



**TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
ATHLETIC ORGANIZATIONS
(TAIAO)**

General Rules

(Last Revised June 18, 2016)

Table of Contents

SUB CHAPTER A - Introduction and Definitions	1
SUB CHAPTER B - Membership	3
SUB CHAPTER C - Organization and Administration.....	5
SUB CHAPTER D - Membership and Committee Meetings	8
SUB CHAPTER E - RULES AND AMENDMENTS.....	11
SUB CHAPTER F - Finances.....	12
SUB CHAPTER G - Eligibility	13
SUB CHAPTER H - Transfer Rule & Transfer Students.....	18
SUBCHAPTER I - Discipline, Protests & Appeals.....	21
SUBCHAPTER J - Classifications and Districts.....	25
SUBCHAPTER K - General Plan.....	27
SUBCHAPTER L - Football	36
SUBCHAPTER M - Basketball.....	37
SUBCHAPTER N - Volleyball	38
SUBCHAPTER O - Cross Country.....	39
SUBCHAPTER P - Track and Field	40
SUBCHAPTER Q - Soccer	41
SUBCHAPTER R - Baseball and Softball	42
SUBCHAPTER S - Academic	43
SUBCHAPTER T - Fine Arts.....	44
SUBCHAPTER U - Middle School Participation.....	45

SUB CHAPTER A - Introduction and Definitions

SECTION 200 - INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose.** The purposes of the TAI AO athletic, academic and fine arts programs are:
1. To assist, advise and aid the Member Organizations in organizing and conducting interscholastic competition;
 2. To devise and prepare rules that will equalize and stimulate wholesome competition between schools/organizations of similar size, and reinforce the curriculum;
 3. To regulate competition so that students, Member Organizations, and their fans can secure the greatest educational, social, recreational and aesthetic benefits from the events, contests and activities;
 4. To reinforce the concept to all Member Organizations that competition is an integral part of the educational program;
 5. To preserve the contest, event or activity for the overall benefit of the contestant and not sacrifice the student to the competition;
 6. To promote the spirit of good sportsmanship and fair play in all contests;
 7. To promote among the students, Member Organizations, and fans a spirit of friendly rivalry and a respect for the rules; and,
 8. To forward the concept of accepting decisions of officials without protest and treating officials as co-partners in the educational process of competition.
- B. Member Organization Authority.** Responsibility for the proper administration, contracts, arrangements, control and scheduling of TAI AO sponsored events, contests and activities in all Member Organizations shall be under the supervision of the Member Organization’s superintendent or a designated administrator.
- C. Coach or Adult Supervisor.** No student shall represent his or her Member Organization at any time in connection with TAI AO competition unless accompanied by a coach or another authorized representative of the Member Organization.

SECTION 201 - DEFINITIONS

In the TAI AO Constitution and General Rules, unless the context requires otherwise:

- A.** *Calendar week* means 12:01 a.m. on Sunday through midnight on Saturday.
- B.** *Coach* means a person under the authority of a member organization who provides students with training, teaching and instruction for the purpose of preparing and participating in contests.
- C.** *Commissioner* means the commissioner of TAI AO.
- D.** *Constitution* means the Constitution of Texas Association of Independent Athletic Organizations (“TAI AO”).
- E.** *Contest* includes competition.
- F.** *Contest Rules* means the rules governing TAI AO contests and competitions as adopted by
- G.** *District* means a grouping of participant schools within an established classification.

- H. *District Chair* means the coach or administrator elected by other District members to represent the district at TAI AO meetings and to chair district meetings.
- I. *Football Committee* means the committee appointed by the Steering Committee charged with oversight and supervision of all TAI AO football related contests, events and activities.
- J. *Football Committee Chairman* means the individual appointed by the Steering Committee to chair the Football Committee.
- K. *High School* refers to contests open to students of a Member Organization 14 to 18 years old in the Year of Participation.
- L. *Member Organization* means a Private School, Parochial School, Charter School or Home School Group in good standing with TAI AO.
- M. *Middle School* refers to contests open to students of a Member Organization 11 to 14 years old in the Year of Participation.
- N. *Probation* means a specific period of time during which a Member Organization, coach, administrator, student or specific program of a member organization employee(s) is subject to critical examination and evaluation to determine if the subject on probation is in compliance with the TAI AO constitution, General Rules, and other rules and approved policies.
- O. *Region* means a grouping of districts and/or at-large Member Organizations for the purpose of facilitating reasonable competition among Member Organizations within the region.
- P. *School week* means the week beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Monday and ends at 12:00 p.m. on the following Friday.
- Q. *Student* means any young man or woman eligible to participate as an individual or on a team under the authority of a member organization.
- R. *TAI AO* means the Texas Association of Independent Athletic Organizations.
- S. *TAI AO Steering Committee* means the executive committee of TAI AO as described in Article IV of the Constitution.
- T. *Varsity* means the contest entry at the highest level of competition as provided for in the Athletic, Academic and Fine Arts Plans at which a team, team member, or individual student is designated to represent a Member Organization in TAI AO district, regional or state contests, events and activities.
- U. *Year of Participation* shall mean the 12 month period beginning on September 1st and ending on August 31st of the following calendar year. Those sports which span the September 1 cut-off will be considered part of the year in which the season ends.

Sections 202 to 205 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER B - Membership

SECTION 206 – APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

A. Requirements for Membership.

1. All organizations applying for admission in TAI AO must meet the organizational requirements listed in Article III of the TAI AO Constitution.
2. If the Applicant organization is a member of an organization similar to TAI AO for extracurricular activities, the Applicant organization must be in good standing with that organization and eligible for continuing membership in that organization.

B. Initial request for information.

1. All organizations must complete the Information Request Form located on the TAI AO website.
2. Upon receipt of the Information Request Form the TAI AO office will contact the named representative of the applying organization for a phone interview.

C. Application Process.

1. The initial step in the Application Process will be a phone interview with a TAI AO representative.
2. At conclusion of the phone interview, applying organizations meeting the basic requirements for membership in TAI AO will be forwarded an Application for Membership.
3. Each organization will be required to complete and return the Application for Membership with all requested documentation to the TAI AO office.
4. In addition, the Application for Membership must be accompanied with the annual TAI AO membership fee.
5. Upon receipt of the complete Application for membership and the annual membership fee the TAI AO Steering Committee will review the application and will notify the applying organization within 10 working days of receipt.

SECTION 207 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE

A. Good Standing. A Member Organization in good standing means an organization that;

1. Has paid its annual dues and all related sport and event fees by the deadline(s) required by TAI AO;
2. Has met all deadlines in submitting required forms and reports to the appropriate TAI AO officer or committee;
3. Has met its obligations in regard to competition in scheduled contests;
4. Has followed the rules and guidelines of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures;
5. Has completed its probationary term; and,
6. Has not and is not involved with litigation against TAI AO

B. Right to Participate. In order to be authorized to compete in TAI AO sponsored activities, contests or events the following will apply;

1. Each Member Organization is responsible for having read and agreed to comply with the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures.
 2. TAI AO requires all Member Organizations to provide each coach and administrator with the proper information related to a particular activity, contest or event.
 3. Each Member Organization agrees to timely comply with the following;
 - a. To pay all dues and fees by the specified date;
 - b. Complete all TAI AO required forms and rosters;
 - c. Make provisions for liability and medical insurance on all coaches and students for all TAI AO events and contests; and,
 - d. Upon request by TAI AO, provide the name of the insurance carrier for subsection 3. c. above.
 4. No member organization will be allowed to participate in any event on a district level if it has not paid the applicable event fee. A district allowing ineligible member organizations to participate could forfeit their playoff position in that contest or event.
- C. First Year.** Except as may be otherwise provided, during the first year in TAI AO a new Member Organization shall be assigned to At-Large status. For sports, the New Member Organization will be assigned to a division. At the next biennial realignment, the new Member Organization shall be assigned, in addition to a division for sports, to a district where applicable.
- D. Qualified Member Organizations.** A Member Organization that has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs A. and B. above shall be considered a Qualified Member Organization for voting purposes.

SECTION 209 – MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES

- A. Annual Association Dues.** Each Member Organization shall pay the annual membership dues at the time and in the amount determined by the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- B. Fees.** Each Member Organization that wishes to participate in TAI AO activities, events and contests shall pay the applicable fee at the time and in the amount as determine by the TAI AO Committee charged with oversight.
- C. Special Fees.** A special or one-time fee may be assessed for TAI AO activities, events and contests in addition to entry or admission fees.

SECTION 210 – LEGAL ACTION

- A. Legal Action.** Any TAI AO Member Organization, employee, administrator, coach, student, parent representative or volunteer which files a lawsuit or other legal action which must be defended, shall reimburse TAI AO, its Steering Committee, other committees, any member of any of the forgoing TAI AO committees and/or any TAI AO employee, officer or ad hoc committee member for any and all expenses incurred for that defense.

Sections 211 to 215 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER C – Organization and Administration

SECTION 216 – COMMITTEES

A. Steering Committee.

1. **Nomination and Election.** TAI AO shall be governed by the Steering Committee which shall be selected in the manner provided in Article IV of the TAI AO Constitution.
2. **Committee Officers.** The Steering Committee officers shall be nominated and elected in the manner provided in Article IV of the TAI AO Constitution.
3. **Re-election.** Each Steering Committee member is eligible for re-election.
4. **Responsibilities.** The Steering Committee shall;
 - a. Fulfill its obligations as required by the TAI AO Constitution;
 - b. Establish guidelines, regulations, policies and procedures as authorized by the Constitution and General Rules;
 - c. Nominate and appoint committees to assist with supervision and operation of the Association;
 - d. Develop and approve the annual budget for the Association;
 - e. Levy annual dues and fees for Association activities, events and contests;
 - f. Employ a commissioner to direct the daily operations of the Association;
 - g. Interview and approve or deny new organizations seeking membership in TAI AO;
 - h. Determine, from time to time, if a Member Organization has fulfilled all requirements for membership and to have the right to participate in TAI AO activities, events and contests;
 - i. Develop and maintain an annual Association calendar of activities, events and contests;
5. **Authority.** The Steering Committee shall have the authority to;
 - a. Propose, authorize and modify the TAI AO General Rules and policies and procedures;
 - b. Appoint all committee positions and officers other than the Steering Committee;
 - c. Conduct investigations;
 - d. Determine violations of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures;
 - e. Impose penalties and sanctions; and,
 - f. Serve as the final appeal of committee decisions and rulings;

B. Athletic, Academic and Fine Arts Committees.

1. **Nomination, Appointment and Composition.** Members of the Athletic, Academic and Fine Arts Committees shall be nominated and appointed as provided in Article IV of the TAI AO Constitution.
2. **Re-appointment.** Each committee member is eligible for re-appointment and may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.
3. **Committee Officers.** Committee officers shall be selected in the manner provided in Article IV of the TAI AO Constitution.
4. **Responsibilities.**
 1. The Athletic Committees will assist, advise and recommend to the Steering Committee athletic plans, policies and procedures in the area of athletics.

2. The Academic and Fine Arts Committee will assist, advise and recommend to the Steering Committee plans, policies and procedures in the area of academics and Fine Arts.
 3. All Committees will;
 - a. Meet as such times and in such locations as is necessary to conduct the business of the committee;
 - b. Enforce all rules contained in the TIAAO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures, including assessment of penalty for any rule violation.
 - c. Review, maintain and approve a list of eligible students submitted by each Member Organization.
 - d. Review and rule, in accordance with the TIAAO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures, on all questions of eligibility.
 - e. Assist the Commissioner and Steering Committee in the execution of Regional and State athletic play-offs.
 - f. Establish the method of qualification for post season play-offs and the method to determine representatives in the event two or more Member Organizations are tied in competition for post season activities.
 - g. Take such other action and perform any and all duties that are reasonable, necessary or desirable, and consistent with the TIAAO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures.
 5. **Prohibited Actions.** A committee does not have the authority to vote a student eligible when that student does not meet the requirements of the TIAAO Constitution or General Rules.
 6. **Appeals.** Decisions handed down by a committee may be appealed to the TIAAO Steering Committee.
- C. **Other Committees.** The Steering Committee may, from time to time, appoint such other committees which shall have such duties and responsibilities as assigned.

SECTION 217 – TIAAO COMMISSIONER

- A. **Commissioner.** The TIAAO Steering Committee shall employ a person to serve as Commissioner in the manner provided in Article IV of the Constitution.
- B. **Responsibilities.** In addition to those duties outlined in the TIAAO Constitution, the Commissioner has the responsibility:
 1. To serve as the chief administrative officer of TIAAO and as a member of the Steering Committee;
 2. To employ, subject to Steering Committee approval, all TIAAO staff and consultants;
 3. For day to day operation of TIAAO;
 4. To work closely with the Steering Committee on contractual and fiscal matters, committee meeting agenda, and other association business;
 5. For the administration of all TIAAO sponsored activities, events and contests;
 6. To take such other actions that are necessary or desirable under and consistent with:
 - a. The actions and directions of the TIAAO Steering Committee; and,
 - b. The TIAAO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures.

C. Removal. The TAI AO Commissioner shall serve at the pleasure of the Steering Committee and shall be subject to removal at any time, either for or without cause, by resolution adopted at a meeting of the Steering Committee called for that purpose.

SECTION 218 – EFFECT OF COMMITTEE ACTION ON TAI AO

A. Binding Actions. TAI AO shall be bound only by those actions that are reasonably undertaken by TAI AO pursuant to the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures.

SECTION 219 - INSURANCE

A. Liability Insurance. TAI AO shall pay the premium on and be covered by a liability insurance policy with the following minimum coverage limits:

1. \$1,000,000.00 bodily injury
2. \$1,000,000.00 property damage

B. Coverage Limits. The TAI AO insurance will not cover students or other participants while actively engaged in practice or other activities, events or contests.

C. Member Coverage. All Member Organizations are required to make provisions for liability and medical insurance on all coaches and students for all TAI AO activities, events and contests.

D. Coverage Funding. TAI AO’s insurance premiums will be funded through Member Organization annual dues.

Sections 220 to 224 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER D - Membership and Committee Meetings

SECTION 225 – MEMBERSHIP AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A. TAIAO Membership Meeting.

1. **Annual Meeting.** An annual meeting of the Member Organizations shall be held each year on the 3rd Saturday during the month of June at such time and place as stated in a notice of meeting issued by the Steering Committee for the election of members of the Steering Committee and to transact such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting.
2. **Special Meetings of the TAIAO Membership.**
 - a. Special meetings of the Member Organizations may be held when called by the Steering Committee or when called by a notice in writing to all Member Organizations by not less than one-third of the Association membership in good standing and entitled to vote at such meetings.
 - b. Written notice setting forth the time and place of any special meeting of the TAIAO membership and stating the purposes for which the meeting is called shall be mailed or delivered to each Member Organization in good standing and entitled to vote and to each member of the Steering Committee not less than ten (10) days nor more than thirty (30) days before the meeting.

B. Committee Meetings.

1. **Regular Meetings.** Meetings of the TAIAO committees may be held at such time and location as requested by the Chairman of each committee for the transaction of such committee business as may properly be brought before the meeting.
2. **Action without a Formal Meeting.**
 - a. When it is necessary for an Athletic Committee, or the Academic Committee and Fine Arts Committee, to make a determination with regard to the applicability of TAIAO rules to persons within the jurisdiction of TAIAO, including eligibility cases or alleged violations of TAIAO rules, the applicable committee shall have the option of making a decision on the matter based upon written submissions or convening an informal meeting to discuss the matter in an effort to achieve an equitable resolution.
 - b. If a decision is made to hold an informal meeting (hearing), the interested parties should be given written notice of the meeting and invited to attend. All decisions by committees shall be in writing, whether based upon a written submission or testimony at an informal meeting.
 - c. Final appeals of a committee's decision may be heard by the TAIAO Steering Committee.

C. Meeting Quorum and Voting. A majority of the Qualifying Member Organizations or a majority of a TAIAO committee, represented in person or by proxy, shall constitute a quorum at a committee or membership meeting. When a specific item of business is required to be voted on, a majority of the Qualifying Member Organizations or committee members that established the quorum shall pass or approve of the item in question.

D. Voting. Each Qualifying Member Organization and each committee member shall have one vote on each matter submitted to a vote. A Qualifying Member Organization may vote either through its delegate or by a properly executed written proxy.

- E. Proxies.** Every Qualifying Member Organization may authorize another Qualifying Member Organization to act as its proxy.
1. A proxy must be dated and signed by the delegate of the Qualifying Member Organization.
 2. No proxy shall be valid after the expiration of eleven months from the date thereof.
 3. Every proxy shall be revocable at the pleasure of the Qualifying Member Organization or its delegate.
- F. Telephone Meetings.** The Chairman of any TAI AO committee may allow any Association or committee meeting to be held by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment such that all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. All Qualified Member Organizations or committee members connected by telephone or other electronic communication shall count toward a quorum and may participate and vote.
- G. Supermajority Voting Requirements.** Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the TAI AO General Rules or approved policies and procedures, the following actions taken on behalf of the Association and/or its Member Organizations shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Qualifying Member Organizations;
1. A change in the name of the Association;
 2. The dissolution of the Association;
 3. The merger or consolidation of the Association;
 4. The removal of a Steering Committee Member prior to expiration of his or her current term of office.

SECTION 226 – APPEALS OF COMMITTEE RULINGS AND DECISIONS

- A. Appeals to the Steering Committee.** Decisions by a TAI AO committee may be appealed to the Steering Committee which shall have the discretion to either accept or decline to hear the appeal. If the appeal is heard the appeal may be:
1. Referred back to the original committee;
 2. Granted; or,
 3. Rejected.
- B. Steering Committee Options.** The Steering Committee may accept the sanctions presented, reduce the sanctions or add additional sanctions based on their findings.
- C. Appeal Fees.** An appeal to the Steering Committee shall carry a minimum fee of \$200. This fee shall be nonrefundable and is due within 10 days of filing the appeal. An additional fee may be charged for any appeal requiring committee members to attend in person in which the committee must convene outside of its posted meeting schedule. Provided, however, in the case of an expulsion or suspension, the minimum fee shall be waived.
- D. Appeal Procedure.**
1. **Appeal by E-mail.** All information, representing both sides of the appeal, is submitted to the TAI AO State Office on the appeal form located on the TAI AO website, which, in turn, shall be forwarded to the Steering Committee for decision without a hearing or other discussion. The TAI AO State Office will contact both parties involved in the appeal to make sure all documentation and written testimony is complete before forwarding it to the Steering Committee. **Appeal by Conference Call.** All information, representing both sides of the appeal, is submitted to the TAI AO State Office on the appeal form located on

the TAI AO website. At the request of the person or Member Organization making the appeal, a conference call hearing shall be held. Prior to the conference call the TAI AO State Office will contact both parties involved in the appeal to make sure all written documentation and testimony is complete before forwarding it to the Steering Committee and arranging for the conference call.

2. **In Person Appeal.** All information, representing both sides of appeal, is submitted to the TAI AO State Office on the appeal form located on the TAI AO website. The parties involved in the appeal will be required to wait for the next scheduled Steering Committee meeting and appear for a hearing in person. Prior to the hearing the TAI AO State Office will contact both parties involved in the appeal to make sure all written documentation and testimony is complete before forwarding it to the Steering Committee and scheduling the hearing.
3. **Appeal Costs.** The appealing party shall be responsible for all costs associated with any special meeting if the timing of the issues requires a special meeting of the Steering Committee.

E. Timing. Appeal of a TAI AO committee decision must be received in the TAI AO State Office within ten days of notification of the committee’s findings. After ten calendar days, the original committee decision will become final.

F. Steering Committee Decision. The Steering Committee’s decision is final.

G. Representation. A Member Organization may have a legal representation present at an appeal to provide advice. However, only Member Organization personnel will be allowed to make presentations or directly present questions to the Steering Committee

SECTION 227 - APPEALS OF DIVISION ALIGNMENT OR DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

A. Decisions a TAI AO committee related to division alignment or district assignment may be appealed to the TAI AO committee originally rendering the decision by the Member Organization affected.

B. A Member Organization whose original appeal is denied by the TAI AO Steering Committee may not appeal.

Sections 228 to 230 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER E - RULES AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION 231 – RULES AND AMENDMENTS

A. Rules of Construction.

- 1. General Construction.** The rules of TAI AO shall be broadly construed to give reasonable effect to the intentions, purposes, and objectives of TAI AO. However, rules involving eligibility, rules involving violations and rules involving penalties shall be strictly construed.
- 2. Constitution Prevails.** Where any term or section of the General Rules or policies and procedures of TAI AO are found to be inconsistent with the TAI AO Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail and apply and the remaining terms and sections of the General Rules or policies and procedures of TAI AO shall continue in effect.
- 3. Effect of Titles.** Titles appearing throughout the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures are for descriptive purposes only.

B. Amendments to the General Rules, Policies and Procedures.

The TAI AO General Rules and policies and procedures may be amended by the TAI AO Steering Committee without approval or referendum of TAI AO Member Organizations.

SUB CHAPTER F - Finances

SECTION 232 – BUDGET AND EXPENSES

- A. Annual Report.** The TAI AO Commissioner is responsible to prepare an annual report on the financial and programmatic conditions and activities of TAI AO.
- B. Annual Budget.**
1. The TAI AO Commissioner shall prepare an annual budget for the Association and submit it to the TAI AO Steering Committee for approval.
 2. The TAI AO Steering Committee shall be responsible for approval of the annual budget of the Association.
- C. Audit.** All of the financial affairs of TAI AO are subject to audit in accordance with the policies of the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- D. Authorized Expenditures.** All expenditures of TAI AO funds shall be authorized consistent with the rules, regulations, and practices of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures.
- E. Sources of Revenue.** TAI AO sources of revenue shall include the following:
1. Membership dues;
 2. Activity and Event fees;
 3. Contest fees; including, but not limited to, academic and fine arts events and activities;
 4. Donations;
 5. Fees related to and collected in connection with open records production requests;
 6. Publication sales (programs, directory, constitution, general rules and policies and procedures);
 7. Filing fees for new Member Organization applications;
 8. Admission price for state level track and field, football, baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, wrestling, and volleyball;
 9. Proceeds from radio and television broadcasting and telecasting contracts;
 10. Merchandise sales; and
 11. Income from advertising and licensing the use of trademarks and logos.

Sections 233 to 235 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER G - Eligibility

SECTION 236 - ELIGIBILITY

A. Age Requirements.

1. Article VI Section 2. of the Constitution shall control the upper age limit of students eligible to participate.
2. A student will be considered a High School student who is 15 years of age or older as of September 1st in the year of participation.
3. Except as otherwise provided, a student who is 14 years of age as of September 1st in the year of participation who plays for a member organization varsity team shall be considered a High School student.

B. Definitions.

1. **One Team.** No student will be allowed to participate on more than one team per sport at a time.
 - a. For example, Student A participates on a Member Organization's Varsity Basketball team during the Regular Season, Student A may not participate on any other TAI AO or non-TAI AO basketball team during the Regular Season.
 - b. For example, Student A participates on a Select/Club volleyball team during the Summer. Student A may not participate on any other TAI AO or non-TAI AO volleyball team during the Summer.
 - c. Any student participating on more than one team per sport at a time shall be deemed ineligible and the Member Organization involved will be required to forfeit all games, contest, events or matches in which the student participated.
2. **Year** shall mean the 12-month period beginning on September 1 and ending on August 31 of the following calendar year. Those sports which span the September 1 cut-off will be considered part of the year in which the season ends.
3. **Participation** shall apply to any student who has been listed on the roster of a member organization and had participated in regular season activities, events or contests. Eligibility is affected regardless of the duration of the participation or the reason for stopping the participation. Eligibility is not affected by participation in practices, off-season activities, summer leagues or sub-varsity participation in varsity level tournaments, meets, events, etc.
4. **Ineligible** shall mean a student is not authorized by the Member Organization or TAI AO to participate in any contests, events, games or matches, including, without limitation, against TAI AO and/or non-TAI AO opponents, until the reasons for ineligibility have been removed.

C. Game and Match Participation Limits. Game and Match participation limits provided in the different Athletic Plans shall include all contest, events, games and matches played by the Member Organization's team in that sport. This shall include, without limitations, all contests, events, games and matches against TAI AO and non-TAI AO opponents. This shall also include, for Middle School students, all middle school and high school activities.

D. Academic Requirements.

1. **Academics First.** All Member Organizations are expected to monitor their students and ensure that academics are a primary pursuit in student life while athletics and other extra-curricular activities and events are secondary
2. **Schools.** Member Organizations which are Private, Parochial and Charter schools, while not required, are encouraged to ensure students achieve and maintain a passing grade (e.g. 70 in the scale of 100) in order to maintain eligibility for athletics.
3. **Home Schools.** TAI AO recognizes that it is common for home educated students to be working at a “grade level” different from the one they would be if they were in public or private school. TAI AO completely supports the right of parents to direct the education of their children. If, in the home educating parents’ opinion, a child’s participation in TAI AO activities, events or contests is rendering that student’s academic performance unacceptable, TAI AO will support those parents’ decision to remove that student from participation for a time.
4. Any Member Organization may reserve the right to hold their students to higher academic requirements for eligibility if desired.
5. TAI AO Member Organizations will certify each student’s eligibility to participate on the official Team Roster posted on MaxPreps on the roster deadline date and before entering “Post Season” play. The Athletic Director, Head Master or the Member Organization’s top administrative officer must sign eligibility forms. (See Section J. below.)

E. Four Year Rule:

1. Except as otherwise provided, a student is allowed up to 4 consecutive years of eligibility to participate in TAI AO at the High School level,
2. A student is allowed less than 4 consecutive years of eligibility to participate in TAI AO at the High School level in the following situations:
 - a. **Advanced Age:** A student participating at the High School level for the first time who is older than 15 years as of September 1st will have his/her years of eligibility reduced by 1 year for each year beyond 15 years of age. (For example, a student who will be 17 years of age as of September 1st will be limited to 2 years of High School level participation.)
 - b. **First Official Roster Designation:** a student’s eligibility to participate at the High School level will be limited to his/her first official classification on a Member Organization’s Roster for a particular sport, competition or event. (For example, a student participating for the first time who is listed as a sophomore will only have 3 years of eligibility, including the sophomore year, regardless of age.)

F. Younger Students: Due to safety concerns;

1. “Playing Up”; Only students in the smallest division will be allowed to participate at the High School level without affecting their high school eligibility (See Subsection 236. E. above). Playing up will only be allowed if the Member Organization cannot field the minimum number of players required plus 2 for all sports other than football and plus 3 for football to begin the event, contest, game or match for the sport in question. The sole purpose of “Playing Up” a student shall be to allow the Member Organization to participate in the sport in question and shall not be for the purpose of allowing the team in question to be more competitive. This shall apply to any event, contest, competition or game including, without limitation, against both TAI AO and non-TAI AO opponents.
2. Any student playing on a member organization’s High School team MAY NOT participate on the Middle School team during the same week.

3. No student 13 years or younger as of September 1st in the year of participation may play on any TAI AO High School team.

G. Middle School:

1. **Age Requirements.** Participation in TAI AO sponsored Middle School activities, events and contests, other than football, shall be open to students who;
 - a. Will reach their 10th birthday no later than September 1st in the year of participation; and,
 - b. Will not have reached their 15th birthday earlier than September 1st of the same year.
 - c. Participation in football will require
 - i. The student to have reached their 11th birthday no later than September 1st in the year of participation; and,
 - ii. Will not have reached their 15th birthday earlier than September 1st of the same year.
2. **Five Year Rule.** In sports other than football, Students may have up to five consecutive years of eligibility at the Middle School level. Football participation will be limited to up to four consecutive years of eligibility.
3. A Member Organization may adopt eligibility rules related to Middle School participation that are more stringent than TAI AO rules for eligibility (including academic eligibility).
4. Questions concerning eligibility shall be referred to the TAI AO Committee providing oversight for the contest, event or activity in question for review and a decision.

H. Physicals. All students participating in athletics must have a physical examination every other year. Once the physical has been done, the student must present a completed and signed doctor's form to the head coach or administrator in charge. The Member Organization in turn must keep the form on file.

I. Challenge of Eligibility. If a student's eligibility to compete in TAI AO activities, events or contests is questioned, the student's family has the burden in any proceeding to establish that the student is eligible.

3. A birth certificate attested by the appropriate official is the best evidence of the date of birth. If this evidence is not available, other credible evidence of the date of birth may be considered.

J. Required Forms. It shall be the responsibility of each Member Organization to keep on file the following required annual forms for each student who participates in any practice, scrimmage, or game.

1. **Medical.** This form is to be kept on file in the school office. The form is not to be sent to the TAI AO office unless requested.
2. **Registration Form.** An annual participation form, signed by the student's parent or guardian, is required and kept on file in the office of the Member Organization. Since this form provides parents' permission for travel, etc., the coach may keep a copy with him/her. The form is not to be sent to the TAI AO office unless requested.
3. **Rules Acknowledgment for Students.** An annual TAI AO Rules Acknowledgment Form signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian is required and shall be kept on file in the office of the Member Organization. The form is not to be sent to the TAI AO office unless requested.

- 4. Rules Acknowledgment for Coaches.** An annual TAI AO Rules Acknowledgment Form signed by each team's coach is required and shall be kept on file in the office of the Member Organization. A copy of this form shall be sent to the TAI AO office.
- 5. Official Roster and Eligibility Form.**
- a. All students, regardless of classification shall be included on the appropriate team roster in MaxPreps.com. Roster may be adjusted until the final roster date as set by the appropriate sports committee. As of the final roster date, the roster in MaxPreps shall become the FINAL and official roster for the team for the remainder of the season.
 - b. The Roster shall include the following information:
 1. First and Last Name;
 2. Jersey Number;
 3. Grade Classification;
 4. Approximate Height; and,
 5. Approximate Weight.
 - c. By listing a student on the roster, the respective coach is certifying that the student is eligible to participate in TAI AO in the respective sport. Should a student lose eligibility status after the final roster is posted, the coach of that student must notify the applicable sports committee and opposing coaches of this fact along with the number of games that student will be ineligible.
 - d. No additions will be allowed to the final roster after the final roster date.
 - e. The only changes allowed to the final roster will be in the event of a damaged jersey that cannot be replaced by the same number. This change must be approved by the sports committee supervising that sport and the opposing coaches must be made aware of the change as soon as reasonably possible.
 - f. The chairman of the respective sports committee shall cause a true copy of each roster to be printed on the day following the final roster date. These copies shall be maintained and accessible should there be a question as to eligibility status of a student.
 - g. Any student not listed on the final roster shall be considered to be ineligible.
 - h. Any Member Organization found to be utilizing an ineligible student will be subject to sanctions by TAI AO.

SECTION 237 – NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY.

A. Equal Opportunity.

1. No student, otherwise eligible to participate in TAI AO sponsored games, events or activities, shall be denied, because of race, color, sex, religion or national origin, the opportunity to;
 - a. Participate in Academic and Fine Arts events, contest or competition,
 - b. Participate in the following individual sports;
 1. Cross Country,
 2. Golf,
 3. Swimming and Diving,
 4. Tennis,
 5. Track and Field,

6. All of the foregoing individual sports are classified as an individual sport and, therefore, female or male students may not participate on opposite gender teams as the opportunity exists to participate at the district, regional and state levels as an individual.
 - c. Participate on the following teams;
 1. Boys' Football,
 2. Boys' Basketball,
 3. Boys' Soccer,
 4. Boys' Baseball,
 5. Girls' Volleyball
 6. Girls' Basketball,
 7. Girls' Soccer,
 8. Girls' Softball.
 2. Gender shall be determined based on a student's birth certificate. In cases where a student's birth certificate is unavailable, other similar government documents used for the purpose of birth gender identification may be substituted.
- B. Exception to Non-Discrimination.**
1. Boys shall not be eligible nor allowed to participate on girls' gender specific teams. Except as provided below, girls shall not be eligible nor allowed to participate on boys' gender specific teams.
 2. Where a Member Organization offers only a boys' team in any gender specific sport, girls may participate on the boys' team at the discretion of the Member Organization.

Sections 238 to 239 are reserved for expansion.

SUB CHAPTER H - Transfer Rule & Transfer Students

SECTION 240 – TRANSFERS

A. Purpose of Transfer Rules. The TAI AO rules on transfer;

1. Have been developed to protect student participation in TAI AO activities, events and contests;
2. Are intended to deter transfers by a student from one Member Organization to another based on monetary incentives;
3. Are intended to be designed to protect students who have previously participated in interscholastic competition at a Member Organization from being replaced by students who transfer for athletic or financial reasons, including the effects of student or family shopping for schools or being recruited for athletic purposes; and,
4. Are to encourage fair play, discourage the abuse of overenthusiastic promotion of Member Organization programs, and to protect the integrity of interscholastic athletic programs for both Member Organizations and TAI AO.

B. Transfer Form.

1. **Full Transfer.** To be used in the case of a student leaving one Member Organization with the intention of not returning to that Member Organization
2. **Limited Transfer.** To be used in the case of a student transferring to another Member Organization for an athletic, academic or fine arts opportunity not offered at the student's current Member Organization. Any student who is approved for a Limited Transfer must participate with the original Member Organization for all other athletic, academic or fine arts contests, events or activities or go through the regular TAI AO full transfer process.

C. Transfer Procedures for Previous Participation.

1. If a student participated in a TAI AO sponsored contest, event or activity during the previous season at either the sub-varsity (JV) or varsity level **at another Member Organization**, and that student wishes to transfer to a new Member Organization; that student must complete the appropriate TAI AO Transfer Form and have it approved by the TAI AO Committee providing oversight for the contest, event or activity in question before the student can compete at the varsity level in at the new Member Organization.
2. Parents must sign the Parent Certification in the applicable Transfer Form.
3. The head coach or an administrator from both the former and receiving Member Organizations must sign the applicable Transfer Form.
4. If either Member Organization raises an objection within 7 calendar days from the date they are notified of the transfer; the objecting Member Organization shall contact the Chairman of the TAI AO Committee responsible for reviewing the transfer in question and a meeting will be held to determine the student's eligibility to participate.
5. In the event an objection is raised, the student will not be eligible to participate until the meeting is held and eligibility affirmed.
6. Denial of eligibility will be based on objective findings only. If there is not a violation of TAI AO requirements, eligibility will not be denied to preserve an athletic advantage over a Member Organization.

7. Appeals of a Committee’s decision may be submitted to the TAI AO Steering Committee within 5 business days of the date of the prior committee’s decision.

8. The decision of the Steering Committee is final.

D. Home School Students. Home school students, by nature, have more options to affiliate with multiple organizations in respect to their athletic and academic objectives. Home school students are strongly encouraged to NOT transfer from one Member Organization to another for the purpose of gaining a competitive advantage in any given contest, event or activity. An affiliation with another Member Organization involving any contest, event or activity shall be viewed as at least a “limited transfer” for that student. For example, if a student played baseball at Member Organization A and now desires to play football at Member Organization B; the student would need to submit a transfer request for Member Organization B from Member Organization A.

E. Transfers from Non Member Organizations. If the new student transferred from any school (public or private) or home school organization on or before the transfer deadline, the student shall be eligible to compete in Varsity contests upon satisfactory completion of the transfer form and approval by the appropriate TAI AO committee.

F. Exemption. If the new student did not compete at either the sub-varsity or varsity level during the current or the previous season, a transfer form is not required.

G. Late Transfers.

1. Students who are not enrolled and in attendance at the Member Organization prior to the transfer deadline may NOT participate in Varsity athletics, academic or fine arts contests, events or activities until the next TAI AO season. The student may practice and participate on the Sub-Varsity level during this time.

2. In the event of a “late transfer” (i.e. after transfer deadline), a Member Organization may petition the TAI AO Committee supervising the contest, event or activity in question to request an exception to the general rule of no transfers after the deadline for Varsity competition. This request shall be completed in writing, submitted to the appropriate TAI AO Committee and a meeting will be held to present the student and the circumstances that would create such a need. The TAI AO Committee will review the request and make a final determination.

H. Coach Transfers.

1. When a coach transfers to at a new Member Organization, a student who transfers to that Member Organization shall not be eligible for Varsity competition in a sport for a period of one year if any of the following are true:

a. The coach in that contest, event or activity coached or trained the student at the previous Member Organization.

b. The coach in that contest, event or activity coached or trained the student on an AAU, Select, Club or similar team during the previous 12 months.

c. The coach in that contest, event or activity at the new Member Organization was directly associated with the AAU, Select, Club or similar team on which the student participated as owner, manager, supervisor or similar position during the previous twelve months.

d. Exceptions:

i. Adopted or birth children are eligible if their parent or legal guardian is the coach who changes Member Organizations.

ii. If the previous Member Organization of the student and coach has closed.

2. The student may either;
 - a. Remain at the previous Member Organization for one year, retaining eligibility while there, and after one year transfer to follow the coach and be eligible according to the transfer rule; or,
 - b. Transfer to the new Member Organization when the coach changes and be ineligible for varsity athletics for one year in the contests, events and activities coached by that coach.

I. Ineligible at Previous Organization.

1. If a student has been placed in an ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL for disciplinary reasons by the previous organization, school or school district, the student is not eligible to participate in TAI AO contests, events and activities until the length the alternative school placement has been served.
2. If a student has been expelled from the previous organization, school or school district, the student is not eligible to participate in TAI AO contests, events and activities until the following school year.
3. If a student has been removed from a team or a contest, event or activity by the previous organization, school or school district, the Member Organization to which the student wishes to transfer shall determine the student’s eligibility to participate in varsity sports in accordance with its published guidelines and TAI AO transfer rules.

- J. Exceptional Appeals.** In the event a Member Organization has an exceptional case for a student and would request it be considered, that Member Organization may set up a meeting with the TAI AO Committee supervising the contests, events or activities in question to present its case (both written and verbal) as a matter of exception. The appropriate TAI AO Committee will originate a recommendation and forward it, along with supporting materials, to the Steering Committee for final determination if the student is allowed to participate in Varsity competition for the current season.

Sections 241 to 245 are reserved for expansion.

SUBCHAPTER I - Discipline, Protests & Appeals

SECTION 246 – VIOLATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

- A. Compliance and Self-Reporting.** TAI AO expects each Member Organization to abide by the TAI AO rules, policies, procedures and guidelines. Each Member Organization is expected to act with integrity and to self-regulate in accordance with the TAI AO General Rules, policies and procedures.
- B. Violations.** In the event of a violation of TAI AO General Rules, policies or procedures each Member Organization involved will file a report as follows:
- 1. Self-Reporting.** In the event that a Member Organization fails to abide by the TAI AO General Rules, policies, procedures or guidelines; it is expected to promptly self-report the incident to the Chairman of the appropriated TAI AO Committee or to the Chairman of the TAI AO Steering Committee.
 - 2. Reporting from another Member Organization.** In the event that a Member Organization fails to abide by the TAI AO General Rules, policies, procedures or guidelines; another Member Organization may report the incident to the Chairman of the appropriate TAI AO Committee or to the Chairman of the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- C. Investigation & Determination of Facts.** The involved TAI AO Committee shall work to review any reported violation and determine the appropriate record of facts. Upon completion of said review, a summary report of findings will be sent to the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- D. Discipline.**
- 1.** Violations of TAI AO General Rules, policies, procedures and guidelines are subject to Association administered disciplinary action, including, but not limited to;
 - a.** Game, contest or event forfeiture;
 - b.** Monetary fines;
 - c.** Disqualification of post-season play; and/or,
 - d.** Probation and expulsion.
 - 2.** Disciplinary action may be assigned to individuals (e.g. staff, student athletes, or any individual associated with and/or representing a TAI AO Member Organization) as well as Member Organizations as appropriate.
- E. Assessment of Discipline.** The TAI AO Committee first reviewing the complaint shall determine a recommendation for the appropriate discipline(s) based on the facts of the specific incident and any history that would be applicable. The recommended discipline(s) shall be forwarded to the TAI AO Steering Committee for approval and subsequent execution.
- F. Appeal.** Upon receipt of assessed discipline, the receiving party(s) shall have a period of 48 hours to submit an appeal to the TAI AO Steering Committee. The TAI AO Steering Committee will review any written appeal. The TAI AO Committee ruling on the complaint will be notified that an appeal has been initiated and is under assessment, and will receive subsequent notification of the Steering Committee’s final determination.
- G. Final Decision.** Completion of the specified appeal process or failure to execute an appeal within the mandated period renders the decision final.

H. Records. The official record of the investigation and the resulting determination shall be kept on file in the TAI AO State office.

SECTION 247 – PENALTIES

- A. Penalties a TAI AO Committee Can Impose.** Subject to provisions below, the following constitute the penalties that may be imposed by a TAI AO Committee following a determination of a violation of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules, and policies and procedures.
- B. For Student Representatives.** The penalties that may be imposed by a TAI AO Committee on a student representative of a participant Member Organization for violations of ethics, sportsmanship codes, eligibility rules, contest plans or reporting practices are: reprimand, individual suspension, and disqualification of individual district and state honors.
- 1. Reprimand.** A reprimand shall be in writing and shall state the violation found, with one copy going to the Member Organization and one copy being attached to the minutes of the meeting. A reprimand may include a probationary period of up to three years, and may include any reasonable conditions, which if not fulfilled, may result in a more stringent penalty.
 - 2. Individual Suspension.** If the TAI AO Committee finds that a student has failed to comply with the rules it may suspend the participant student from competition, including practice, in all germane activities for one day to three years. Suspension may include a probationary period of up to three years and may include any reasonable conditions, which if not fulfilled may result in additional suspension.
 - 3. Disqualification of Individual District and State Honors.** The disqualification of individual honors shall deny the awarding of all-district and all-state honors for one year.
 - 4. Appeal.** A student representative may appeal penalties imposed by the TAI AO Committee through the Member Organization of the student to the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- C. For Member Organizations.** The penalties that may be imposed by the TAI AO Committee on a Member Organization for violations by its student representative, fans, patrons or personnel, of ethics, sportsmanship codes, eligibility rules, contest plans or reporting practices are: private reprimand, public reprimand, probation, forfeiture of contest, disqualifications from germane activity, and suspension recommended.
- 1. Probation.** A given period of time during which a Member Organization, its employee(s) or a specific program of the Member Organization is subject to critical examination and evaluation to determine if the subject on probation is in compliance with the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules, and policies and procedures. If the component, while on probation, is found to be in violation of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules, or policies and procedures, that component will be subject to more stringent sanction.
 - 2. Private Reprimand.** A private reprimand may be oral or in writing and shall not be published by TAI AO. A penalty stronger than private reprimand to the Member Organization should be strongly considered in cases involving patron or fan misconduct.
 - 3. Public Reprimand.** A public reprimand shall be in writing, published by the TAI AO State Office and on its website, and state the violation found. A public reprimand may include a probationary period of up to three years, and may include any reasonable condition, which, if not fulfilled, may result in a more stringent penalty.

4. Forfeiture of Contest.

- a. Minimum penalty for ineligible contestant.** The involved TAI AO Committee shall forfeit the contest won by the individual or Member Organization as a minimum penalty, if it finds that an individual contestant was not eligible to participate in the contest.
- b. Mandatory forfeiture for participation of an ineligible student under court order.** If a student, who is determined to be ineligible, participates in a TAI AO contest under a temporary or other court order, the involved TAI AO Committee shall forfeit the contest.
- c. Violations by personnel or participants.** The involved TAI AO Committee may order contests to be forfeited prior to or after the competition for violations of rules by covered Member Organization personnel and/or participants if an unfair advantage was gained.

5. Disqualification:

- a. Disqualification from district honors.** Disqualification from district honors shall deny the awarding of district championship honors and deny participation in any TAI AO contest beyond the district level for a period of up to three years. Disqualification from district honors may include any reasonable conditions, which, if not fulfilled, may result in an extension of the disqualification or recommendation of suspension to the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- b. Mandatory disqualification.** The involved TAI AO Committee shall disqualify a Member Organization from all germane activities if the Member Organization has failed materially and knowingly and intentionally permitted an ineligible individual to represent it in a TAI AO activity, event or contest.

6. Suspension Recommended:

- a.** If in the opinion of the involved TAI AO Committee the offense is of sufficient gravity to warrant suspension in the germane activity, the committee may impose suspension.
- b.** The committee recommendation of suspension shall be automatically appealed to the Steering Committee for review and approval, modification, reversal or remand back to the committee.
- c.** Suspension shall deny participation in specified TAI AO activities for a period of one to three years. Suspension may include a probationary period of one to three years, and may include any reasonable conditions, which if not fulfilled, may result in additional suspension.
- d.** A suspended Member Organization may not play or scrimmage a TAI AO Member Organization at the varsity or sub- -varsity level in grades nine through twelve in the activity from which it was suspended. A contract for a germane competition by the suspended Member Organization with another Member Organization shall be null and void.

7. Expulsion Recommended.

- a.** If in the opinion of the involved TAI AO Committee the offense is of sufficient gravity to warrant a recommendation to the Steering Committee of expulsion from TAI AO, the committee shall provide a written report with the recommendation to the Steering Committee and provide a copy to the Member Organization.

- b. The committee recommendation of expulsion shall be automatically appealed to the Steering Committee for review and approval, modification, reversal or remand back to the committee.
 - c. From the point in time the committee recommends expulsion until a final decision is rendered by the Steering Committee, the Member Organization shall not be allowed to participate in any TAI AO sponsored events, contests or activities.
 - d. There shall be a two (2) year minimum penalty for expulsion imposed before a Member Organization may reapply for membership in TAI AO.
- 8. Appeal.** A Member Organization may appeal penalties imposed by the involved TAI AO Committee to the TAI AO Steering Committee.
- D. For Member Organization Personnel.** The penalties that may be imposed by the involved TAI AO Committee on Member Organization personnel found to have cause violations of ethics, sportsmanship codes, eligibility rules, contest plans or reporting practices are: probation, reprimand, public reprimand, game suspension, suspension recommended.
- 1. Probation.** A given period of time during which an employee(s) or representative of the Member Organization is subject to critical examination and evaluation to determine if the subject on probation is in compliance with the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules and policies and procedures. If the employee or representative, while on probation, is found to be in violation of the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules or policies and procedures, the employee or representative will be subject to more stringent sanctions.
 - 2. Reprimand.** A reprimand shall be in writing and shall state the violation found, with one copy going to the Member Organization and one copy being attached to the minutes of the meeting. A reprimand may include a probationary period of up to three years and may include any reasonable conditions, which, if not fulfilled, may result in a more stringent penalty.
 - 3. Public reprimand.** A public reprimand shall be in writing, published by the TAI AO State Office and on its website, and state the violation found. A public reprimand may include a probationary period of up to three years, and may include any reasonable condition, which, if not fulfilled, may result in a more stringent penalty.
 - 4. Game suspension.** The involved TAI AO Committee may issue an order of suspension to a covered Member Organization employee or representative suspending him or her from participating in any germane contest plan from one to ten games or events.
 - 5. Suspension recommended.** If in the opinion of the involved TAI AO Committee the offense is of sufficient gravity to warrant suspension in the germane activity for up to three years, the committee may impose suspension. A committee recommendation of suspension shall be automatically appealed to the Steering Committee for review and approval, modification, reversal or remand back to the committee.
 - 6. Honors and Office disqualification.** Any Member Organization personnel or representative receiving any of the above penalties are ineligible to receive individual TAI AO honors or hold district or state office during the traditional school year in which the penalties are imposed or during a probationary period.
 - 7. Appeal.** Member Organization personnel or representatives may appeal penalties imposed by the involved TAI AO Committee, through the Member Organization, to the TAI AO Executive Board.

Sections 248 to 250 are reserved for expansion.

SUBCHAPTER J - Classifications and Districts

SECTION 251 – DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS

- A. Each even numbered year TAI AO shall:
 - 1. Establish division classifications for each sports related activity, event or contests. There will be no division assignments for Academic and Fine Arts; and,
 - 2. Where district competition is provided, including sports, academic and fine arts activities, events and contests, assign each participating Member Organization to a district.
- B. Except as otherwise provided in the TAI AO Constitution, General Rules or policies and procedures, these division and district assignments shall be maintained for the next two school years.

SECTION 252 – DIVISION ALIGNMENT

- A. **Division Classifications.** Division classifications and assignments for each sport will be based on the participating Member Organization’s official Roster count as established by each sport plan in the TAI AO General Rules.
- B. **Timing.** Each Member Organization shall report to the TAI AO State Office its official Rosters for each sport competition in the manner and by the date provided in the applicable sport plan
- C. **Requested Reclassification.** A Member Organization may request to be assigned to a larger or smaller classification after completion of competition in their initial assigned classification. In the event of district play; in order to be moved to a new classification, the Member Organization must obtain unanimous approval from both the receiving district as well as the district from which they are departing.

SECTION 253 – DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

- A. **District Assignment.** District assignment shall be based on geographic location and, in sports, division alignment. The supervising TAI AO Committee shall be responsible for assignment of each participating Member Organization to a district for each TAI AO activity, event and contest.
- B. **Requested Reclassification.** A Member Organization may request to be assigned to a different district after completion of competition in their initial assigned district. In order to be moved to a new classification, the Member Organization must obtain unanimous approval from both the receiving district as well as the district from which they are departing.
- C. **At-Large Assignment.** Member Organizations joining TAI AO after the bi-annual district assignment shall be assigned to an At-Large district classification until the next district assignment.

SECTION 254 – TEAM COMPOSITION**A. Roster Numbers.**

1. **Roster Figures.** Official Roster numbers will determine all sport divisional alignments. The TAI AO Athletic Committee will establish rules for roster numbers, limits and deadlines for each sport. There will be no divisions for Academic and Fine Arts competition.
2. **“Blended” Teams of Member Organizations.**
 - a. Blended Teams” are allowed ONLY in the event a Member Organization does not have an active program in that sport, academic or fine art activity, event or contest.
 - b. Students enrolled in schools or homeschool cooperatives currently being governed by a state recognized organization including, but not limited to, University Interscholastic League (UIL), Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS), Texas Christian Athletic League (TCAL), and Texas Christian Athletic Fellowship (TCAF), are allowed to participate in TAI AO, if “Limited Transfer Forms” are approved by the supervising TAI AO Committee.
2. **Hardship Recourse** - In the event a Member Organization’s official Roster count in a particular sport changes significantly, the Member Organization may petition the TAI AO Commissioner, for hardship recourse.
 - a. If official Roster numbers decrease – A Member Organization may request to be moved from Division I to Division II. Post Season eligibility will be considered based on the schedule played in the upcoming season.
 - b. If official Roster numbers increase – Any Member Organization experiencing a significant increase in official Roster count for any sport MUST declare this to the supervising TAI AO Committee so that appropriate adjustments can be considered. A significant increase is defined as one where the roster limits exceed the limit for each sport.
3. **High School Roster Expectations.** Every January, the TAI AO office shall obtain expected roster data from participant TAI AO Member Organizations (grades 8-11). The figures shall be used to verify and determine the appropriate sport Division classification for the upcoming seasons. A “rolling” 3-season average will be considered when determining roster size for the next season and therefore the appropriate Division. The TAI AO Athletic Committee will determine roster numbers for each sport.
 - a. **“No Cut” or “No Try Out” Requirement** - TAI AO Member schools and homeschool programs shall not implement or use a “try-out” system or “cut players” from their possible rosters.
 - b. Any “small” school/team may request to be elevated to a higher level.

Sections 255 to 260 are reserved for expansion.

SUBCHAPTER K – General Plan

SECTION 261 – CALENDAR

- A. TAI AO Calendar.** The TAI AO Calendar shall provide information pertaining to TAI AO sponsored activities, events and contests.
- B. Off-Season Calendar.** The TAI AO Off-Season calendar for each sponsored sport shall be as provided in each sport specific plan.
- C. Summer Calendar.** The TAI AO Summer calendar shall be from June 1st until the following July 31st.
- D. Pre-Season, Regular and Post Season Calendar.** The TAI AO Regular and Post Season Calendar for each sponsored sport shall be as provided in each sport specific plan.
- E. No Sunday Activities.** No organized instruction or activities may be given on a Sunday.

SECTION 262 – FACILITY USE (OFF SEASON AND SUMMER)

- A.** Students may attend Member Organization open gyms, facilities and weight rooms.
- B.** Attendance records shall not be kept.
- C.** Coaches and other authorized instructors may;
 1. Be present to supervise the facilities and equipment.
 2. Provide specific instruction in sport skills.
 3. Provide weight lifting instruction and maintain progress charts.
- D.** Coaches are responsible for notifying student athletes in their sport that their participation is strictly voluntary, never required, and in no way shall be a prerequisite for making the team or getting more playing time.
- E.** Facilities of a Member Organization may be made available to students under the following conditions:
 1. Recreational opportunities receive advance approval by the Member Organization,
 2. Dates and times of operation shall be announced, posted or publicized so that every student involved in that Member Organization is aware of the opportunity,
 3. Each activity is based on a first come, first served basis.
 4. The facilities will be closed on Sunday.
 5. An adult other than a Coach may be appointed to supervise the facilities.
 6. Use of the facilities may be restricted to that Member Organization's students.
 - a. Note: If only members of an athletic team are allowed to participate in their sport in an open recreational facility, it could be deemed a violation of off-season regulations.

SECTION 263 – FACILITY USE (PRE-SEASON, REGULAR SEASON AND POST SEASON)

- A.** Rules related to facility use during pre-season, regular season and post season sport activities shall be as provided in each sport specific plan.

SECTION 264 – OFF SEASON ACTIVITIES**A. Authorized Activities.**

1. Between the dates provided in each sports specific plan, coaches may conduct approved off season programs.
2. Accelerated physical education activities, calisthenics, individual skills, strength training and conditioning exercises may be conducted starting no earlier than 6:00 AM and concluding no later than 8:00 PM.
3. These activities shall not;
 - a. Exceed one continuous period of up to but not to exceed 90 minutes per day; and,
 - b. A total of 300 minutes per week.
4. Practice may include individual and full team drills without contact activities.
5. Allowed equipment is limited to balls, sport appropriate shoes, training equipment and machines and physical education attire.
 - a. Air or padded blocking dummies or devices, and other similar devices are prohibited.
 - b. No contact equipment or activities are allowed.
6. Coaches shall make every effort to see that students understand that participation in Off Season activities is strictly voluntary and never required. Participation shall not be a prerequisite for trying out for a football team or getting more playing time.

SECTION 265 – SUMMER ACTIVITIES**A. Student Participation.**

1. Summer Workouts and activity shall be an optional activity.
2. Coaches shall make every effort to see that students understand that participation in Summer Workout or attendance at Summer Camps is strictly voluntary and never required. Participation shall not be a prerequisite for trying out for a football team or getting more playing time.

B. Workout Schedule.

1. From June 1st until July 31st, TAI AO coaches may conduct approved Summer Workouts.
2. Summer Workouts Accelerated may be conducted starting no earlier than 6:00 AM and concluding no later than 9:00 PM.
3. These activities shall not;
 - a. Exceed 2 hours per day; and,
 - b. A total of 8 hours per week.
4. Student initiated or student led activities are allowed at any time.

C. Summer Workouts. Summer Workouts may include;

1. **Individual Workouts.** Accelerated physical education activities, calisthenics, individual skills, strength training and conditioning exercises.
2. **Team Workouts.** Coaches and administrators may schedule and supervise Team Workouts without contact activities or equipment.
3. **Summer Tournaments.** Coaches and administrators may organize, supervise and schedule summer tournaments.
 - a. TAI AO Coaches are allowed to coach their players in these tournaments.

- D. Summer Camps.** Participation in summer leagues or attendance at summer athletic camps are not considered school workouts even though there may be several members of a TAI AO school playing on one team in a summer league (or attending the same camp).
- a. TAI AO coaches are allowed to coach their players in these leagues or camps.

SECTION 266 – PRE-SEASON, REGULAR SEASON AND POST SEASON ACTIVITIES

- A.** Rules related to practice and game schedules and activities during pre-season, regular season and post season sport activities shall be as provided in each sport specific plan.

SECTION 267 – GAME ADMINISTRATION

- A. Game Rules.** Unless otherwise provided in the sport specific plan, rules of the University Interscholastic League (“UIL”) shall be used for all TAI AO sponsored activities, contests and events.
- B. Post-Game Reporting.** Unless otherwise provided in the sport specific plan, posting of each game team and individual statistics shall be required no later than 48 hours following the end of the contest.
- C. Pre and Post Game Activities.**
1. At each contest between TAI AO member organizations pre-game and post-game prayer is encouraged (not required).
 2. When a TAI AO member organization is playing a non TAI AO School, the TAI AO member organization is encouraged to offer to pray before or after the game with the non TAI AO School.
- D. Tickets & Admissions – Regular Season Games.**
1. **Passes.** A Member Organization may create game and season passes for home games. These passes are applicable only to their regular season home games and are not applicable to another school’s game location. TAI AO administrative passes shall be honored.
 2. **Tickets.** Tickets for any regular season game shall not exceed the following:
 - a. ADULTS - \$5.00,
 - b. STUDENTS (High school and below and children) - \$3.00,
 - c. FAMILY - \$25.00.
 3. A member organization may charge less if desired.
 4. Coaches, players, officials and primary game personnel (ball boy, trainer, team manager, etc.) are exempt from paying admission.
- E. Game Officials – Regular Season Games.**
1. All Game officials shall be UIL Certified, TASO Certified and TAI AO approved.
 2. Unless otherwise provided in the specific sport plan, the number of officials is expected for a Varsity or Junior Varsity game shall be the TASO required minimum. If less than the required minimum of officials show up, it is at the discretion of the visiting coach whether to play or not. If visiting coach elects to play the game, the game will count without forfeit; otherwise, a scrimmage can be played.

SECTION 268 – EVENT PASSES

- A. Every Member Organization shall be awarded event passes for use in connection with TAI AO sponsored contests, events, games and matches.
 - 1. Four passes shall be issued for football; and,
 - 2. Three passes shall be issued for all other sports and activities
- B. Passes shall include the name of the card holder on the card and shall be non-transferable.
- C. The pass will admit the card holder. A photo ID will be required to insure passes are being used properly.
- D. Passes will be good for any TAI AO sponsored contest, event, game or match during the TAI AO calendar year for which they were issued.
- E. Additional passes may be purchased for \$300.00 each.

SECTION 269 - TATTOOS

- A. Tattoos must be covered by tape or the student’s uniform or clothing at all times. This includes while preparing for competition, during competition, for awards presentations and post competition while on a Member Organization’s property.
- B. Exception in swimming. Students must have tattoos covered when not competing in the race and during out of water warm up/cool down.

SECTION 270 – PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- A. Live animal mascots, cannons, fireworks, etc. are prohibited at TAI AO contests, events, games and matches.
- B. No dogs or other animals are allowed at TAI AO contests, events, games and matches.
- C. Noisemakers, including megaphones, are prohibited at TAI AO contests, events, games and matches held at field houses, gymnasiums or other indoor facilities.
- D. Bands, when permitted, shall play only during time-outs and intermissions, individual instruments may not be used as noisemakers.
- E. At football games, bands and noisemakers may play between plays (stopping prior to the referee’s whistle for “ready for play”), after a touchdown, field goal, extra point or safety.

SECTION 271 - EQUIPMENT

- A. **Jerseys – Home & Away.** Each Member Organization shall have a Home and an Away uniform jersey for each sport.
 - 1. All jerseys shall be readable. Dark numbers on dark jerseys and light numbers on light jerseys are not permitted. Opponents and officials must be able to read the number from a reasonable distance.
 - 2. Each student shall be issued a number at the beginning of the season which shall remain his/her number through the entire season (as it is listed in MaxPreps on the Team Roster). If a number change is required, the coach shall inform each future opponent of the change for the remainder of the season.
 - 3. Acceptable reasons for a number change shall be:
 - a. In the event the original uniform is damaged and requires replacement.

- b. In the event a jersey is not available (forgotten, etc.) and a real time replacement is required.
- B. Team Colors.** The Home team shall wear colored jerseys and the Visiting team shall wear white unless another arrangement is mutually agreed upon.
- C. Game Uniforms.**
 - 1. All coaches shall ensure all students are properly equipped to make the game or contest as safe as possible.
 - 2. The head coach or his designated representative shall certify to the umpire before each scrimmage or game that all students are equipped according to the equipment rules.
 - 3. Proper uniforms shall be worn at each scrimmage and game. A team or a student that is in violation is subject to penalties.
- D.** Each sport plan shall provide more specific equipment and uniform specifications.

SECTION 272 – COACH TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

- A.** All TAI AO head coaches are required to complete the following NFHS Courses by August 1st of the first year of participation in TAI AO and every second year thereafter:
 - 1. Core Courses:
 - a. *Fundamentals of Coaching*; and,
 - b. *First Aid, Health and Safety for Coaches*
 - 2. Additional Course:
 - a. *Concussion in Sports*
- B.** All TAI AO coaches and other staff are strongly encouraged to complete at least every other year training courses or clinics related to the following:
 - 1. *Heat Acclimatization*: Education and training related to utilization of available professional development tools regarding proper approach to Heat Acclimatization.
 - 2. *Sportsmanship*: Education and training related to utilization of available professional development tools regarding proper approach to Sportsmanship, how it impacts the educational process and your specific role in promoting it at all interscholastic athletic events.
- C.** A coach certified as having completed the requirements of Subsection 272.A above must be in attendance at all events, contests, games and matches of the Member Organization regardless of whether or not against a TAI AO opponent.

SECTION 273 – POST SEASON PLAY

- A. Rules related to qualification and participation in post season playoffs shall be as provided in each sport specific plan.

SECTION 274 – POST SEASON HONORS AND ALL STAR GAMES**A. Post Season Honors.**

1. TAI AO shall recognize All District, All Region and All State individual honors for each TAI AO sponsored sport.
2. Determination of individual post season honors will be as provided in each sport specific plan.

B. All-Star Games.

1. **Purpose.** *All Star games are designed to bring together the most talented players in TAI AO at the end of the season in order for them to be recognized and to play on the same field as others of equal recognition. An All-Star game will be played for each division in a particular sport.*
2. **Location and Date.**
 - a. The All Star games shall occur at a time provided in the specific sport plan.
 - b. The All Star games shall be played at a “central” location so that individuals from various teams share the travel burden. TAI AO shall administer the game.
3. **Player Selection.**
 - a. One game shall be played for each Division where the matchup is between 2 super regions as determined by the TAI AO Committee supervising the sport of either a North/South or an East/West configuration.
 - b. Player selections for each All Star game shall be from the players previously named and recognized as 1st Team All-State selections for each super regional team or as otherwise provided in the specific sport plan.
 - c. Players from the 2nd Team All-State selections may serve as substitutes for a 1st Team player that is not able to play in the game.
 - d. Selections from the 2nd Team All-State list shall be accomplished by the coach assigned to one of the All Star teams based on team need and with consideration to broaden team presentation if possible.
4. **Player Obligations.** Each player who wishes to attend/play in an All Star game must agree and will be required to;
 - a. Forward to the TAI AO office payment in advance (if required) for the All Star jersey (Cost estimated at \$50); and,
 - b. Participate in the single practice for the All Star team prior to the game (located in the same area of the All Star game).
5. **Coach Selection and Guidelines.**
 - a. Coaches for each All Star team shall be selected from the top ranked MaxPreps team from each super region at the end of the Regular season in each Division.
 - b. Each All Star Coach accepting the invitation is expected to fulfill the following guidelines;
 1. Make it an enjoyable and fun event for each All Star.

2. Insure playing time is created for each All Star – not equal time but at least meaningful time (1 quarter minimum).
 3. Make every effort to adjust defense and personnel to keep the contest competitive.
 4. Create at least one social time for the All Stars with a team dinner or breakfast (player participation is optional).
 5. Invite the head coach of another team within the super region to assist during the All Star activities.
- 6. Tickets & Admissions.**
- a. The location for the All-Star game shall be chosen in a manner to appropriately “size” the location to the expected crowd and to create an admission fee that is reasonable as outlined below.
 - b. Tickets for games shall not exceed
 1. ADULTS - \$10.00
 2. STUDENTS (& children) - \$5.00
 3. FAMILY - \$25.00.
 4. Coaches, players, Officials and primary game personnel (chain gang, ball boy, trainer, team manager etc.) are exempted from paying admissions.

SECTION 275 – MEDIA, VIDEOTAPING AND FILMING

A. Media.

1. **Post Season.** The following rules related to media apply to post season play only.
2. **Credentialed Media Personnel.**
 - a. A *Media Request Form* must be submitted and approved prior to the activity, contest or event.
 - b. Media are limited to four (4) per Member Organization. This includes print, photography, digital and video media.
 - c. Passes grant admission to the event, contest or activity. Floor or field access shall be at the discretion of the host organization.
 - d. Passes may be revoked by a TAI AO representative.
3. **Member Organization Media.**
 - a. A *Media Request Form* must be submitted and approved prior to the activity, contest or event.
 - b. Media are limited to two (4) per Member Organization. This includes print, photography, digital and video media.
 - c. Passes do not grant admission to the event, contest or activity. Floor or field access shall be at the discretion of the host organization.
 - d. Passes may be revoked by a TAI AO representative.
4. **On Site Photography and Videography.**
 - a. TAI AO does not recognize an official photographer or videographer for TAI AO sponsored events, contests and activities. Those wishing to work an event, contests or activity shall:
 1. Complete the *Media Request Form* and submit the form to the TAI AO State Office prior to the event, contest or activity; and,
 2. Make payment to TAI AO of the per event fee required by TAI AO.
 - b. **Flash Photography.**

1. The use of electronic flash equipment is prohibited at all indoor events, contests and activities.
 2. The use of a strobe flash is allowed.
 3. If either team head coach or the event, contest or activity director requests a strobe flash to be discontinued, the request will be honored.
- 5. Radio.**
- a. Radio broadcasts, whether over air or internet, are limited to one per team per game.
 - b. Each station or broadcaster will be limited to two (2) media passes per game.
 - c. TAI AO does not guarantee power, phone or internet access at the event sites.
 - d. Upon approval, broadcasters should contact the event host if additional resources are necessary.
 - e. To broadcast a TAI AO sponsored event, contest or activity, the following shall apply;
 1. Complete the *Media Request Form* and submit the form to the TAI AO State Office prior to the event, contest or activity; and,
 2. Make payment to TAI AO of the per event fee required by TAI AO.
- 6. Internet Radio Broadcasts.**
- a. Radio broadcasts, whether over air or internet, are limited to one per team per game.
 - b. Each station or broadcaster will be limited to two (2) media passes per game.
 - c. TAI AO does not guarantee power, phone or internet access at the event sites.
 - d. Upon approval, broadcasters should contact the event host if additional resources are needed.
 - e. To broadcast a TAI AO sponsored event, contest or activity, the following steps apply;
 1. Complete the *Media Request Form* and submit the form to the TAI AO State Office prior to the event, contest or activity; and,
 2. Make payment to TAI AO of the per event fee required by TAI AO.
- 7. Television and Internet Video Broadcasts.**
- a. Television and Internet video broadcasts are limited to one (1) per team per game.
 - b. Each station or broadcaster will be limited to four (4) media passes per game.
 - c. TAI AO does not guarantee power, phone or internet access at the event sites.
 - d. Upon approval, broadcasters should contact the event host if additional resources are needed.
 - e. To broadcast a TAI AO sponsored event, contest or activity, the following steps apply;
 1. Complete the *Media Request Form* and submit the form to the TAI AO State Office prior to the event, contest or activity; and,
 2. Make payment to TAI AO of the per event fee required by TAI AO.
- 8. Notification to Media.** Member Organizations shall notify local media of these rules and requirements and shall work with TAI AO to insure timely payment of all required fees will be made to TAI AO.
- B. Videotaping/Filming.**
1. **It is a violation to videotape or film an athletic activity, contest or event in which your Member Organization or team is not competing unless prior consent of ALL Member Organizations involved has been obtained.**
 2. A Member Organization does not have to obtain permission to film or tape a contest in which it is competing. However, the film or videotape may not be utilized for coaching purposes during the contest or for any other reason until after the contest has been completed.

3. Films and videotapes become the property of the Member Organization doing the recording unless otherwise agreed to by consent of the Member Organizations involved in the contest.

D. Film/Video Exchange.

1. Regular Season.

- a. TAIAO does not have a rule about exchanging film during the regular season. However, it is **STRONGLY** encouraged that a Member Organization would agree to exchange film/video with an upcoming opponent.
- b. Exchanging film/video with an opponent is a recognized, accepted and encouraged practice for scouting purposes. For example; team A is playing team B in game 3 of the season, the coach from A trades his film from game 1 and/or 2 with the coach from team B for his film from game 1 and/or 2. The films are the property of the member organization doing the filming and they do not have to get permission from anyone to exchange their own property.
- c. It is permissible for a coach to contact a team that has played his opponent and arrange to borrow or trade for that film/video. The film/video is the property of the member organization or school that made it legally, since they were involved in the game.

2. Post Season.

- a. Member Organizations participating in Post Season play are **REQUIRED** to exchange 2 quality films/videos with their opponent as follows:
 1. The games to be exchanged shall be the recipient's choice,
 2. All film/video exchanged shall be received by the opponent no later than as provided in the specific sport plan or at least 4 days preceding the game,
 3. Film/video may be in the form of film, disc or electronic copy (all are acceptable). [Hudl](#) is an acceptable media of exchange; and,
 4. Each film/video must be deemed “viewable and usable” by the opponent. It shall contain clarity for general use for scouting purposes.

E. Filming/Videotaping by Individuals. Any individual videotaping or filming shall have permission from the Member Organizations involved in the contest and may not obstruct the view of other spectators of the contest.

F. Commercial Uses. Use of the films or videotapes for commercial purposes must be approved by all Member Organizations involved in the contest.

Sections 276 to 299 are reserved for expansion.

Sections 300 to 399 are reserved for expansion.

SUBCHAPTER L - Football

SECTIONS 400

SUBCHAPTER M - Basketball

SECTIONS 500

SUBCHAPTER N - Volleyball

SECTIONS 600

SUBCHAPTER O – Cross Country

SECTIONS 700

SUBCHAPTER P – Track and Field

SECTIONS 800

SUBCHAPTER Q - Soccer

SECTIONS 900

SUBCHAPTER R - Baseball and Softball

SECTIONS 1000

SUBCHAPTER S - Academic

SECTIONS 1100

SUBCHAPTER T - Fine Arts

SECTIONS 1200

SUBCHAPTER U - Middle School Participation

SECTIONS 1300