

Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools

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"Competition with Honor"

TO: HEAD ADMINISTRATOR AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Last week the Texas Senate passed Senate Bill # 1214 which would require the UIL (University Interscholastic League) to allow membership by private and parochial schools within the state. This bill requires a majority vote of the House of Representatives to become law.

This is not the first time a similar bill has passed the Senate, but has never gone to a vote by the House.

At the present time, a number of professional organizations are voicing their opposition to this bill, including the Texas High School Coaches Association. A large number of public school superintendents have also voiced their disapproval of allowing private schools in the current "public school" league.

The bill, if passed, adds Section 33.0832 to the Education Code, and while it "provides private and parochial schools with equal opportunity to become members of the league (UIL) for the purpose of providing their students with access to league activities"; "it does not exempt a private or parochial school or its students from satisfying each rule or eligibility requirement imposed by this subchapter" (of the Education Code).

Listed below are some of the requirements that private or parochial school would have to meet in order to become members of the UIL.

- All schools must be accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)
- All coaches must be full time employees of the school (no part-time, stipend or volunteer coaches)
- Students must reside in the public school district in which the private/parochial school is located
- Students who live with someone other than their parent(s) or immediate family member, OR who transfer for athletic purposes are ineligible for varsity play for one year
- Students who live outside the public school district in which the private/parochial school is located, are ineligible for varsity play for one year
- Strict "no-pass, no-play"; students must pass ALL subjects at the end of the grading period, with a minimum of 3 weeks of ineligibility. At the end of the three week period, the student must be passing all classes to be eligible for varsity play.
- Foreign Exchange Students have one year of eligibility; Foreign Resident Students (I-20) are ineligible.

- Under current guidelines all TAPPS 1A, 2A and 3A schools would be assigned to UIL 1A
- Most TAPPS 4A would be assigned to UIL 2A; approximately 18 current TAPPS schools would be assigned to UIL 3A and the eight largest TAPPS schools would be assigned to UIL 4A
- UIL does not allow its coaches to coach their own players in summer leagues, 7 on 7 or offer private instruction. TAPPS offers all these options to its students and coaches.

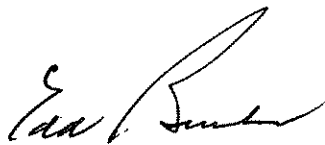
If the bill becomes law, membership in the UIL by private/parochial allows competition in all team sports except football and basketball. One Senator has been quoted that "private schools could play all team sports except football and basketball in the UIL and continue to play those sports in TAPPS." THIS IS NOT CORRECT. TAPPS By-Laws do not allow dual membership in similar leagues, and schools will have to choose one league or the other.

It should also be noted that if a school leaves TAPPS to join another league, there will be a waiting period of two alignment cycles (4 years) before that school will be considered for membership in TAPPS again.

Since its beginning in 1979, with some 20+ schools, TAPPS has grown to the point that it is the only private school association that is an affiliate member of the National Federation of High School Associations, and is among the top 25 members of the NFHS according to size.

It could be that some schools will find that membership in the UIL is best for their school, if the current bill passes. If that is the case, by all means, school boards, administrators and their governing bodies should do what is best for their school.

For those schools that choose to remain in TAPPS, if the option becomes available to them, I can only pledge that the Fine Arts Executive Committee, the Athletic Executive Committee, the TAPPS Executive Board and the TAPPS Staff will continue to serve the member schools to the best of their abilities and provide them with quality extra curricular programs based on "Competition with Honor."



Edd Burlison
TAPPS Director