



**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Schools

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<b>BILL:</b>	HB 1429	<b>DATE:</b>	March 6, 2020
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Education – Public School Athletics – Basketball Schedule	<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Ways and Means
<b>POSITION:</b>	Information Only		
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**EXPLANATION:**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) is providing information for your consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 1429, State Board of Education – Public School Athletics – Basketball Schedule. House Bill 1429 would require the MSDE and the MPSSAA to review all regulations found in COMAR 13A.06.03 *Interscholastic Athletics in the State* to make exceptions for the sport of basketball as detailed in the bill.

There are 198 public high schools that are members of the MPSSAA. Those 198 member high schools support 4,215 varsity high school interscholastic sport teams annually that have collectively agreed upon the regulations found in COMAR 13A.06.03. House Bill 1429 sets a precedent and different standard for 396 boys and girls basketball programs out of the annual 4,215 varsity high school sports teams.

House Bill 1429 affects COMAR 13.06.03.03 *Sport Seasons*, by changing the seasonal limitations for only the sport of basketball, restricting weekly limitation flexibility, and regulating tournament opportunities during the season. House Bill 1429 mandates weekly limitations and does not provide for schedule flexibility for postponed contests as found in COMAR 13A.06.03.03B(3). Currently, many schools play in multiple tournaments and showcase games throughout the season, counting each contest within the tournament as a regular season contest. Each school is afforded an opportunity within the current COMAR regulations to challenge student athletes, or provide opportunities for additional student participation, by distinguishing a tournament from a regular season contest so that it will not count towards state tournament seeding. House Bill 1429 limits sport season tournaments to a single tournament therefore, limiting in-season scheduling opportunities for schools.

COMAR 13A.03.06 limits interscholastic athletic participation on behalf of the public schools to a defined sports season. House Bill 1429 provides an exception for the sport of basketball to participate in four tournament contests outside the defined sport season whereas, all other sports and school programs would be still regulated by out-of-season interscholastic athletic contest participation

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(COMAR 13A.06.03C(3), out-of-season practice regulations (COMAR 13A.06.03.04E), and sanctioning regulations (COMAR 13A.06.03.09).

House Bill 1429 as it relates to participation in tournaments outside of the normal basketball season does not address health and safety factors of practice and gradual assimilation to play. Local educational agencies will be affected by participation outside the defined sport season with increased liability of school sponsored programs, parental oversight of student participation during out-of-season tournaments, record-keeping, eligibility compliance, transportation requirements, and supervision of students. The MSDE estimates local educational agencies will have increased expenditures to cover the costs of out-of-season basketball coaching stipends, school security, transportation, building services, and general supervision and oversight.

House Bill 1429 provides for participation in tournaments outside the normal basketball season. These tournaments do not have National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) sanctioning or MPSSAA sanctioning and may be run by third-party for profit organizations. Events not sanctioned by the NFHS and MPSSAA may place public school students in contests against students and participants that do not meet similar eligibility standards such as age restrictions, number of season restrictions, and being a bona-fide high school program as designated by the respective state high school athletic association.

Even though House Bill 1429 is directed toward basketball, the ramifications will be statewide. Regulations that govern interscholastic athletics are dependent on all member schools and school systems abiding by the same rules and regulations they have collectively agreed upon. House Bill 1429 will create a focus on single-sport specialization with the option of participation in tournaments outside the defined sports season, provide a standard for one sport that is not provided to any other sport, and impact the equitable participation and parity that currently exists within public schools.

The MPSSAA has been working with the Maryland High School Basketball Coaches Association regarding NCAA June Evaluation Periods to provide a framework of participation opportunities for basketball student-athletes that does not violate the regulations agreed upon by the 24 local educational agencies. The framework would be very similar to other sports such as baseball and lacrosse that have showcase events for individual participants through the respective sports coaches association.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 1429**. For further information, please contact Tiffany Clark, at 410-260-6028, or [tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov](mailto:tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov).