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MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Michael Grego

DATE: August 5, 2011

SUBJECT: Interscholastic and Intrасcholastic Sports

On June 2, 2011, Governor Rick Scott signed House Bill 797 into law which amends s. 1006.15(8)(a), F.S., to allow a student attending a private middle school or high school to participate in interscholastic and intrасcholastic sports at a public school. This legislation will go into effect July 1, 2011.

This amended law requires the Florida High School Association (FHSAA), in cooperation with each district school board, to facilitate a statewide program in which a middle school or high school student who attends a private school shall be eligible to participate in an interscholastic and/or intrасcholastic sport at a public high school, a public middle school, or a 6-12 public school that is zoned for the physical address at which the student resides. The following requirements must be met in order for a student to be eligible:

1. The private school in which the student is enrolled is not a member of the FHSAA, it does not offer an interscholastic or intrасcholastic athletic program, and total school enrollment for grades 6-12 does not exceed 125 students.

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2. The private school student meets the guidelines for the conduct of the program established by the FHSAA's board of directors and the district school board. At a minimum, such guidelines shall provide:
 - A deadline for each sport by which the private school student's parents must register with the public school in writing their intent for their child to participate at that school in the sport.
 - Requirements for a private school student to participate, including, but not limited to, meeting the same standards of eligibility, acceptance, behavior, educational progress, and performance which apply to other students participating in interscholastic or intrascholastic sports at a public school or FHSAA member private school.
3. The parents of a private school student participating in a public school sport under this subsection are responsible for transporting their child to and from the public school at which the student participates. The private school the student attends, the public school at which the student participates in a sport, the district school board, and the FHSAA are exempt from civil liability arising from any injury that occurs to the student during such transportation.
4. For each academic year, a private school student may only participate at the public school in which the student is first registered (per s. 1006.15(8)(a), F.S.) or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a practice.
5. The athletic director of each participating FHSAA member public school shall maintain the student records necessary for eligibility, compliance, and participation in the program.
6. Any non-FHSAA member private school that has a student who wishes to participate in this program must make all student records, including, but not limited to, academic, financial, disciplinary, and attendance records, available upon request of the FHSAA.
7. A student must apply to participate in this program through the FHSAA program application process.

The FHSAA form EL-12 (Registration and Guidelines for Student Attending a Non-Member Private School to Participate at the Zoned Public School) must be filed with the FHSAA member public school at which the student is zoned to attend and at which he/she wishes to participate before the student can practice and compete. The participating school will review the form and attachments before registering the information with the FHSAA Office. The deadline for submitting this form to the participating school is the Monday of the first week of regular season competition for the sport(s) in which the student wishes to participate. This form is linked below:

http://www.fhsaa.org/sites/default/files/el12_public_part.pdf

Should you have any additional questions, please contact Michael Colby with the Florida High School Athletic Association at mcolby@fhsaa.org or by phone at (352) 372-9551.