beyond the normal scope of competition; spitting on a contest official or opponent; directing gender, racial or ethnic slurs toward a contest official, an opponent or any other person attending an athletic contest; or other such acts deemed to be unacceptable conduct according to the principal of the member school the student attends or this Association.

**7.2.1.1 Penalty for Students.** Students who are found to have committed unsportsmanlike conduct will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletic competition for a penalty period determined by the President.

**7.2.1.2 Penalty for Coaches.** Coaches who are found to have committed

unsportsmanlike conduct will be ineligible to attend an interscholastic athletic competition in which his/her team participates for a penalty period determined by the President.

**7.2.1.3 Restoring Eligibility.** The President, or the Board of Directors on appeal, may restore the student's eligibility prior to the end of the penalty period, when in the discretion of the President, the student has been properly disciplined and the student agrees to comply with these standards in the future.

**7.2.2 President's Powers.** The President shall have full authority to investigate allegations and incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct and invoke penalties against member schools or individuals involved.

**7.2.3 Disqualifications.** The disqualification from participation of a coach or student, or removal of a spectator or other representative of a member school due to unsportsmanlike conduct during an interscholastic event will subject the school to the appropriate penalties.

**7.2.4 Removal by Coach or Administrator.** The removal of a team or individual competitor by a coach or administrator because of their dissatisfaction with conditions of the contest shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will subject the school to the appropriate penalties.

**7.2.5 Unsportsmanlike Conduct at Tournaments, Meets, or Contests.** The President, in the event of unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a representative of the member school during an athletic tournament, meet, or contest, shall have the authority to deny further participation at said tournament, meet, or contest, to such team or individual.

**7.2.6 Unsportsmanlike Conduct—Performance-Enhancing Drugs.** The use of performance enhancing drugs by a student is considered to be an act of unsportsmanlike conduct, and as such the student shall be ineligible for competition until such time as medical evidence can be presented that the student's system is free of performance-enhancing drugs.

**7.2.7 Crowd Control.** Any member school whose principal commits unsportsmanlike conduct or whose principal fails to control the conduct of the student body, faculty, and spectators shall be subject to the appropriate penalties, which may include expulsion from membership in this Association.

## **OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 8**

### **Interscholastic Contests**

## **8.1 INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTEST**

**8.1.1 Definition of Interscholastic Contest.** An interscholastic contest is any competition between organized teams or individuals of different schools in a sport recognized by the National Federation of High Schools, and therefore shall be subject to all regulations pertaining to such contests.

**8.1.2 Protests.** Any decision made by a contest official shall not be contested. The decisions of the contest officials are final.

## **8.2 Rules of Competition**

**8.2.1 NFHS RULES.** Unless waived by at least a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, the rules published by the National Federation of High Schools, or those approved by it, shall be the official rules for interscholastic athletic competition in all sports.

## **8.3 Schools with which contest may be held**

**8.3.1 Eligible Contestants.** Member schools may engage in interscholastic contests with any school it wishes.

## **8.4 Contracts**

**8.4.1 General Principles.** Contracts are not required for all interscholastic athletic contests between member schools. The designated SIAA Representative may execute such contracts. Schools and teams are expected to play every contest scheduled by the SIAA Office. All other contests must be agreed upon by both schools. Written confirmation of such contest is not required, but is recommended.

**8.4.1.1 Forms.** In order to be valid, the contracts shall be executed utilizing the official Association process, as approved by the President.

**8.4.2 Cancellation of Contract.** Contracts may be canceled by mutual consent any time at least two (2) days (48 hours) prior to the event.

**8.4.2.1 Disputed Cancellation.** If the parties fail to reach agreement or contract cancellation, the matter will be referred to the President for adjudication.

**8.4.2.1.1 Appealing of Decision.** If the President's decision is appealed, the decision of the Appeals Committee or Board of Directors shall be final.

**8.4.2.1.2 Failure to Comply.** Non-compliance with the final decision by either school shall subject the school to a penalty, which may include expulsion.

**8.4.2.2 Use of Ineligible Athletes.** Contracts between member schools shall be subject to cancellation whenever either party proposes to allow the use of ineligible students. Member schools are prohibited from competing with schools which propose to use ineligible students.

**8.4.2.3 Suspended or Expelled Schools.** When a member school is placed on suspension, probation or expelled from membership, all contracts which the school has executed shall be null and void. The contract may be renewed when the penalized school's punishment has ended if those dates have not yet been filled.

**8.4.3 Failure to Meet Contractual Obligations.** Any school which does not fulfill the terms of any valid contract or enters into an invitational tournament and does not compete until elimination shall be subjected to a financial penalty at the discretion of the President.

## **8.5 CATEGORIZATION OF SPORTS**

**8.5.1 Sports Categorized as Sanctioned.** All sports which are not sanctioned by the Board of Directors shall be considered club sports and are not under the jurisdiction of this Association.

**8.5.1.1 Sanctioned Sports.** Sanctioned sports require participants to abide by Association bylaws, policies, rules and contest regulations with regard to student eligibility and sportsmanship in interscholastic contests established by the Board of Directors. Sanctioned sports may be eligible for state championship series status.

## **8.6 PARTICIPATION BY GENDER**

**8.6.1 Girls on Boys' Teams.** Girls may play on a boys' team in a sport if the school does not sponsor a girls' team in that sport.

**8.6.2 Boys on Girls' Teams.** Biological boys or those students who were a male at birth may not participate on a girls' team in any sport.

**8.6.3 Mixed Gender Teams.** Team sports that have both boys and girls are required to compete in the boys division in that sport.

## **8.7 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES**

**8.7.1 State Championship Series.** For the purpose of determining the official state champion(s) in those sports that are sanctioned by the Board of Directors, this Association may conduct a State Tournament.

**8.7.1.1 Determining Which Schools Are Eligible.** Participation is limited to member schools only.

**8.7.1.2 Determining Which Sports Are Eligible.** The Board of Directors shall determine which sports will conduct state championship series and shall set the terms and conditions of each series.

**8.7.1.3 Commitment Form.** Member schools choosing to participate in a State Championship Series must communicate with the Association in a reasonable time manner and time period prior to the organization of the event.

**8.7.2 Disbursement of Funds Raised.** Member schools which host a state championship series shall operate in accordance with conditions established by the Board of Directors.

**8.7.3 Officials Assignments.** The assignment of officials to officiate during the state championship series will be made by the assignment officer of the local association and by the SIAA Office at the state level. The officials assigned to these contests are independent contractors and may be employees of the local associations but not the SIAA.

## **8.8 SEASON LIMITATIONS**

**8.8.1 General Principles.** The Board of Directors does not have season limitations in each sport which conducts a state championship series. There are not limitations that shall establish the earliest and latest permissible dates for practice and competition, as well as the maximum number of regular season contests in each sport. Member schools shall conduct practice or competition in a sport during the established “off-season” for that sport if they so choose.

**8.8.2 Off-Season.** Schools have the autonomy to govern their coaches and student athletes the way they see appropriate. After the conclusion of the season until the beginning of the following season, coaches may work with student-athletes in any manner they deem appropriate.

## **8.9 USE OF REGISTERED OFFICIALS**

**8.9.1 Sports Requiring the Use of Registered Officials.** All officials for interscholastic contests in the sports of baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, and volleyball must be registered in the sport the individual is to officiate. Registered officials must be members of an officials association which is sanctioned by this Association.

**8.9.2 Failure to Use Registered Officials.** It shall be the responsibility of the hosting member school for contracting registered officials through the officials

association sanctioned by this Association. Violation of this regulation shall subject the school to a financial penalty.

**8.9.4 Conflicts of Interest.** Coaches or other persons representing the athletic interests connected with competing schools shall not officiate in contests except with the consent of all competing schools. The principal, athletic director or team coach from all competing schools may grant consent.

## **OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 9**

### **Student Eligibility**

#### **9.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**9.1.1 Participation in Interscholastic Athletics a Privilege.** Participation in interscholastic athletic programs by a student is a privilege, not a right. Students who participate are required to meet the requirements established in state law, SIAA regulations, and by their respective schools.

**9.1.1.1 Local Rules May Be More Stringent.** Schools and /or school districts may adopt more stringent rules for the students under their supervision. No school or school district, however, may adopt rules that are less stringent than those of the SIAA or state law.

**9.1.2 School Responsible to Ensure Student Eligibility.** A school must not permit a student to represent it in interscholastic athletic competition unless the student meets all eligibility requirements and the school has certified the student's eligibility. Should a player's eligibility be questioned, the school must be prepared to present the necessary information to the SIAA Office upon request.

**9.1.2.1 Ineligible Student.** An ineligible student shall be allowed on the players' bench, in the team box or on the field of play. However the student may not wear any portion of a team uniform.

**9.1.2.2 Falsification of Information.** A student who falsifies information to gain eligibility shall be declared ineligible to represent any member school for a period determined by the President.

#### **9.2 ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**9.2.1 Student May Only Participate at School He/She Attends.** A student must attend school, and may participate only in the interscholastic athletic programs sponsored by the school.



**9.2.1.1 Definition of “Attend School.”** A student attends school if he/she is present in a school classroom on a regular basis, on a school and class roster, and working towards a grade, or is legally registered as a home education student participating for a member school. A student can attend only one school at a time for the purposes of interscholastic athletic eligibility.

**9.2.1.2 Definition of Interscholastic Athletic Programs.** Interscholastic athletic programs encompass all activities relating to competitive sport contests involving individual students or teams of students from one school against individual students or teams of students from another school. Such activities include, but are not limited to, tryouts, offseason conditioning, summer workouts, preseason conditioning, in-season practice and contests.

## **9.2.2 Attendance Exceptions.**

**9.2.2.1 Home Education Student.** A legally registered home education student may participate at one of the following:

- (a) A school that will accept the student for participation; or
- (b) A home education cooperative to which the student belongs.

**9.2.2.1.1 Home Education Student Requirements.** To participate in interscholastic athletics, a home education student must: (s.1006.15(3)(c)1-7, Florida Statutes)

- (A) Register as a home education student with the district school superintendent of the county in which he/she resides; and
- (B) Register with the school of his/her intent to participate before the beginning date of the season for the sport in which he/she wants to participate; and
- (C) Meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as the school requires of other participating students; and
- (D) Certify the school at the end of each semester that he/she has the minimum cumulative grade point average required for participation; and
- (E) Meet all other SIAA eligibility requirements; and
- (F) Must be approved by the SIAA office.

**9.2.2.2 Charter School Student.** A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at a charter school must: (s.1006.15(3)(d)1-7, Florida Statutes)

- (A) Meet the requirements of the charter school education program as

determined by the charter school governing board; and

(B) Meet the minimum grade point average standards that are required of all students; and

(C) Meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he/she participates; and

(D) Meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance that are required of other students in interscholastic athletics; and

(E) Register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletics as a representative of the school before the beginning date of the season for the sport in which he/she wishes to participate; and

(F) Meet all other SIAA eligibility requirements.

**9.2.2.3 Students in Dual Enrollment and Early Admission Programs.** A student who attends a dual enrollment or early admission program operated by a community college or university may participate at the school the student would normally attend if:

(A) The school awards credit toward graduation for the work the student completes at the community college or university; and

(B) The student has not met the graduation requirements as specified by the school's student progression plan for high school graduation; and

(C) The student does not participate in the intercollegiate athletic programs of the community college or university; and

(D) The student meets all other SIAA eligibility requirements.

**9.2.2.4 Students in Alternative or Special Schools.** A student who attends an alternative school or other special school may participate at the school he/she would normally attend according to the school attendance policy. The student must meet all other SIAA eligibility requirements.

**9.2.2.5 Participation in Summer Athletic Activities by Students Changing Schools or Entering a member School or Combination School for the First Time.** A student may participate in athletic activities sponsored by or affiliated with any school during the summer period.

**9.2.2.6 Middle School Students Attending Non-member Public Schools.** A student in grades 6 through 8 who attends a public school that is not a member of this Association and has no athletic program due to low student population

may represent a member school in interscholastic competition.

**9.2.3 Attendance within First 10 Days of Semester.** A student must attend classes within the first 10 school days of a semester. Otherwise, the student will not be eligible until:

(A) The student has made up all class work missed during his/her absence; and

(B) The student has attended one school day for each school day missed.

**9.2.4 Ineligible Student Cannot Change Schools to Become Eligible.** A student who is ruled ineligible for any reason should not be eligible in the new school. Schools are given the authority to determine if the student is deserving of eligibility in accordance with SIAA bylaws and policies.

## **9.3 Transfer Regulations**

**9.3.1 “Transfer” Defined.** A transfer occurs when a student makes any change in schools after he/she establishes residency at a school.

**9.3.2 Exception – Full and Complete Move to New Residence.** A student who transfers from one school to another will be eligible at the new school given the transfer:

(A) Was the result of the student or family moving to a new residence;

(B) Was from a member school to another member school prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>, and the necessary waiver was signed by the previous school and submitted to the SIAA Office;

(C) Was from a non-member school prior to the third Monday in January.

**9.3.3.1 Transfer Student Must Provide Academic Records.** A student who transfers to a member school from a member or nonmember school after beginning high school must provide the member school with transcripts showing all grades he/she has received at all schools attended since beginning ninth grade. The student must also provide the school with all information the school needs to convert the student’s grades using the proper scale according to the SIAA Bylaws. The member school should not declare the student academically eligible until all such information is received to its satisfaction.

**9.3.3.2 Transfer Student’s Former School Must Verify Eligibility Status Upon Request.** The member school formerly attended by a transfer student must verify the student’s eligibility status if requested to do so by the student’s new school.

**9.3.3.3 Transfer Student Not Eligible if Transcript Cannot be Obtained.** A transfer student whose former school cannot or will not provide transcripts will not be eligible in the new school until he/she has been in attendance for one full semester and has established a cumulative GPA. The school must submit a written report to the SIAA Office that includes the student's name, date of first attendance in the school, and the beginning and ending dates of the previous semester.

**9.3.4 Ineligible Student Can Not Transfer to Become Eligible.** A transfer student who is ruled ineligible for any reason should not be eligible in the new school. Schools are given the authority to determine if the student is deserving of eligibility in accordance with SIAA bylaws and policies.

**9.3.4.1 Students Under Expulsion.** A student who has been expelled by a school should not be considered eligible at any member school during the length of the expulsion. Schools are given the authority to determine if the student is deserving of eligibility in accordance with SIAA bylaws and policies.

**9.3.5 Transfer Students Who Are Not Eligible.** The following transfer students are not eligible in their new school even if they otherwise qualify under one of the SIAA Bylaws.

**9.3.5.1 Students Who Transfer After SIAA State Tournament in a Sport Begins.** A student who transfers to any school on or after the third Monday in January will not be eligible to participate in that sport through the conclusion of that state tournament.

## **9.4 ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

**9.4.1 2.0 GPA Required for Academic Eligibility.** A middle/junior high student must have 2.0 GPA, or the equivalent of a 2.0 GPA based on a 4.0 scale, at the conclusion of each semester. A high school student must have a cumulative 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 un-weighted scale, or its equivalent, at the conclusion of each semester to be academically eligible during the next semester. (s.1006.15(3) (a)1, Florida Statutes)

**9.4.1.1 Courses to be Used in Calculating GPA.** The grades from all courses required for graduation that a student takes, including those taken by the student before he/she begins high school, must be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA at the conclusion of each semester. This includes the courses listed in s.1003.43(1), Florida Statutes.

**9.4.1.2 Academic Eligibility/Ineligibility is for a Semester.** A student who is academically eligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically eligible for that entire semester. Likewise, a student who is

academically ineligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically ineligible for that entire semester, except as provided in Bylaws. The student's academic eligibility for each successive semester will depend upon his/her cumulative GPA at the conclusion of the previous semester.

**9.4.1.3 First Semester of High School Attendance – Ninth Grade.** A first-year high school student, entering the ninth grade for the first time, is academically eligible during his/her first semester of high school attendance. The student, however, must have the cumulative 2.0 GPA at the conclusion of his/her first semester of high school attendance to be academically eligible to participate during his/her next semester of attendance.

**9.4.1.5 Using Semester GPA for Ninth and Tenth Grade.** A student who is academically ineligible during the second semester of ninth grade or during the first semester of tenth grade and does not regain a cumulative 2.0 GPA at the conclusion of the semester of ineligibility may be granted academic eligibility for the next semester if: (s.1006.15(3)(a)2, Florida Statutes)

(A) The student signs an academic performance contract with his/her school upon discovery of the semester of ineligibility; and

(B) The student sits out the semester of ineligibility; and

(C) The student attends summer school, or its graded equivalent, as necessary; and

(D) The student earns a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 un-weighted scale in all courses taken during the semester of ineligibility.

**9.4.1.6 No Exceptions during the 11th and 12th Grade.** Once a student has completed 10th grade, he/she must have the cumulative 2.0 GPA as required by Bylaw 9.4.1 for the remainder of his/her high school career. (s. 1006.15(3)(a)3, Florida Statutes)

**9.4.1.7 Students in Dual Enrollment or Early Admission Programs.** Students who participate in dual enrollment programs or early admission programs must have the cumulative 2.0 GPA as required in Bylaws to be academically eligible.

**9.4.1.8 Student Not Eligible for One Full Semester if Transcript Cannot be Obtained.** A student whose school cannot or will not provide an official transcript will not be eligible until he/she has been in attendance for one full semester and has established a cumulative GPA. The school must submit a written report to the SIAA Office that includes the student's name, date of first attendance in the school, and the beginning and ending dates of the previous semester.

**9.4.2 Mandatory Grading Scale to be used in Calculating GPA.** All member schools must use the following alphabetical grading scale as mandated in s.1003.437, Florida Statutes, when calculating the grade point averages of high school students to determine their academic eligibility:

- Grade “A” is 90 to 100 percent and has a GPA value of 4;
- Grade “B” is 80 to 89 percent and has a GPA value of 3;
- Grade “C” is 70 to 79 percent and has a GPA value of 2;
- Grade “D” is 60 to 69 percent and has a GPA value of 1; and
- Grade “F” is 59 percent or less and has a GPA value of 0.

**9.4.2.1 Incomplete Grade is a Failure.** An incomplete grade must be counted as a failure (Grade “F”) when calculating a student’s cumulative GPA until that student completes the necessary work to receive another grade.

**9.4.3 Effect of Summer School or its Graded Equivalent Courses on Cumulative GPA.** A student may raise or lower his/her cumulative GPA by attending summer school or its graded equivalent if:

(A) The summer school or its graded equivalent is regularly scheduled and regularly organized under the direction of a district school board or private school;

(B) All course work taken by the student is completed before the first day of classes in the subsequent semester; and

(C) All courses taken by the student, in which he/she receives a grade, whether during the regular academic year or summer school, or its graded equivalent, must be used to calculate the student’s cumulative GPA.

**9.4.3.1 “Forgiveness.”** If a student repeats a course, regardless of whether he/she passed or failed the course on the first attempt in which the student earned a “D” or “F,” or the equivalent of a grade of “D” or “F,” the grade may be replaced with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher, provided for required courses the course is the same or comparable course, or with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher for an elective course and that grade will be used to calculate the student’s cumulative GPA. (s.1003.428(4)(d), note, Florida Statutes)

**9.4.3.1.1 Grade GPA Calculation.** For the purposes of GPA calculation, each subsequent unsuccessful attempt on a course taken for forgiveness must be

computed in the calculations. One successful attempt will over write the original grade and all previous unsuccessful attempts.

**9.4.3.2 Course Taught by Private Tutor cannot be Used to Raise GPA.** A school cannot accept a grade received by a student in a class conducted by a private certified tutor to raise his/her cumulative GPA for academic eligibility purposes.

**9.4.4 Determination of Academic Eligibility at Conclusion of Each Semester.** A school must calculate the cumulative GPA of a student at the conclusion of each semester to determine the student's academic eligibility for the next semester.

**9.4.5 Course Work must be Completed by First Day of Next Semester.** A student must complete all work required to earn credit in a course taken during a semester by the first day of the next semester. A grade of "incomplete" must be considered a failing grade when calculating a student's cumulative GPA.

#### **9.4.5.1 Exceptions.**

**9.4.5.1.1 Special Course Work That cannot be Completed by First Day of Next Semester.** An exception to Bylaws is made for students taking courses which have special projects that cannot be completed until after the first day of the next semester.

**9.4.5.1.2 Work Not Completed Due to Illness or Excused Absence.** A student who may become academically ineligible because of a failure to complete his/her course work by the first day of the next semester due to an extended illness or other excused absence may have his/her academic eligibility maintained or restored until the course work is completed and the student receives a passing grade that keeps or raises his/her cumulative GPA to 2.0 or above.

**9.4.6 Change in Eligibility Status.** If a student's academic eligibility changes at the end of a semester, the student will become eligible or ineligible immediately. Even if the last day of the semester coincides with the last day of school for the winter holidays, the student will become eligible or ineligible immediately.

**9.4.7 Student must be an Undergraduate.** A student must not have graduated from high school in the secondary education system of the U.S. or any other country.

## **9.5 LIMIT OF ELIGIBILITY**

**9.5.1 High School Student Has Four Years of Eligibility.** A student has four consecutive calendar years of eligibility from the date he/she begins ninth grade



for the first time. This does not imply that the student has four years of participation. A student becomes permanently ineligible four consecutive calendar years from the date he/she begins ninth grade for the first time.

**9.5.1.1 Student Whose Limit of Eligibility Expires During Sports Season.** A student whose four-year limit of eligibility expires during the season of a sport in which the student is participating may complete the season if the student continues to meet all other eligibility requirements. The student, however, will not be permitted to participate in any other sport that begins after his/her limit of eligibility has expired.

**9.5.1.2 Participation Prior to High School Does Not Affect Limit of Eligibility.** A student's four-year limit of high school eligibility is not affected by the student's participation in interscholastic athletics before beginning the ninth grade for the first time.

## **9.6 AGE**

**9.6.1 Student May Participate at High School Level Until the Age of 19 Years 9 Months.** A student who turns 19 before June 1st will not be eligible.

**9.6.2 School Must Verify Age of Student.** A school must verify the age of each student who represents it in interscholastic athletic competition. The student must provide documented proof of his/her age for this purpose. A student who is unable to provide documented proof of his/her age cannot participate.

**9.6.2.1 What is Documented Proof of Age?** Documented proof of age is one or more of the following:

(A) An original birth certificate issued by the office of vital records in the country, province, state, county or city where the student was born;

(B) A passport, visa or "green card" that lists the student's date of birth; or

(C) An official record of birth from the hospital in which the student was born.

## **9.7 PHYSICAL EVALUATION**

**9.7.1 Student Must Have a Physical Evaluation Each Year.** A student must have a physical evaluation each year and be certified as being physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletic programs. A physical evaluation shall be valid for a period not to exceed one calendar year from the date of practitioner's signature. The student cannot be allowed to participate in any activity related to interscholastic athletic programs until the fully executed physical evaluation form is on file in the school. (s.1002.20(17)(b), Florida Statutes)



**9.7.2 Qualified Practitioners.** The annual physical evaluation must be administered either by a licensed physician, a licensed osteopathic physician, a licensed chiropractic physician, a licensed physician assistant, or a certified advanced registered nurse practitioner.

**9.7.3 Filing Requirements.** The student-athlete shall be required to file with the school a fully executed physical evaluation form signed by the practitioner and medical history questionnaire signed by the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

**9.7.4 Evaluation Requirements.** The Board of Directors shall adopt minimum requirements for the physical evaluation to which each member school shall adhere.

## **9.8 CONSENT AND RELEASE**

**9.8.1 Student Must Provide School with Signed Consent and Release Form to Participate.** A student must have the consent of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) (if under the age of 18, to participate in interscholastic athletic programs at a member school. The student and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must also release the SIAA, its member schools and contest officials from all liability for any injury or claim that may result from the student's participation in interscholastic athletics. The form must be signed by the student and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The student should not be allowed to participate in any activity related to interscholastic athletic programs until the fully executed consent form is on file in the school.

**9.8.1.1 Board of Directors to Adopt Language for Consent and Release Form.** The Board of Directors will adopt the language that must be contained in the consent and release form, which, at a minimum, will include the following:

(A) A statement acknowledging that participation in interscholastic athletics may require the student to miss classes;

(B) A statement authorizing the school to provide to the SIAA for inspection the student's academic, attendance and financial assistance records when requested;

(C) A statement warning of the health risks, including death, involved in participating in interscholastic athletics;

(D) A statement authorizing the use or disclosure of the student's individually identifiable health information should treatment for illness or injury become necessary; and

(E) A statement granting to the released parties the right to photograph and videotape the student and to use his/her name, face, likeness, voice and appearance in connection with exhibitions, publicity, advertising, promotional and commercial materials without reservation or limitation.

## **9.9 AMATEURISM**

**9.9.1 General Principles.** A student may not participate in an athletic activity of this Association unless he/ she is an amateur. An amateur is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived from the activity.

**9.9.2 Forfeiture of Amateur Status.** A student-athlete forfeits amateur status in a particular sport for one year by:

- (A) Competing for money or other monetary compensations;
- (B) Receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the SIAA;
- (C) Capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of a monetary nature;
- (D) Signing a professional playing contract in any sport or hiring an agent to manage his/her athletic career;
- (E) Competing under an assumed name.

**9.9.3 Permissible Awards, Gifts, or Other Compensation.** A student-athlete will not forfeit his/her amateur status for accepting:

- (A) Symbolic awards such as school letters, medals, trophies, ribbons, plaques, pins, keys, or ribbons of small monetary value purchased from an established awards company;
- (B) Rings, sweaters, jackets, or award blankets provided that they are presented by the school which they represent and do not exceed the value of the purchase price from an established awards company;
- (C) Remuneration of “essential expenses” for any game in which he/she participates as a player; limited to meals, lodging, and transportation;
- (D) A college scholarship offer.

**9.9.3.1 Amateur Sports Guidelines.** The SIAA uses the guidelines of the national governing body of a particular sport, when applicable; to determine the

types and amounts of benefits an amateur may receive.

**9.9.4 Violations.** Violation of the amateur rule in one sport does not make a student ineligible in all other sports.

*NOTE: Any student who may consider participating in athletics as an amateur after high school should determine whether any action they intend to take while in high school would violate the amateurism regulation of the governing body at the level of competition at which he or she intends to participate.*

## **9.10 STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION**

**9.10.1 Athletic Participation Defined.** A student in athletic uniform during an athletic contest is defined as having participated. Any member school which allows a student to participate in interscholastic athletic competition (dress in any part of the full uniform worn for that contest with the exception of a cap) in violation of the regulations of this Association will be held guilty of using an ineligible student and subject to the penalties assessed.

## **OPERATIONAL BYLAW, ARTICLE 10**

### **Compliance and Enforcement**

#### **10.1 PENALTIES**

**10.1.1 General Principles.** The President shall have the authority to investigate all alleged violations of this Association's Bylaws, as well as regulations, guidelines, policies or procedures established by the Board of Directors. All findings shall be disclosed to the school or person alleged to have committed a violation. The President shall have full authority to invoke one or more of the following penalties against the violating school or person:

(A) REPRIMAND - An official letter of censure to the concerned party in regard to the offense committed which warns against further violations. This letter will be kept on file for future reference.

(B) FINE - A monetary payment.

(C) FORFEIT - The forfeiture of an interscholastic athletic contest.

(D) PROBATION - Types of probation that may be imposed are as follows:

1) Administrative Probation - The school is reprimanded, fined and served notice that it is in a period of warning for a minimum of one calendar year. Additional violations during this time will result in increased penalties which may include expulsion.

2) Restrictive Probation - The school faces the same penalties as administrative probation, with the additional consequence of restriction from participation in championship competition in one or more sports, or other restrictions deemed appropriate by the President, for one or more calendar years.

3) Suspension Probation - The school faces the same penalties as administrative probation, with the additional consequence of suspension from one or more sports for one or more calendar years.

(E) EXPULSION - Involuntary termination of a school's membership in the Association for one or more calendar years.

**10.1.1.1 Restricted Membership.** The Board of Directors, instead of expulsion, may restrict one, more or all the membership privileges of the school. The school remains a member even if all of its membership privileges are restricted.

**10.1.2 Reimbursement of Expenses.** A member school found to have committed a violation shall pay to this Association any expenses incurred related to such violation, including, but not limited to, the costs of the investigation, attorney's fees and legal costs, and all other related costs.

**10.1.3 Court Injunctions.** If a member school or student, in violation of or noncompliance with any provisions of this Association's rules, competes based on an injunction or restraining order which is later voluntarily vacated, stayed or reversed, or it is determined that injunctive relief is not or was not justified, they will still be subject to the penalties listed in the SIAA Bylaws.

## **10.2 FORFEITURE OF CONTEST**

**10.2.1 General Principle.** If an ineligible student is inadvertently or intentionally permitted to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest, forfeiture of the game and honors shall be automatic and mandatory.

**10.2.1.1 Team or Individual Sports.** In team sports, the contest and honors shall be forfeited. In individual sports, the points won by the ineligible student, individually or as the member of a relay team shall be forfeited.

**10.2.1.2 Procedures.** If an ineligible student is allowed to participate in an athletic contest, the principal shall notify the President the dates of the competition and the opposing school(s) the student participated against.

**10.2.1.3 Intentional Use of Ineligible Students.** The President shall have full authority to invoke additional penalties against a member school that in his/her determination intentionally permits an ineligible student to participate.

## 10.3 PROTEST PROCEDURE

**10.3.1 Protesting Actions of Another School.** Any member school filing a protest over the eligibility of a student or the actions of a member school shall submit to the President in writing (email) a full statement of the facts signed by the principal. The President shall provide the accused party or parties with a copy of the accusation and determine if the allegations warrant an investigation.

**10.3.1.1 False Accusations.** If a member school falsely accuses (alleges a violation by another school that cannot be supported by appropriate documentation and facts) any other member school(s) more than once in a five (5) year period, that school will be subjected to penalties by the President. Schools

**10.3.2 Protesting Actions of Contest Officials.** The decisions of contest officials shall be final and not subject to review. Member schools should file reports of unsatisfactory performance by contest officials with the officials association of which that official is a part.

## 10.4 DUE PROCESS

**10.4.1 Eligibility Appeals.** When a student is determined to be ineligible by a member school and/or is ruled ineligible by the President, the member school may appeal the ruling of the President if he/she or the student takes issue with it, and must do so at the student's request.

**10.4.2 Rules Violations Appeals.** Any student athlete, coach or member school who is found to be in violation of the rules of this Association may appeal the finding of the President if he/she takes issue with it, or may appeal the penalty imposed if he/she believes it to be too severe, and must do so at the student's request.

**10.4.3 Disputes between Member Schools Appeals.** A member school may appeal the findings by the President which arise from a dispute between one or more member schools. Member schools are required to attempt to settle differences independently of the SIAA Office prior to formal submission of the dispute to the SIAA Office.

**10.4.4 Undue Hardship Waivers.** A member school may file a request for undue hardship waiver on behalf of the student when enforcement of the provision(s) which render(s) the student ineligible works an undue hardship upon the student, and must do so at the student's request.

**10.4.4.1 Criteria for an Undue Hardship Waiver Determination.** By seeking an undue hardship waiver, the student and the member school accept the fact that

the student is ineligible under the SIAA Bylaws but are asking for a grant of waiver of those Bylaws. For the purpose of determining whether to grant or deny an undue hardship waiver, the Appeals Committees and the Board of Directors shall be guided by the criteria contained in these Bylaws and SIAA Policies and their respective experience related to high school athletics.

**10.4.4.2.1 Insufficient Grounds for Undue Hardship Waiver.** The fact that a student is retained in a lower grade shall not be sufficient grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver if the student fails to pass the required number of courses, or is voluntarily withdrawn from school, or repeats a lower grade to gain physical, social or emotional maturity.

**10.4.4.2.2 Potentially Sufficient Grounds for Undue Hardship Waiver.** The fact that a student is unable or desires to participate in interscholastic athletics shall not, in and of itself, be grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver request. The fact that a student is retained in a lower grade because he/she misses school for a prolonged period of time due to serious injury or illness, which must be supported by a physician's record indicating that the absence was directly and solely related to such injury or illness, or events which were beyond the control of the student and/or the parent or guardian which causes the student to miss school for a prolonged period of time causing the student to repeat a grade, may be grounds for granting an undue hardship waiver request.

**10.4.5 Waiver of Bylaws Due to Special Circumstances.** The member school may request a waiver of any Bylaw or other regulation, guideline, policy or procedure of this Association not directly related to student eligibility when special circumstances, in the opinion of the school, call for a relief from or a modification to the effects of the rule.

**10.4.6 Appeals of President's Findings.** The member school or any other individual, who is found to be in violation of the rules of this Association by the President may appeal the findings of the President, or may appeal the penalty imposed.

**10.4.7 No Appeal or Waiver of Florida Statutes.** The Appeals Committee and the Board of Directors do not have the authority to waive a provision of the Florida Statutes including but not limited to:

- (A) Mandatory GPA requirements;
- (B) Definition of a grading period as being one semester;
- (C) Mandatory grading scale;
- (D) Authority of school to establish codes of conduct by which students must

abide to be eligible to participate in interscholastic competition;

(E) Home Education guidelines;

(F) Charter School guidelines.

## **10.5 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR APPEALS AND REQUESTS FOR WAIVER**

**10.5.1 Cost of Appeal.** The cost of an appeal, if any, including the Association's attorney fees, shall be borne by the person or entity making the appeal if the finding of the President or the penalty imposed is upheld.

**10.5.2 Burden Of Proof.** The burden of showing error in the determination of ineligibility or in showing why a waiver should be granted is on the person or entity making the appeal. Such proof shall include, as a minimum, a brief statement of the facts involved, the specific bylaw(s) or policy(s) involved and argument in support of the relief requested. This statement shall be supported by any relevant documentary evidence available.

**10.5.3 Complete and Accurate Submissions.** The person or entity making the appeal must ensure that the information submitted to support such appeal or request is complete and accurate. In the event a decision was made based on incomplete or inaccurate information, the decision shall be withdrawn and the sanctions provided by these bylaws shall apply.

**10.5.4 Request for Eligibility Ruling.** Each member having reasonable cause to believe that a student is ineligible to participate in, or continue to participate in, interscholastic athletic competition under any provision of these regulations may request an official ruling on the student's eligibility from the President, and must do so at the student's request. The President shall issue a ruling based on the statement of facts and any other information available to the President. In the event the President later determines that incomplete or inaccurate information has been included in the statement supporting the member schools request for an eligibility ruling, the ruling may be retracted and such penalties as deemed appropriate may be imposed by the President against the member school requesting the ruling.

**10.5.5 Initial Appeals or Requests for Waivers.** Initial appeals or requests for waivers will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

**10.5.6 Subsequent Appeals or Requests for Waivers.** Unfavorable decision found on the initial appeal or request for waiver rendered by the Appeals Committee will be heard by:



(A) The Appeals Committee, provided new information is provided, or

(B) The Board of Directors, which will not hear any evidence that was not presented to the Appeals Committee, and decisions, will be final.

**10.5.7 Appeals of Major Violations.** Appeals of major violations will be heard by the Appeals Committee. Decisions of the Appeals Committee can be appealed to the Board of Directors. Decisions by the Board of Directors will be final.

## **10.6 APPEAL AND REQUEST FOR WAIVER PROCEDURES**

**10.6.1 Filing an Initial Appeal or Request for Waiver.** An appeal or request for waiver must be filed with the Executive and must be accompanied by all necessary documentation. The appeal or request, including all required documentation, must be signed by the principal and received in the office of this Association. Appeals and requests received will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting unless an emergency appeals process is requested. Incomplete appeals or requests for waiver will be returned to the school or person making the appeal for an opportunity to resubmit with all the necessary information.

**10.6.2 Filing an Appeal or Request for Waiver to the Board of Directors.** The request for an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors must be made in writing to the President, must be signed by the member school principal and must be received in the office of this Association.

**10.6.3 Appearances before Appeals Committee or Board of Directors.** The person or entity making the appeal has the opportunity to appear before the Appeals Committee, or the Board of Directors if he/she so chooses. The person or entity making the appeal must give notice of their choice to appear. Appearance by the student and a school representative is mandatory for an appeal or request for undue hardship waiver involving age, limit of eligibility and unsportsmanlike conduct provisions when heard by the Appeals Committee, and is optional when heard by the Board of Directors.

**10.6.3.1 Student Appearance.** A student who is required, or chooses, to appear before the Appeals Committee, or the Board of Directors must be accompanied by a school representative and should be accompanied by his/her parent(s) or other individuals with whom he/she lives. The student may be represented by an attorney. Such representation will not excuse the appearance of a student when that appearance is required.

### **10.6.5 Infraction Appeals Committee Appeals Procedure.**

**10.6.5.1 Written Notice of Appeal.** To be considered by the appropriate appeals



committee, the school's written notice of appeal of the findings of fact or the penalty imposed, or both, must be received in the SIAA Office. The school must submit supporting information for its appeal, if any, to the SIAA Office.

#### **10.6.5.2 Basis for Granting an Appeal.**

**10.6.5.2.1 Appeal of Findings.** The Appeals Committee may set aside findings of fact and violations arrived at ONLY if the school shows that:

(A) The finding of the SIAA staff is clearly not supported by evidence that is credible, persuasive and of a kind on which reasonably prudent persons rely in the conduct of serious affairs;

(B) The school's actions do not constitute a violation of SIAA rules; or

(C) A procedural error affected the reliability of the information that was used to support the SIAA staff's finding. In this case, the school must demonstrate how it contends the staff was in error.

**10.6.5.2.2 Appeal of Penalties.** The Appeals Committee may set aside a penalty imposed by the SIAA staff if the appeals committee determines that the penalty is excessive or inappropriate based on all the evidence and circumstances. Only the Board of Directors may modify a penalty imposed by this Association.

**10.6.5.2.3 Committee and Board Acts on Basis of Record in Case.** The Appeals Committee and Board of Directors can act only on the basis of the record in the case. This record consists of the notice of inquiry and/or allegations to the school, the report of the investigator and the written response by the school. The committee cannot consider information that was not available to the SIAA staff when issuing its finding and imposing the penalty.

**10.6.5.3 Appeal of Unfavorable Decision by Appeals Committee.** A school that is unsuccessful in its appeal to the Appeals Committee may appeal the committee's decision to the SIAA Board of Directors. The school's written notice of appeal of the committee's decision must be received in the SIAA Office.

### **10.7 EMPOWERMENT**

**10.7.1 Appeals Committee Powers.** The Appeals Committee is empowered to consider a request from member schools seeking exceptions to Bylaws and regulations, to hear undue hardship eligibility cases filed by member schools on behalf of student-athletes, and to hear appeals filed by member schools or other individuals. The decision in each case shall be by majority vote and may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

**10.7.1.1 Reliance on a Appeals Committee Decision.** A school that allows a student to participate in accordance with a Appeals Committee decision that is later reversed by the Board of Directors will not be subject to the penalties normally assessed a school that allows participation by an ineligible student.

**10.7.2 Board of Directors Powers.** The Board of Directors is empowered to review appeals and requests for waivers and sustain, modify or overturn the decision of the Appeals Committee, or the President in each case that comes before it.

**10.7.3.1 Finality of Ruling.** The decision of the Board of Directors in each case shall be by majority vote and shall be final.

## **10.8 PROCEDURE IN CASES OF EXPULSION**

**10.8.1 Procedures.** When the President believes that his/her findings in any investigation into any violation of any rule of this Association warrants the expulsion of a member school or a restriction of its membership privileges, the following procedure must be followed:

(A) Notice. The President will notify in writing the principal of the school of the date, time and site of the Board of Directors meeting at which a hearing on the school's membership status will be conducted. The notice must state the findings of the President and must advise the principal of his/her obligation to represent his/her school at the hearing. This notice must be received by the principal of the school not fewer than 10 business days in advance of the date of the hearing.

(B) Hearings. During the hearing before the Board of Directors, the school may have an attorney present, may present witnesses, testimony, and any other relevant evidence or information for consideration by the Board of Directors. The President may also present witnesses, testimony, and any other relevant evidence or information for consideration by the Board of Directors.

(C) Final Decision. Following the presentation of evidence and arguments, the Board of Directors will render its decision by majority vote. The Board of Directors is empowered to sustain, modify or reject the findings and recommendation of the President. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

**10.8.2 Applying for Reinstatement.** A school that has been expelled or has had its membership privileges restricted for a period of one or more calendar years may apply for readmission or reinstatement of its membership privileges after a period of one calendar year and then yearly thereafter. The school must notify the President in writing that he/she intends to apply for readmission or reinstatement and request to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the

Board of Directors. The school will make a verbal appeal for readmission or reinstatement before the Board of Directors at that meeting. A school that has been expelled or has had its membership privileges restricted may be readmitted or have its membership privileges reinstated only upon approval by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

## **10.9 COMPLIANCE WITH DECISIONS**

The administrative decisions of the Board of Directors, Appeals Committee and President shall be accepted in good faith by all member schools. Any member school that refuses to accept the decisions of the Association shall subject the school to expulsion from this Association without refund of paid dues, fees, and/or fines. These provisions are not to be construed as preventing the principal of a member school from exercising his/her school's right to due process by appealing decisions of the President to the Appeals Committee or the Board of Directors.

# **Administrative Policies Of the Sunshine Independent Athletic Association, Inc.**



## **POLICY 1**

### **APPORTIONMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SECTIONS**

**1.1 President Evaluation.** The President shall be directed to undertake and prepare for review by the Board of Directors an evaluation of the existing apportionment of the administrative sections when requested.

## **POLICY 2**

### **DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP**

**2.1 Diversity in Leadership.** The Sunshine Independent Athletic Association recognizes the diversity of its membership and believes that it is best served by a diverse leadership. Accordingly, the Association shall promote diversity of representation within its governance structure (Board of Directors, Representative Assembly, Appeals Committee) and substructures (advisory and other committees).

**2.1.1 Charge to President.** The President shall actively solicit and encourage eligible individuals from under-represented groups to seek election to available member school positions within the Association governance structure.

**2.1.2 Charge to Board of Directors.** The President shall actively seek out and recommend to the Board of Directors eligible individuals from under-represented groups for appointment to fill vacancies in member school positions within the Association governance structure whenever such vacancies occur.

**2.1.3 Charge to Advisory Committees.** The President and staff shall actively seek out and appoint eligible individuals from under-represented groups to fill vacancies on the various advisory committees whenever such vacancies occur.

**2.1.4 Diversity Statement.** All written materials for nominations and elections prepared by the Association will include the following statement: "The SIAA values and seeks a diverse leadership."

## **POLICY 3**

### **CATEGORIZATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

**3.1 General Principles.** The following guidelines shall govern the categorization of interscholastic sports programs sponsored by member schools, as well as the

implementation of state tournament competitions in those sports. These guidelines establish the thresholds (minimum standards) that sports must meet for categorization and state championship series implementation. Any member school that sponsors a sport that is sanctioned by this Association shall abide by all regulations of this Association.

## **3.2 Club Sports**

**3.2.1 Club Sports Defined.** Any sport that is not categorized as a sanctioned sport by the Board of Directors as stipulated herein shall be considered to be a club sport and shall not be under the jurisdiction of this Association.

## **3.3 Sanctioned Sports**

**3.3.1 Sanctioned Sport Defined.** A sanctioned sport is a sport that is eligible for official state championship series competition. The SIAA bylaws reflect that sanctioned sports, in which an official state championship series competition is implemented, may require participants to adhere to a greater degree of regulation subject to terms and conditions established by the Board of Directors.

## **3.4 Revocation of Categorization Status**

**3.4.1 Empowerment of Board of Directors.** The Board of Directors may revoke the status given any sport, and suspend or discontinue the state championship series or official state championship series in any sport when any one of the following occur:

## **3.5 Reasons for Not Sponsoring a Sport**

**3.5.1 Below Requisite Number.** The requisite number of member schools no longer sponsor a program in the sport; or

**3.5.2 Financially Unfeasible.** It is determined that it is no longer financially feasible for the Association and its member schools to supervise and regulate the sport, and/or conduct a state championship series or official state championship series in the sport; or

**3.5.3 Revocation Due to Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** The number and nature of acts of unsportsmanlike conduct, or other acts of a flagrant and malicious nature, that are committed by student-athletes and coaches during competition in the sport, reach such a level as to make it no longer in the best interests of the Association or its member schools to sanction competition in the sport.

## **POLICY 4**

### **INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTESTS**

#### **4.1 Interscholastic Contests**

**4.1.1 Interscholastic Contests Defined.** The SIAA defines an interscholastic contest as “any competition between organized teams of different schools in a sport sanctioned by this Association.” All such contests are subject to SIAA Bylaws as well as the guidelines, regulations, policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors for that sport and in general.

#### **4.2 Outcome of Interscholastic Contests**

**4.2.1 Outcome is Final.** The outcome (i.e. winners and losers) of all interscholastic contests are final, and cannot be reversed, except where the rules of the sport permit or in the case where a winner must forfeit its victory or points.

**4.2.2 Elimination is Final Unless Forfeiture of Winning Team is Ruled.** Elimination from a SIAA State Series competition is final. Defeat by individuals or teams that are later ordered to forfeit their victory, place and/or points, or are vacated from the bracket, will bring about reinstatement or advancement in the SIAA State Series competition on the part of the individual or team that has been eliminated.

**4.2.3 Championship is Final Unless Forfeiture of Winning Team is Ruled.** Championships or other placements in SIAA State Series competitions are final. Championships or other placements ordered vacated by individuals or teams, will bring about advancement in placements or receipt of awards for those placements.

## **POLICY 5**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **5.1 Membership Applications**

**5.1.1 First-Time Membership.** A completed membership packet must be filed at the SIAA Office on or before June 1st for the school to be considered for admission the following school year.

#### **5.2 Approved Accrediting Agencies**



**5.2.1** Accreditation for purposes of membership will be accepted from any of the following agencies:

- (A) Association of Christian Schools International;
- (B) Association of Independent Schools of Florida;
- (C) Christian Schools of Florida;
- (D) Council of Bilingual Schools;
- (E) Episcopal Diocese of Florida;
- (F) Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools;
- (G) Florida Catholic Conference;
- (H) Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools;
- (I) Florida Conference of Seventh Day Adventist Schools;
- (J) Florida Council of Independent Schools;
- (K) Florida League of Christian Schools;
- (L) Lutheran Schools Florida-Georgia District;
- (M) National Independent Private School Association;
- (N) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

**5.2.2 First Three Years of Organization.** All current members of the SIAA will have three (3) years to become fully Accredited to one of the above Approved Accrediting Agencies.

## **POLICY 6**

### **Sports Seasons Limitations**

#### **6.1 General Principles.**

**6.1.1 SPORTS SEASONS LIMITATIONS.** The sports seasons do not have limitations.

**6.1.2 Individual Limitations.** An individual student shall be permitted to participate in as many contests as desired. This includes multiple contests on the same day, within 24 hours, and with multiple teams and sports. The responsibility of the physical, emotional and mental well-being of the student lies with the school, parents and/or guardians of the student, and the student.

**6.1.3.1 Concussions.** Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest or practice and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional as specified in Administrative Procedure 1.2.

## **POLICY 7**

### **MEMBER SCHOOL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

All member schools must certify on the membership application that all of the coverage referenced below has been obtained, and must also provide a certificate of coverage from their insurance carrier or broker for the catastrophic accident medical, catastrophic disability and general liability coverage. The Board of Directors has established the following requirements with regard to insurance coverage for member schools, as well as schools granted approved non-member school status:

**7.1 Athletic Medical Base Plan.** Up to \$25,000 limit is required for medical expenses for each participant in interscholastic athletics sponsored, supervised and engaged by the school. The member school will be allowed to accept certification from parents that the coverage is in place for the student-athlete on a family plan that meets this requirement. If the student-athlete is not covered under his/her parents' family plan, then the school must provide a plan for the student that will satisfy these requirements.

**7.2 Athletic Catastrophic Accident Medical Plan.** Minimum limits of \$1,000,000 are required for medical expenses for each participant in interscholastic athletics sponsored, supervised and engaged in by the school. This coverage is to be in excess of the athletics base plan medical policy limits or the policy can include the base plan medical coverage within the policy. The policy must provide no fault coverage.

**7.3 Athletic Catastrophic Disability.** Minimum limits of \$500,000 are required for total disability of any participant in interscholastic athletics sponsored, supervised and engaged in by the school. Structured pay-out benefits may vary.

Coverage must also include some limited benefits for partial disability. The policy must provide no fault coverage.

**7.4 General Liability.** A general liability plan with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 is required.

**7.5 SIAA Additional Insured.** The SIAA shall be named as an additional insured under all of the above coverage. Member schools shall require the insurance companies to give the SIAA thirty (30) days prior notice in the event of policy lapse, non-payment of premiums or non-renewal.

## **POLICY 8**

### **FINANCES**

#### **8.1 Membership Dues and Fees**

##### **8.1.1 Membership Dues.**

**8.1.1.1 Continuing Members.** Dues (\$2000) for the 2023-2024 school year will be due by December 19th to the SIAA office.

##### **8.1.2 Membership Fees.**

**8.1.2.1 New Membership Application Fees.** Fees for the upcoming 2023-2024 seasons will be due by June 1<sup>st</sup> to the SIAA office.

**8.1.2.2 Inaugural Membership Fees.** Each new member will be assessed a one-time fee of \$100 for joining the Association. The member will also be responsible for paying membership dues for that year.

**8.1.2.3 Participation Fees for New and Continuing Members.** Fees for the 2023-2024 school year will be due by November 1<sup>st</sup> to the SIAA office. Fees shall be \$250 per sport per gender for each team choosing to participate in the state tournament.

## **POLICY 9**

### **ATHLETIC RECRUITING**

#### **9.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**9.1.1 Permissible Recruitment.** A school may conduct a recruitment program that is designed to attract students to the school based upon its total educational and extracurricular (athletic and activities) program.

**9.1.2 Compliance Programs.** Schools are expected to educate all employees, athletic department staff members and representatives of the school's athletic interests about acts that are prohibited by this policy.

**9.1.3 Athletic Recruiting.** Athletic recruiting is a violation of the spirit and philosophy of educational athletics when conducted in an unethical and unsporting conduct which is forbidden by SIAA Bylaws.

**9.1.4 Financial Assistance Permissible.** Schools may administer school-based financial assistance programs for students.

## **9.2 GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

**9.2.1 Athletic Recruiting.** Athletic recruiting is any effort by a school employee, athletic department staff member or representative of a school's athletic interests to pressure, urge or entice a student to attend that school for the sole purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.

**9.2.2 Improper Contact.** Improper contact is direct contact, whether in person or through written or electronic communication, by a school employee, athletic department staff member, representative of the school's athletic interests with a student or any member of the student's family, in an effort to pressure the student to attend a different school for the sole purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.

**9.2.3 Impermissible Benefit.** An impermissible benefit is any arrangement, assistance or benefit that is not offered or made available to other students and/or their families who apply to or attend a school, or that otherwise is prohibited by SIAA rules. Receipt of a benefit by a student-athlete or his/her family is not a violation of SIAA rules if it is demonstrated that the same benefit is available to other students or family members and is not based solely on athletic interest, potential or performance.

**9.2.4 Financial Assistance.** Financial assistance is funds from various sources that are administered and provided by a school to students to pay or assist in paying costs directly related to their education at the school.

## **9.3 SCHOOL RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS**

**9.3.1 References to Athletic Program.** Any presentation conducted as part of a school's recruitment program may promote the school's overall educational and

extracurricular programs. It is understood that the presentations and activities of all persons involved in the school's recruitment program must try to avoid any references to the school's athletic program that might pressure a student to attend that school for the sole purpose of athletic participation.

## **9.4 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**9.4.1 School-Administered Financial Assistance.** Financial assistance provided by a school must be administered by the school; meaning that the school, through an established process that conforms to this policy, makes the final determination of the student who is to receive the assistance and the amount of assistance to be given. No student-athlete may accept financial assistance from any other person, business or organization unless it is received from one upon whom the student-athlete is naturally or legally dependent or is received through established and continuing programs to assist students that are administered by the State of Florida.

**9.4.1.1 Criteria for Providing Financial Assistance.** School-based financial assistance may be based on financial need as determined by an independent financial needs assessment company. A school may supplement the amount of financial assistance for which a student is determined to qualify provided the same form of supplemental assistance is available to other students.

**9.4.1.2 Assistance with Room or Meals.** School-based financial assistance may supplement costs associated with room or meals other than those meals made available during the school day to all students..

**9.4.1.3 Work-Study Programs.** A work-study program in which students receive financial assistance from a school in exchange for labor performed by the student for the school may be operated.

**9.4.1.4 Records Relating to Financial Assistance.** The school should keep detailed records of school-based financial assistance provided to each student. This includes the report of the student's financial need as well as the actual amount of financial assistance provided to the student by the school. The school must make all records available to the President or his/her designee for inspection upon request.

**9.4.2 Financial Assistance Not Administered by School.** Students may apply for and receive financial assistance through established and continuing programs to assist students that are administered by the State of Florida such as:

**9.4.2.1** The Opportunity Scholarship Program, through which the parent of a student in a failing public school may request and receive an Opportunity Scholarship for the student to attend an eligible private school.

**9.4.2.2** The McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program, through which the parent of a public school student with a disability who is dissatisfied with the student's progress may request and receive a McKay Scholarship for the student to attend an eligible private school.

**9.4.2.3** The Corporate Income Tax Credit Scholarship Program, through which the parent of a public school student who qualifies for free or reduced-price school lunch may seek a scholarship to attend an eligible private school from an eligible nonprofit scholarship- funding organization.

## **Policy 10**

### **10.1 SIAA Regulations and Legal Proceedings**

**10.1.1** The SIAA will not comment about an eligibility situation to an entity outside of the SIAA Office or member schools. At no time will the SIAA divulge personal details of the eligibility situation which might compromise the privacy of a student-athlete involved.

**10.1.2** The principal of the member school involved or the person(s) involved may release information about an eligibility case as they see fit.

**10.1.3** The SIAA will not comment about, release by telephone, fax, mail or otherwise the names of student-athletes involved and/or implicated in any investigation into alleged violations of Association Bylaws, regulations or policies.

## **POLICY 11**

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

#### **11.1 GPA Calculation.**

**11.1.1 Middle School GPA Calculation.** For grades 6 through 8, the semester GPA will be calculated at the conclusion of each semester by taking the sum of quality points earned (as per Bylaw 9.4.2) divided by the number of credits attempted during that semester.

**11.1.2 High School GPA Calculation.** For grades 9 through 12, the cumulative GPA will be calculated at the end of the first semester, including high school level grades earned while in grades 6 – 8, and the end of the school year (including summer school or its equivalent, if applicable) by taking the sum of all quality

points earned (as per Bylaw 9.4.2) divided by the number of all credits attempted since the student began taking senior high school level courses and adjusting for forgiveness grades as per Bylaw 9.4.3.1.

**11.1.2.1 Exception.** Senior high school level courses taken prior to the initial first semester of 9th grade will not be calculated in the cumulative GPA until the conclusion of the initial first semester of 9th grade.

**11.1.3 Rounding off GPA.** No rounding of calculated values will be used in determining the GPA.

## **11.2 Schools with Alternate Scheduling Formats.**

**11.2.1 Grading Period.** A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all member schools regardless of the type of scheduling format (i.e. block, traditional, trimester, etc.) they use.

## **11.3 Alternative/Special Schools and Special Programs.**

**11.3.1 Evaluation of Athletes.** A student-athlete attending any special school or special program must be evaluated on a semester that is consistent with the semester for all other students attending the member school.

**11.3.2 Grade Point Average.** The minimum grade point average (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) requirement as stated in s.1006.15(3)1, Florida Statutes, and the Association's Bylaws must be maintained each semester by all student-athletes attending special schools or special programs regardless of the nature of the special school or special program.

### **11.3.3 Alternative/Special School Student Participation in Athletics at Member Public Schools.**

**11.3.3.1 Requirements for Participation.** A student attending an alternative school or a special school operated by a school district is eligible to participate at the public school to which the student would be assigned according to the school district attendance area policies, provided:

(A) The member school has authorized athletic participation of alternative/special school students and the member school has notified the Association which schools qualify;

(B) The student meets the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities;

(C) The student registers with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletic competition as a representative of the school prior to the last applicable transfer date for the sport season in which he/she wishes to participate;

(D) The student complies with all SIAA regulations, including eligibility requirements regarding age and limits of eligibility, and local school regulations during the time of participation.

## **11.4 Home Education Programs.**

### **11.4.1 Home Education Student Participation in Athletics at Member Schools.**

**11.4.1.1 Requirements for Participation.** A student enrolled in a home education program is eligible to participate at member school provided:

(A) The student, within 30 days of his/her withdrawal from a traditional school program, properly registers with the district school board as being enrolled in a home education program in accordance with Section 1002.41(1)(a) of the Florida Statutes;

(B) The student's parents at the conclusion of each semester certify to the principal of the school that the student meets the minimum grade point average standards which are required of all students;

(C) The student meets the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities;

(D) The student registers with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletic competition as a representative of the school prior to the last applicable transfer date for the sport season in which he/she wishes to participate;

(E) The student complies with SIAA regulations, including eligibility requirements regarding age and limits of eligibility, and local school regulations during the time of participation;

(F) The student provides to school authorities all required forms and provisions.

### **11.4.2 Home Education Program Cooperatives.**

**11.4.2.1 Requirements of Cooperatives.** A cooperative of home education programs may become a member of this Association provided:



- (A) The cooperative appoints a designated representative to the SIAA so far as the obligations of the cooperative to this Association are concerned;
- (B) The cooperative pays membership dues and other such fees as established by the SIAA Board of Directors under the authority of these Bylaws;
- (C) Each participating student has basic medical insurance coverage and has catastrophic insurance coverage provided by the cooperative or independently secured;
- (D) The cooperative purchases and maintains liability insurance coverage, which names the SIAA as an insured party;
- (E) The SIAA representative at the conclusion of each semester certifies that each student participating in interscholastic athletics in the cooperative meets the minimum grade point average standards which are required of all students; and
- (F) Each student participating in interscholastic athletic competition must comply with SIAA eligibility requirements regarding age and limits of eligibility.

## **11.5 Charter Schools.**

### **11.5.1 Charter School Student Participation at Member Public Schools.**

**11.5.1.1 Requirements for Participation.** A student attending a charter school that does not sponsor an interscholastic athletic program in a sport(s) in which the student desires to participate is eligible to participate at a member school (the student must meet the same standards as any other student requesting assignment through the controlled open enrollment provisions, provided:

- (A) The student meets the requirements of the charter school program;
- (B) The student demonstrates educational progress as required by s.1006.15;
- (C) The student meets the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance that are required of other students participating in interscholastic athletics; and
- (D) The student registers with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletic competition as a representative of the school prior to the last applicable transfer date for the sport season in which he/she wishes to participate;
- (E) The student complies with all SIAA regulations, including eligibility requirements regarding age and limits of eligibility;

(F) The student provides proof of basic medical insurance coverage and both independently secured catastrophic insurance coverage and liability insurance coverage which names the SIAA as an insured party in the event the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to students attending a charter school;

(G) The student provides to school authorities all required forms and provisions.

## **11.6 Non-Member Private Schools.**

### **11.6.1 Non-Member Private School Participation at Member Schools.**

**11.6.1.1 Requirements for Participation.** A student attending a non-member private school that does not sponsor any interscholastic or interscholastic (i.e. intramural) athletic program is eligible to participate at a member school (s. 1006.15(8), F.S.) provided:

(A) The non-member private school at the conclusion of each semester provides to the member school a report of grades for that semester;

(B) The non- member school must make all student records, including, but not limited to, academic, financial, disciplinary, and attendance records, available upon request of the SIAA;

(C) The student meets the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities;

(D) The student registers with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic athletic competition as a representative of the school prior to the last applicable transfer date for the sport season in which he/she wishes to participate;

(E) The student complies with all SIAA regulations, including eligibility requirements regarding age and limits of eligibility, and local school regulations during the time of participation;

(F) The student provides proof of basic medical insurance coverage and both independently secured catastrophic insurance coverage and liability insurance coverage which names the SIAA as an insured party in the event the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to students attending a non-member private school;

(G) The student provides the school authorities all required forms and provisions.

## **11.7 Use of Ineligible Students.**

The intentional or inadvertent use of ineligible students is strictly prohibited by this association and should be reported immediately upon discovery.

**11.7.1 Ineligible Student Defined.** An ineligible student is one who has been found to have violated one or more of the bylaws or policies of this association such as, but not limited to:

- (A) Age
- (B) Academic requirements
- (C) Attendance requirements
- (D) Limit of eligibility
- (E) Transfer regulations
- (F) Amateurism
- (G) Suspended students due to unsportsmanlike acts.

**11.7.2 Penalties for Use of Ineligible Students.** Schools found to have used ineligible students could be subject to one or more of, but not limited to, the following:

- (A) Forfeiture of contests
- (B) Forfeiture of playoff advancement
- (C) Monetary penalties
- (D) Reprimand
- (E) Probation; administrative, restrictive or suspension
- (F) Expulsion or restricted membership

## **11.9 Penalties Assessed to Schools.**

**11.9.1** The penalty for violation of a Bylaw or policy of the Association will be determined by the President and/or Board of Directors.

**11.9.2 Fines for Violations.** Schools who commit violations against the SIAA bylaws, policies and general expectations will be subject to fines as determined by the President:

- (A) Level 1 = \$25
- (B) Level 2 = \$50
- (C) Level 3 = \$100
- (D) Level 4 = \$250
- (E) Level 5 = \$500

**11.9.3 Purpose of Fines.** Fines are not in place to make an income or create a budget line item. Rather they are in place to hold people accountable to their requirements and responsibilities to conducting themselves in a professional manner and upholding the expectations of the SIAA.

## **11.10 Reclassification**

**11.10.1 Reclassification Upon Entrance.** A student may be reclassified upon entrance into an SIAA school.

**11.10.2 Reclassification Restrictions.** A student may not be reclassified if he/she:

- (A) Has already begun his/her senior year;
- (B) Has transferred from another member school; or
- (C) Will turn 19 years 9 months during his/her senior year.

**11.10.5 Reclassification Concerns.** While a school may grant reclassification to a student, it must be understood that the NCAA considers a student's 4 years of high school eligibility to begin once he graduates the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **POLICY 12**

### **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

#### **12.1 Sportsmanship and Ethics**

Student-athletes, coaches, administrators, spectators and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with a member school, as well as contest officials,

shall adhere to the principles of good sportsmanship and the ethics of competition before, during and after all contests in which they participate and/or attend.

### **12.1.1 Penalties Assessed the School.**

**12.1.1.1** Storming the playing field or court by spectators and students during or at the conclusion of an athletic contest may result in a monetary penalty and may be increased depending on the severity of the incident.

**12.1.1.2** Removal by a coach or school personnel of a team or individual from an athletic contest prior to its normal conclusion may subject the school to a monetary penalty.

## **12.2 Unsportsmanlike Act by a Student-Athlete**

**12.2.1 Penalties Assessed the Student-Athlete.** Student-athletes who commit unsportsmanlike acts before, during or after a contest will be subject to suspension as determined by the President:

**12.2.1.1 Level 1 Suspension.** A student-athlete who commits an unsportsmanlike act or a flagrant foul for which he/she is ejected from the contest will be ineligible to compete for the remainder of that contest.

**12.2.1.2 Level 2 Suspension.** A student-athlete who receives a second Level 1 Suspension or commits an unsportsmanlike act, as defined in Bylaw 7.2.1, will be ineligible to compete for the remainder of that contest, ineligible to compete in any interscholastic athletic contest in any sport, at any level, for a period determined by the President. The length of such suspension could be as long as the remainder of the season in which the violation was committed.

**12.2.1.3 Level 3 Suspension.** A student-athlete who receives a second Level 2 Suspension or commits an egregious unsportsmanlike act, as determined in the sole discretion of the President, will be ineligible to compete in any interscholastic athletic contest in any sport for a period determined by the President. The length of such suspension could be as long as one (1) year.

**12.2.1.4 Level 4 Suspension.** A student-athlete who receives three (3) or more Level 2 Suspensions or commits an egregious unsportsmanlike act, as determined in the sole discretion of the Board of Directors, will be ineligible to compete in any interscholastic athletic contest for period determined by the Board of Directors. The length of such suspension could prohibit participation in any sport for the duration of the student-athlete's high school career.

**12.2.1.5** It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this policy

is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This policy applies to all regular season and State Series contests.

### **12.2.2 Penalties Assessed the School.**

**12.2.2.1** In the event that more than three (3) students from the same school have been charged with any suspension level, as defined in 13.2.1, in any one sport, beginning with the fourth suspension, the school could face probation in that sport and could be assessed a monetary penalty.

## **12.3 Unsportsmanlike Act by a Coach or Other Representative of the School's Athletic Interests**

**12.3.1 Penalties Assessed the Coach or Other Representative of the School's Athletic Interests.** Coaches or other representatives of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) who commit unsportsmanlike acts before, during or after a contest will be subject to the following suspension levels as determined by the President:

**12.3.1.1 Level 1 Suspension.** A coach or other representative of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) who commits an unsportsmanlike act for which he/she is ejected from the contest will be ineligible to coach or attend the remainder of that contest.

**12.3.1.2 Level 2 Suspension.** A coach or other representative of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) who receives a second Level 1 Suspension or commits an unsportsmanlike act, as defined in Bylaw 7.2.1, will be ineligible to coach or attend any interscholastic athletic contest for a period determined by the President. The length of such suspension could be as long as the remainder of the season in which the violation was committed.

**12.3.1.3 Level 3 Suspension.** A coach or other representative of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) who receives a second Level 2 Suspension or commits an egregious unsportsmanlike act, as determined in the sole discretion of the President, will be ineligible to coach or attend any interscholastic athletic contest in any sport for a period determined by the President. The length of such suspension could be as long as one (1) year.

**12.3.1.4 Level 4 Suspension.** A coach or other representative of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) who receives three (3) or more Level 2 Suspensions or commits an egregious unsportsmanlike act, as determined in the sole discretion of the Board of Directors, will be ineligible to coach or attend any interscholastic athletic contest in any sport for a period determined by the Board

of Directors. The length of such suspension could prohibit coaching or attendance at any interscholastic athletic contest for a member school for the duration of membership in the SIAA.

**12.3.1.4** When a coach is disqualified (ejected) from a contest, the coach shall immediately leave the premises or facility (i.e. gymnasium in basketball and volleyball; stadium/field in baseball, football, soccer and softball, etc.) to a place where the coach is not visible to either student-athletes, officials, spectators or other coaches; and to where the contest itself is not visible to the coach. A disqualified (ejected) coach shall not have any further contact with or give instruction to athletes or other members of the coaching staff for the remainder of the contest, including halftime intermission, breaks between quarters, periods or innings.

**12.3.1.5** A coach who is suspended from the next contest or number of contests after having been disqualified (ejected) from a previous contest shall not attend the contest(s) from which he/she has been suspended in any capacity and shall not be present at the site(s) of such contest(s).

**12.3.1.6** All coaches who have been disqualified (ejected) from a contest should complete the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Fundamentals of Coaching Course. This course should be completed by the end of the coach's suspension. A copy of the coach's certificate of completion should be forwarded to the SIAA Office. Such participation may decrease the length of the suspension.

### **12.3.2 Penalties Assessed the School.**

**12.3.2.1** A school whose coach commits multiple unsportsmanlike acts subjects the member school to probation in that sport and could be assessed a monetary penalty as determined by the President and/or Board of Directors.

**13.3.2.2** It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this policy is enforced. When a coach is allowed to coach in a contest from which he/she has been suspended, the school shall face additional penalties. This policy applies to all regular season and State Series contests.

**12.4 Public Criticism of Officials.** No coach or other school personnel may publicly criticize or berate an official prior to, during or following a contest. Professional ethics require that coaches and other school personnel use proper channels, as per Bylaw 10.3.2, to report their complaints about officials. A monetary penalty may be assessed a school whose coach or other employees are in violation of this provision.

## **12.5 Appeals**

The decision to disqualify (eject) a student-athlete, coach or other representative of the school's athletic interests (see Bylaw 1.4.18) from a contest is a decision of the contest official or SIAA Administrator. Any penalties imposed may be appealed to the President, and, from there, through the normal appeals procedures. All periods of ineligibility (suspensions) remain in effect during any such appeal unless and until they are modified or reversed.

## **POLICY 13**

### **GAME MANAGEMENT - BASKETBALL**

These are specific guidelines for home schools to use in order to properly manage a home basketball contest at all levels for basketball.

**13.1 Gym and Court Specifications.** Court size must be at least 84' x 50' with no obstructions at least 25' above the court surface. Level 4 fine for failure to comply.

**13.1.1** The home team shall provide at least two (2) balls for the visiting team for warm-ups. It is strongly suggested that visiting teams bring their own balls to warm-up with.

**13.2 Shot Clocks.** The playing court must have 2 shot clocks, one on each end. Both shot clocks must be mounted on wall or on a stand at least 6' off of the ground. The shot clocks may not be game clocks used for shot clocks. Level 4 fine for failure to comply.

**13.2.1** All SIAA games shall be played using a 30-second shot clock. It is always reset to 30-seconds.

**13.3 Certified Officials.** There must be 3 certified officials for all varsity girls and National boys games, and at least 2 certified officials for games in the Regional, Sunshine, & Coastal. Level 4 fine for failure to comply.

**13.4 Game Times.** All games in National will be played as 4 9-minute quarters with a 10 minute half time. All games in Regional, Sunshine, Coastal and Varsity Girls will be played as 4 8-minute quarters with a 10 minute half time. Officials and the home school do not have the authority to change this unless agreed to by both schools/coaches. Level 3 fine for failure to comply.

**13.4.1** Teams shall have at least 10 minutes to warm-up prior to tip-off. Should the visiting team arrive late and cause the tip-off to be later than scheduled, this expectation is nullified. The coaches may then agree upon a proper warm-up time.



**13.5 Game Clock, Shot Clock and Score Book Operations.** The home school must provide an adult (out of high school) to properly perform the actions and responsibilities of the game clock, shot clock and official scorebook. If able to do so effectively, the same person may operate the game and shot clock. One individual may not perform all three actions. Level 4 fine for failure to comply.

**13.5.1** Overtime will be a four (4) minute period. Each subsequent overtime period is also 4 minutes.

**13.6 Personal and Team fouls.** Players will be disqualified on their 5th recorded foul per NFHS rules.

**13.6.1** For all SIAA games, fouls will be reset to zero (0) at the end of the quarter. Players in the boys divisions will shoot 1 & 1 free throws (single bonus) on and after the 5th foul recorded in the quarter. Players will then shoot 2 free throws (double bonus) on and after the 8th foul recorded in the quarter. Varsity girls will shoot the double bonus (2 free throws) on and after the 5th foul of the period. Fouls from the 4th quarter will be carried over to overtime period.

**13.7 Offensive player closely guarded by defender.** To be considered "closely guarded", a defender must be guarding a player who is located in the frontcourt and within six feet of the player. The count applies to a player who is only holding the ball.

**13.8 Home team provides video for SIAA games.** In the National division, it is the responsibility of the home team to provide a video recording of the game to the opponent within 48 hours after the game. This can be in the form of livestreaming, archived streaming, or sharing via a disk, drive, or link.