



Oregon School Activities Association

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TO: Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Directors
FROM: Peter Weber, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Update from the Transfer Task Force – December 10, 2019

The Transfer Task Force had their second meeting at the OSAA Offices in Wilsonville on Tuesday, December 10, 2019 to begin its review of current OSAA transfer policies.

The Task Force was appointed by the OSAA Executive Board following a request from the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association (OACA) and a survey of statewide athletic directors at the Oregon Athletic Directors Association (OADA) State Conference last April.

The OSAA Executive Board has charged the group with exploring the following topics related to transfer policies:

- Thorough review of the current Rule 8.6 regarding transfers, including the Joint Residence requirement
- Strategies to address the increasing number of transfers
- Consideration of policies in effect in other states as it relates to transfers
- Feasibility of allowing ineligible transfers to participate at the sub-varsity level
- Policies and procedures for transfers involving homeless students as defined by McKinney-Vento
- Transfers with affiliation, including students returning to a school previously attended
- Mid-year transfers vs. transfers between school years
- Transfer hardship appeals process involving District Hardship Committees
- Plus, any other topics deemed relevant by the Task Force

The Task Force was welcomed by OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber along with other OSAA Executive Staff members. The charge of the Committee was presented before they began their discussion.

Task Force members are concerned with a “free agency” mentality regarding transfers and the increased role that out-of-season club sport participation has on which school a student attends. After the first meeting the Task Force asked the staff to collect data on District Athletic Committee (DAC) rulings, Eligibility Appeals Board (EAB) rulings, transfer rules from other states and a survey asking schools about number of transfers, types of transfers and when students transfer.

The topics that were discussed were vast and many, but the Task Force wanted to focus on the following items as they start the conversation with the membership:

Sub-Varsity Participation for Transfers

The Task Force believes that participation is key in connecting students to a school. For ineligible transfers, they do not want to take the opportunity of participation away from an individual, but they are interested in restricting at what levels they can participate. The concept would be that any ineligible transfer is automatically eligible at the sub-varsity level but not at the varsity level. The idea is that if someone is going to transfer for athletic purposes then knowing that they won't be eligible at the varsity level may detour them from transferring. The period of eligibility at the sub-varsity level only would be consistent with current OSAA rules (typically one calendar year). For schools that do not have sub-varsity teams there would be a similar hardship process to what is currently in place.

Participation in the same Sport in the same Season

To curb early season / mid-season transfers, the Task Force is interested in restricting a student to participating for a single school in a single activity in a season. This restriction would begin once a student attends tryouts, practice or participates in a contest. An example would be: a student participates in tryouts at school 'A' but doesn't make the team. They decide to then transfer to school 'B' to try to make the team there. This student, because of their tryout at school 'A' would not be eligible to participate in that

activity at any other school for that sports season even with a move of the entire family. This concept would help keep students at their originating school and not transferring for athletic purposes.

Minimum Mileage Restriction for Transfers

The Task Force is interested in the idea of setting a minimum mileage a student must physically move to allow OSAA rules of immediate eligibility to come into play. In metropolitan areas with multiple high schools, students can transfer within a district without ever moving or move a very short distance to gain eligibility at a new school. The Task Force believes that intra-district transfers and inter-district transfers have proven to be harmful to the success of programs and the investment in students coming up through feeder, neighborhood programs. An example would be: a student receives an intra-district transfer, an inter-district transfer or moves within the mileage minimum (i.e. less than 50 miles), they would not be eligible at the varsity level at the new school for one calendar year. In an example of what would be allowed: If a student moves from Eugene to Portland and the whole family unit moves and all other OSAA rules are met, that student would be immediately eligible at the varsity level. The goal is to restrict the continual movement within metropolitan areas.

Restricting Eligibility Entering the 9th Grade

The group feels that recruitment, affiliation and undue influence are filtering down before students enter the 9th grade. The Task Force is interested in exploring the idea of limiting where a student can enter high school based on their feeder middle school. Current OSAA rules have open eligibility entering the 9th grade – a student can go wherever they'd like and gain immediate continuity. This concept would limit students, based on their address, to where they could be eligible entering the 9th grade. The goal of this rule would be to keep students at their resident school and to reinforce the importance of feeder programs to the high school program.

The Task Force's next meeting date is February 3, 2020. Currently those meetings are scheduled to be work sessions, but the group welcomes feedback from member schools on areas the Task Force should address during its work.

Written suggestions and proposals on any transfer related subjects should be emailed to the OSAA (kyles@osaa.org). Any communication received by the OSAA will be shared with all task force members for review and discussion.