

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Board of Trustees Meeting

MINUTES

Georgia High School Association – Thomaston, GEORGIA

June 4, 2025 – 8:30 AM

Scarlett Grantham (6A)
Brian Montgomery (2A)
Regina Montgomery (At Large)
Bobby Brewington (4A) – Absent

Steve Waters (5A)
Michael Thompson (AD1)
Kevin Petroski (At Large)

Eli Connell (3A)
Steven Simpson (AD2)
Jim Finch (Pres)

Jose Fernandez (At Large)
Michelle Masters (At Large)
Curt Miller (VP)

BOT President Jim Finch called the meeting to order, followed by VP Curt Miller leading the Pledge of Allegiance. GHSA Associate Director, Carror Wright, provided the invocation. Director of Media Relations, Marvin James called the roll. Finch called for the Adoption of Agenda. Steve Simpson accepted and Mike Thompson seconded.

1. **By-law Proposal 1.60 (see attached amendments to the by law 1.60)**

Motion for bylaw to go in effect August 1st by Steve Waters, seconded by Regina Montgomery.
(VOTE: 11-1; Brian Montgomery NO. Bobby Brewington Absent)

Motion to approve Constitutional Changes of the by law proposal. (It must sit for 30 days, then vote again in July) was brought up by Mike Thompson and seconded by Scarlett Grantham.
(VOTE: 11-1; Brian Montgomery NO. Bobby Brewington Absent)

The BOT entertained discussion on the **Start/End Date Changes for Next Year**, specifically for baseball, soccer and track & field to allow more time for scrimmages, participation in out of state indoor meets and conditioning. 4 on 1's were recommended for off season workouts to help with training and conditioning.

The addition of the Arm Acclimation Period for Baseball was also discussed with probable start date of ONLY pitchers 10 days before the start date of baseball.

Athens Academy AD, Kevin Petroski, led the discussion on end of regular season region tournaments regarding track & field. His concern was with not adhering to the proposed format of Class A DI–3A Public Schools being allowed to compete for Region titles, while Private Schools were not included. Track appears to be the only sport that did not compete. Discussion is ongoing.

Curt Miller, led a discussion about tennis and track athletes being allowed to participate during both state championships with help from GHSA by scheduling finals on alternate days. The GHSA will also consider scheduling conflicts with lacrosse and soccer student athletes.

Dr. Robin Hines shared legislative update notes regarding the celebration of girls' flag football growing in the state of Georgia. The Arthur Blank Foundation and the Falcons are leading that growth with grants of \$5-10K to programs through the Peach State. Hines also spoke about the Promise Scholarship to the lower 25% of underachieving schools in the state. The scholarship offers \$6500 vouchers for students to attend private schools.

Finch called for motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Simpson motioned and Michelle Masters seconded.

PROPOSED REVISIONS RELATED TO GHSA BY-LAW 160

1.60 - SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS / TRANSFER / MIGRANT STUDENTS /

MIGRATORY WAIVER

1.61 School service areas for member public schools are those attendance boundaries established by local boards of education from which a school normally draws its students. The service area for a member private school is the public school's attendance zone in which the private school resides. The service area for a startup or converted charter school will be the same as the school from which the charter school draws its students.

1.62 A transfer student who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be deemed a migrant at the new school for 365 days from the date of transfer unless the following criteria are met:

a) The student moved simultaneously with the entire family unit, and all other persons

he/she lived with at the former residence, and that residential unit moved into the service

area of the new school with simultaneous enrollment of the student in the new school.

This is known as a “bona fide move.” (NOTE: A move within the same service area does not constitute a bona fide move.)

b) It must be apparent that the parent(s) and all the persons residing with the student and the student have relinquished the residence in the former service area and have moved to a residence in the new service area with the intention that the move be permanent.

c) Determination of what constitutes a bona fide change of residency and with the intent that it be permanent depends on the circumstances of each case. The GHSA will consider all relevant facts and circumstances in making that determination. Confirmation of the following factors, although not conclusive, MUST be provided as evidence of relinquishment of the former residence:

1. All licensed drivers in the household must comply with the Georgia DMV change of address policy and schools must provide copies of updated driver’s licenses with the new address.
2. The former residence must be vacated, all unnecessary utilities terminated and all household goods and furniture must be either moved to

the new residence or stored (except as may be necessary to ready the residence for sale).

3. The former residence must not be used or occupied by any member of the family unit.

4. The residence, if owned, must either be sold or listed for sale. If the former residence was leased by the family unit, the lease must be cancelled.

Copies of any applicable listing agreement, deed, contract for sale, or lease cancellation must be provided.

5. Change of address notification must be made to all employers and the postal service.

The bona fide move is validated when the student's family maintains the new residence for at least one calendar year. A return to the previous service area within that year renders the student to be a migrant student.

d) The student was enrolled in a private school or a magnet school and has a bona fide move from one public school service area to another public school service area. A student in

this situation may attend either the public school or a private school serving his area of residence.

e) The student was enrolled in a non-member school in Georgia and, without a bona fide

move, transferred to a GHSA member school that serves his area of residence as long as:

1. It is the initial move of the student from a non-member school to a member school serving his area of residence, AND
2. The student was enrolled at the high school serving his area of residence in grades 9-12 before attending the non-member school, OR
3. The student has not yet established eligibility in grades 9-12 at a member school. *Eligibility is established the first time the student enrolls in a GHSA member school regardless of service area.*
4. A student who transfers from a GHSA member school to an independent school entering the GHSA in the next school year must be enrolled at the entering independent school by January 31 of the year preceding their becoming a GHSA member school in order to be eligible. NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers have control over the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.

5. In compliance with the Dexter Mosley Act, schools must file eligibility for home study students using Transfer Eligibility Form "HS" found on the GHSA web site.
- f) The student transfers from a non-member home school and the receiving school grants credit so that the student has accumulated sufficient units. At the time such credit is given, the student must also have passed a minimum of at least 2.5 units the previous semester. The student becomes eligible when credit is awarded officially.
- g) The student is involved in a foreign exchange program that is approved and published on the “Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs” published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). This list is found on the GHSA web site.

1. The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year.
2. The student shall not be a graduate of a secondary school in his home country.
3. The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.
4. The foreign exchange program must randomly assign students to schools by a method that insures that no student, school, or other interested party may

influence the assignment for athletic purposes. “Direct Placement” foreign exchange students must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.

5. All eligibility forms (Form B) for foreign exchange students must be accompanied by documentation from the CSIET-approved foreign exchange program showing that the student has been placed according to the normal procedures for that agency.
- h) If one of his/her parents or the custodial parent is a certified teacher or administrator teaching in grades 9-12 at the receiving school. This opportunity is available one time only at any given school. (NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers overrule the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.)
- i) The student has one of the following family related circumstances which shall constitute a waiver of the “bona fide move” rule:
 1. There is a Superior Court Final Order changing permanent physical custody of the student from one parent to the other parent and the student moves to the residence

of the parent receiving custody in a new service area and attends the member school serving that service area.

2. There is a Superior Court Final Order awarding permanent joint physical custody to the parents and the student elects to move from the residence of one parent to the residence of the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence. Provided, however, that such an election can be made only once during a 12-month period beginning the date of the transfer and the Final Order must have specifically awarded the parents “joint physical custody” of the student. Award of “joint legal custody” shall not suffice for purposes of this paragraph.
3. There is a death of the custodial parent with whom the student resided and the student moves to live with the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence.
4. There is a military transfer of one or both custodial parents that requires a change of residence of the student to a new service area and the student attends the member school serving that area of residence.

(NOTE: Eligibility forms for transfer eligibility under paragraphs (1), (2) and (3)

above must be accompanied by certified copies of applicable Court Orders.

Eligibility forms for transfer eligibility under paragraph (4) above must be

accompanied by true and correct copies of verifiable deployment orders.)

5. Students changing schools due to non-parent custodial changes shall be declared

migrant students and ineligible for twelve months from the date of transfer. All

cases involving non-parental custody changes may be appealed through the

hardship process.

6. Illegitimate children do not gain eligibility by transfer to the residence of the

child's father. In order to gain eligibility, the child must be legitimized by the

father pursuant to Georgia law. Signing the birth certificate, paying child support

or living with the father is not sufficient to deem the child legitimate. NOTE:

Children are considered legitimate under Georgia if born or conceived during the

marriage to the mother.

- j) Students who are U.S. citizens and who have been enrolled and attended a high school in a foreign country, upon return to the U.S., shall be eligible to participate at a GHSA member school provided the student lives in the new school's service area and is otherwise eligible under GHSA age, eight-semester, academic and other eligibility rules.
- k) Students who are transferred from one school attendance area to another school attendance area by a mandate of the local board of education maintain their eligibility.
- l) Married students setting up a household (domicile) shall be eligible in the school of their residence provided they meet all other requirements of eligibility.
- m) Students at the Atlanta School for the Deaf will be eligible at the school serving their area of residence provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.
- n) Students entering a school as an "unaccompanied youth" under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
- o) If approved by the local board of education, students enrolled in a magnet or specialty school established by the local board of education shall be allowed to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities as a member of the school team for the school which

they would ordinarily attend according to local board of education attendance policy.

Provided, however, that:

1. If the magnet/specialty school offers the only activity in which the student elects to participate, the student shall be required to participate as a member of the magnet/specialty school program in that activity.
2. Students at magnet/specialty schools may not participate in GHSA extracurricular activities at both the magnet/specialty school and the school that the student would ordinarily attend. Those students must elect to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities at only one school per school year. For example, students could not play basketball at the magnet school and football at the home school.
3. The election of the student to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities for either the magnet/specialty school or the school the student would ordinarily attend shall be binding for the current school year.
4. Such students shall be required to comply with all GHSA eligibility and other rules. The member school shall be required to provide to the GHSA a copy of the local board of education approval of such participation.

5. The receiving school will submit students on an MT Eligibility Form. This form is available on the GHSA web site (www.ghsa.net).

p) All eligibility appeals arising under by-law 1.60-1.69 shall initially be submitted to the Executive Director (or his/her designee) for decision. Appeals from those decisions may thereafter be made to the Hardship Committee.

1.63 Student Eligibility

- a. A “migrant student” is a student who transfers into a GHSA school without a bona fide move or without one of the exceptions listed in by-law 1.62. The student may practice or compete at the sub-varsity level, but may not compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from the date of entry into the new school. In the event that, after transfer, a student becomes or is later determined to be a migrant student, then the student shall be ineligible to compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from that date.
- b. If a student has been ruled eligible to participate by the GHSA, but it is later determined that such eligibility should not have been approved, any ineligibility to participate in

future GHSA activities may be assessed as of the date that such ineligibility was determined.

- c. A student who, after entering the ninth grade, has made one bona fide move and established eligibility at a new member school, shall be declared a migrant for one calendar year upon a second or successive transfer to another member school. Appeal of the migrant status hereunder may be made utilizing the hardship procedure.

1.64 A student who is not eligible at the former school, and then transfers to a new school, cannot regain eligibility by the transfer. Academically ineligible students cannot gain eligibility by being adjudicated to YDC and subsequently returning to their resident school with earned credit. NOTE: The new school may file a hardship appeal if circumstances warrant.

1.65 Students whose transfers from member school to member school have been approved by the GHSA office after the end of regular season play or during post-season play are not eligible for participation in GHSA sponsored tournaments and/or playoffs in that particular sport for the school year of transfer.

1.66 A student who is not eligible at one school because of suspension or expulsion and then transfers to a member school cannot regain eligibility by such a transfer, for the length of the suspension or one calendar year, whichever is less.

1.67 A permissive transfer is defined as an allowance by a local board of education for students and/or their parents to choose a school to attend without regard to the location of residence.

a. A student transferring from member school to member school on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.

b. A student transferring to or from a school housing a system-wide, singular academic or vocation program or a magnet program on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.

1. The offering of an individual course or series of courses by one school in a system does not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.

2. Special options offered by a school system that allow students to attend a school outside their area of residence do not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
 3. Any such permissive transfer issue may be brought before the GHSA Hardship Committee.
- c. Students transferring under the provisions of Federal or State academic accountability regulations must be processed through the normal hardship appeals process.
 - d. When a military base is located in two school districts, a student moving onto the base for the first time may choose to attend either school district, and that district will place the student appropriately. Any transfer after the initial placement will be subject to standard eligibility regulations.

1.68 Hardship Applications may be filed by an administrator at a member school when a student does not meet the standards of eligibility outlined in by-laws 1.50 (academic issues) and 1.60 (transfer issues).

- a. The GHSA Constitution (Art. IV; Sec. 5; Subsection B4) specifies that the hardship issues must be beyond the reasonable control of the school, student, or parents involved with the exception of appeals relating to the issue of whether or not a bona fide move has been made under By-law 1.62 or appeals related to student transfers after the first transfer under By-law 1.63 .
- b. The process of appealing a decision of the Hardship Committee is outlined in the GHSA Constitution (Art. IV, Sec. 9, Subsection C & D).
- c. In order for a hardship appeal based on a financial hardship to be approved, the new school must provide proof that the family attempted to address the financial problem at the previous school, and that the need-based financial aid was non-existent or insufficient to resolve the problem. Increases in tuition or other costs at a private school do not create an automatic reason to grant the appeal, because such fee increases are considered foreseeable and not unavoidable. Documentation of the financial problem is required.

1.69 When a new school opens, student eligibility shall be determined as follows:

- a. When a school district mandates a service area for a new school for all grades enrolled at the new school, all students living within the mandated service area in those grades are immediately eligible. All students living outside the mandated service area who desire to attend the new school are considered migrant students and are ineligible for one year.

Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.

- b. When a school district mandates some students to attend the new school, allows some students to stay at their present school, and permits some students to transfer to the new school, the school shall set a deadline for students living in the service area of the new school to decide whether they will move to the new school, or stay at the present school.

The decisions exercised at the deadline date are binding. Subsequent changes render the student to be a migrant student with the one-year period of ineligibility. Students who are granted permissive transfers to enroll at the new school from other schools within the system are considered to be migrant students. Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GHSA CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE IV SECTION B. 4

By adding to the beginning of Article IV Section B. 4. The following language:

“With the exception of appeals relating to the issue of whether or not a bona fide move has been made under By-law 1.62 or appeals related to student transfers after the first transfer, under By-law 1.63 ,”

so that the revised ARTICLE IV SECTION B. 4. Shall read as follows:

4. With the exception of appeals relating to the issue of whether or not a bona fide move has been made under By-law 1.62 or appeals related to student transfers after the first transfer, under By-law 1.63, the conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements must have been beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents, and such that none of them could reasonably have been expected to comply with the rule. Ignorance of the rule on the part of any or all of them shall not be considered sufficient cause for setting aside its effects.