



Oregon School Activities Association

25200 SW Parkway Avenue, Suite 1
Wilsonville, OR 97070
503.682.6722 <http://www.osaa.org>



April 16, 2022

TO: Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Directors

FROM: Kelly Foster, Assistant Executive Director
Kyle Stanfield, Assistant Executive Director

SUBJECT: Update on the Proceedings of the Cooperative Sponsorship Task Force

The Cooperative Sponsorship Task Force held its final meeting via Zoom on April 14, 2022. The Task Force has used a virtual format for all meetings that allows both Task Force members and those seeking to provide input the option of participating via webinar.

The Task Force began the meeting by reviewing feedback that was shared in both the OSAA Delegate Assembly meeting and the Oregon Athletic Director Association Conference Classification breakouts. Overall, the membership was very supportive of the recommendation from the Cooperative Sponsorship Task Force. Some groups expressed a concern regarding a coop team becoming dominant while remaining above the classification cutoff but believed that the proposed annual review would address those situations.

After hearing feedback from the membership, the Task Force remains supportive of the current policy remaining in place for the schools who fit within the requirements outlined. The group is also recommending an exception for schools interested in hosting a Cooperative Sponsorship where their combined ADM would go beyond the assigned classification of the largest school involved, with an annual review. Members are focused on providing participation opportunities in these situations and are aware that schools may utilize this exception with an eye toward success instead which is why the annual review language is critical.

The Task Force discussed and is currently supportive of the following exception to the Cooperative Sponsorship beginning in the 2022-23 school year:

To be considered for an exception, the combined ADM of the schools involved may not exceed 10% above the classification cutoff of the largest school. Criteria to be considered in an annual review would include roster size, number of participants from each school, geographic location, number of classifications between participating schools, and the ability for the schools to host their own teams. Any cooperative sponsorships granted an exception by the Executive Board will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Final recommendations will be presented to the OSAA Executive Board **at their May 2 meeting**. The Task Force appreciates your support and encourages your participation in this process. Please do not hesitate to contact Kelly Foster (kellyf@osaa.org) or Kyle Stanfield (kyles@osaa.org) at the OSAA if you have any questions.

The Task Force Roster, charge to the Task Force, and information are available at the OSAA website: <https://www.osaa.org/governance/task-forces#coop-sponsorship>.

Proposal to Amend Executive Board Policy – Cooperative Sponsorship

(Action Item)

QUESTION: *Should the Executive Board amend Board Policy – Cooperative Sponsorship to allow schools to request an exception, including a required annual review, when their combined ADM would place them at a higher classification?*

RATIONALE: The OSAA Executive Board commissioned a task force to review cooperative sponsorships following the classification and districting process. The group looked for ways to adjust the policy to better provide participation opportunities for students whose schools don't have enough students to offer an activity while recognizing that competitive balance issues could be present. The 10% figure is intended to align with the annual ADM review done by the Executive Board.

RULE CHANGE SPONSORED BY: Cooperative Sponsorship Task Force

NEXT STEP IF PASSED: Effective beginning with the 2022-23 school year.

POSSIBLE RULE CHANGES:

KEY: Add Delete

18. COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP

In order for two or more schools to qualify for cooperative sponsorship as permitted in Article 6.5., they must meet the following requirements:

- A. **Who May Apply?** Only full member schools may apply for cooperative sponsorship, not families or individuals. Cooperating schools should be located in the same geographic area. Schools requesting cooperative sponsorship approval should make every effort to co-sponsor an activity with the nearest school that also has difficulty sponsoring the activity by itself. Cooperative sponsorship shall be considered only for 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A schools.

EXCEPTION: The Executive Board also may approve cooperative sponsorships involving 4A, 3A, 2A or 1A schools with a 6A or 5A school if the 4A, 3A, 2A or 1A schools are located in an isolated area, are unable to find a closer 4A, 3A, 2A or 1A school willing to enter into a cooperative sponsorship agreement, or if the two schools are physically housed in the same building where students take classes together.

- B. **Classification.** Classification placement for the requested activity will be determined by the total combined ADM in grades 9-12 of the schools involved **per Article 6.3.**

EXCEPTION: If the total combined ADM in grades 9 through 12 causes the cooperative team to qualify for a higher classification, the schools requesting permission for a cooperative team may petition the Executive Board for an exception to this provision. ~~Factors that may be considered by the Executive Board when evaluating a petition for an exception may include, but are not limited to, number of participants from each school, how much the combined ADM exceeds the classification cutoff point, and geographic considerations.~~ **To be considered for an exception, the combined ADM of the schools involved may not exceed 10% above the classification cutoff of the largest school. Criteria to be considered in an annual review would include roster size, number of participants from each school, geographic location, number of classifications between participating schools, and the ability for the schools to host their own teams. Any cooperative sponsorships granted an exception by the Executive Board will be reviewed on an annual basis.**

- C. **School Board Approval Requirement.** The Governing Boards of the schools involved in the cooperative sponsorship shall jointly apply for such sponsorship listing reasons for the request.
- D. **Regular or Special District Approval Requirement.** Cooperative sponsorship applicants shall obtain approval from the regular or special district in which the proposed cooperative team will participate and submit the approval form with the Cooperative Sponsorship Application. Regular and special districts are encouraged to consider the philosophy discussed at the end of this Executive Board Policy when reviewing requests for support of a cooperative sponsorship application.
- E. **Deadline for Application/Dissolution.** The deadline for application or for dissolution for a cooperative sponsorship shall be the first contest date of the season in which the cooperatively sponsored team is to compete.
- F. **Timeline for Approval.** The Executive Board will attempt to act on an application at its next regular meeting following receipt of the application. However, the Executive Director can make a decision, subject to approval by the Executive Board.
- G. **Duration of Approval.** Any approved cooperative sponsorship shall be limited in duration to the remainder of the time block per application. If an application for cooperative sponsorship is granted for multiple years and the cooperating schools choose not to cooperatively sponsor a team during any year of the agreement, it will be necessary for the schools to reapply for permission to cooperatively sponsor a team during the remaining term of the agreement using the most recent ADM figures available.

Cooperative Sponsorship Philosophy

The philosophy that will guide the OSAA Executive Board in reviewing and approving applications for cooperative sponsorship of activities is as follows:

- A. The Executive Board will attempt to increase the number of students who are participating in activities by making activities available for students that would not be available in their school because of a lack of numbers if joint sponsorship did not occur.
- B. The Executive Board would prefer to see projects that combine smaller schools for sponsorship of an activity rather than a small school program combining with a larger school when the smaller school cannot support the activity alone because of a lack of numbers.
- C. Improving the quality of a team (e.g., better won-lost record) will not be a valid criterion in deciding whether approval should be granted.
- D. Agreements are limited in duration to the remainder of the time block but may be terminated by the Executive Board under the following conditions:
 - 1) Closing of one of the schools.
 - 2) Valid complaints from surrounding schools concerning recruiting.
 - 3) Complaints from parents, Governing Boards, students in cooperating schools, etc.
 - 4) Other valid reasons as determined by the Executive Board.