

#### 4.21– RECLASSIFICATION

- 4.21 Every ~~two~~ **four** years, member schools will be placed in classifications for competition by one of the following procedures:
- The four-year reclassification period shall be divided into two contractual periods of two years each.**
    - (1) A school that experiences more than a 20% increase or decrease in FTE at the end of the second year will be placed in a different classification for the final two years.**
    - (2) New private schools will be allowed to enter the GHSA at the third year of the reclassification cycle**
  - based on the FTE count for students in Grades 9-12 provided by the Georgia Department of Education for the fall semester of the second year of the current reclassification cycle
    - A school will be considered a single-gender school if either gender composes less than 35% of the school population
    - A single-gender school shall have its FTE numbers doubled for the purpose of reclassification
  - based on the actual head count of students in Grades 9-12 at member private schools as determined on September 15<sup>th</sup> of the second year of the current reclassification cycle
  - based on projected enrollments numbers for all schools affected by the opening of a new school or the consolidation of existing schools that must be submitted by the system Superintendent no later than September 15<sup>th</sup> of the second year of the current reclassification cycle.
    - Projections must be filed for the next two school years and those numbers will be averaged to get the number by which the schools will be classified
    - In the event that a school's actual enrollment in the first semester of the new reclassification cycle exceeds the projection average by 10% or more or an existing school exceeds the projection by 5% or more, the school shall not be eligible for post-season play in any sport for the entirety of that reclassification cycle.
    - Schools may appeal the loss of post-season competition to the Reclassification Committee and then to the full Executive Committee
  - determined by the Reclassification Committee in accordance with the "Isolation Rule."
- 4.22 The membership of the Association shall be divided into six (6) classifications as follows:
- Schools will be placed in classifications as follows:
    - Largest 10% of schools (according to F.T.E.) - 6A**
    - Next 15% - 5A**
    - Next 15% - 4A**
    - Next 15% - 3A**
    - Next 15% - 2A**
    - Remaining 30% - 1A**
  - Schools with the same F.T.E. count separated by a classification break point will be placed in the higher classification.
  - Each classification will have eight (8) regions unless otherwise needed.
  - The Executive Director shall have the authority to work with any school that is geographically isolated within its region in order to resolve difficulties in travel and time out of class.
    - An individual school shall be considered to be isolated if the average distance from that school to all other schools in the region is 100 miles or more one way.
    - The decision to place a school in a higher or lower classification will be based on a combination of factors that include travel distances and school population size.
    - If two or three schools in a region are considered to be isolated (even if the average travel distance is less than 100 miles one way), the Reclassification Committee shall be authorized to place those schools in another classification based on travel distances and school population size.
    - If four or more schools in a region are considered to be isolated (even if the average travel distance is less than 100 miles one way), the Reclassification Committee shall be authorized to form a subdivided region in which crossover games with the other subdivision will not be mandatory for region standing.

4.23 When the membership is divided into classifications as called for by the GHSA Constitution, the following process will be used:

1. The F.T.E. count for public schools will be averaged by the GHSA staff, and the staff will compile enrollment counts from private schools and system projections for new schools and other schools affected by that opening.
2. Member schools will receive a listing of student population counts for their verification. When there is a major discrepancy between the school's enrollment count and the count determined by the GHSA staff, the school may appeal to the Executive Director to reconsider the count.
3. When enrollment figures have been verified, schools will be placed in the proper classification and schools will have ~~fourteen~~ **seven (147)** days to file a request to play at a higher classification.
  1. A request to move to a high classification must be submitted over the signatures of the school's administrative authorities (i.e., the Principal and Superintendent).
  2. A school that transfers to a higher classification must remain in the higher classification until schools are next reclassified on a statewide basis.
4. ~~When the number of schools moving up a classification has been verified, the same number of schools with the smallest enrollment in the affected classification will have seven (7) days to file a request to play down one classification.~~
  - a. ~~A request to move to a lower classification must be submitted over the signatures of the school's administrative authorities (i.e., the Principal and Superintendent).~~
  - b. ~~A school that transfers to a lower classification must remain in the lower classification until schools are next reclassified on a statewide basis.~~
5. ~~The GHSA Office will initially place schools in regions and sub regions.~~
6. The Reclassification Committee will meet in the month of November to ~~determine final placement of~~ **place** schools in regions and sub regions. ~~The committee will discuss each classification's region placement one classification at a time beginning with 6A and going down through 1A, with ample time for discussion in an open meeting. Each classification will be voted on before moving to the next classification.~~ The decisions will be sent to the member schools after that meeting.
  1. There will be a mandatory subdivision of each region containing ten (10) or more schools by the Reclassification Committee (Exception: Cheerleading).
  2. The Reclassification Committee may subdivide a region consisting of less than ten schools if there is an extremely large geographic area within that region.
  3. For football, the Reclassification Committee will require crossover games between teams in the sub regions to guarantee a minimum of 70% of the season schedule unless there are isolation issues.
  4. For all other sports, subdivided regions must guarantee member schools a minimum number of contests within the region equal to 50% of the season schedule unless there are isolation issues.
  5. Any region subdivided because of geographic considerations may vote to play a full region schedule based on a two-thirds approval of all Principals in the region.
6. Following the initial placement of schools into regions, each new region shall meet to audit the population numbers of its member schools.
  - a. If the numbers are accurate, a written notice of approval shall be sent to the GHSA office.
  - b. If there are discrepancies in the numbers, a written notice shall be sent to the GHSA office asking the Reclassification Committee to hear the appeal at the meeting that is scheduled to hear appeals for lateral transfers.
7. Member schools will have ~~fourteen~~ **seven (147)** days to request a lateral move to another region, and that request is filed with the Reclassification Committee.
  - a. A request to have a lateral transfer must be submitted over the signatures of the school's administrative authorities (i.e., the Principal and Superintendent).
  - b. ~~This appeal will be heard in December and representatives from both regions shall be notified of the appeal, and the region for which they are requesting a lateral move will vote to approve or deny the appeal. ~~may attend the meeting to voice their approval or state their concerns about such a move.~~~~
  - c. A school that receives a lateral transfer must remain in that region until schools are next reclassified on a statewide basis.

d. The decisions made by the Region may be appealed to the Reclassification Committee before being will produce the alignment that will be presented to the full Executive Committee.

8. At a specially-called meeting in January, the Executive Committee shall hear any appeals from members who were denied lateral transfers by the Reclassification Committee. Representatives from both regions involved in the appeal shall be notified, and may voice their approval or state their concerns about the appeal.
9. Member schools may begin scheduling contests for the new reclassification cycle as soon as the final vote has been taken, the membership notified, and any region subdivisions finalized.
10. When a majority vote is used in a subdivided region to determine scheduling and the process for selecting teams for post-season play, one or more schools may file a "minority report" with the Executive Director if the approved procedure is alleged to be unfair to all schools in the region. If the Executive Director believes that there is unfairness with the chosen procedure, the Reclassification Committee will mediate the matter.

4.24 The following scheduling policy will be in effect for public schools entering the GHSA at the beginning of the second year of the reclassification cycle:

1. In sports where the region has two-year scheduling, the new school will not be able to play a complete region schedule at the varsity level. In those sports, the school could play a varsity non-region schedule or a JV schedule.
2. In sports having year-to-year scheduling, the new school will have full membership once it has been assigned to the new region by the Reclassification Committee.
3. In sports that have a region tournament to advance to post-season play, the region may allow a new school to accept a low seed in the tournament even though it did not play a complete region schedule. That is a decision made by the region.

4.25 Reclassification Committee will utilize the following factors in reclassification decision:

1. consideration of travel time and costs, plus time out of school for students.
2. consideration of differences in the size of school populations.
3. consideration of competitive balance of the schools.
4. consideration of equitable access to playoff slots.
5. consideration of rivalries and gate-receipt issues.

4.26 Charter schools that apply for membership after the reclassification process has been completed will be accepted as schools playing sub-varsity schedules and/or non-region varsity schedules for the next reclassification cycle.