Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association

Constitution and By-Laws

Founded, 2007
Initiated, 2010
Updated, 4/22/2020

Article I - Name
The name of this organization is the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association (PAISAA).

Article II - Purpose and Philosophy
The Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association (PAISAA) was founded in 2007 to unite independent schools in the state of Pennsylvania in fostering healthy athletic rivalries, meaningful competition, and the values of sportsmanship.

The guiding principles of PAISAA are to:
- Support interscholastic athletics programs for independent schools across the state of Pennsylvania.
- Organize and execute tournaments in each sport in which the members express an interest and there are sufficient teams to provide meaningful competition.
- Provide professional development opportunities for athletic administrators and coaches.
- Maintain affiliate membership with the National Federation of High Schools, thereby maintaining opportunities for member schools with other NFHS organizations.

Article III - Leadership and Governance
Section I - Officers and At-Large Members
The PAISAA Executive Board is composed of four officers, the Immediate Past President, and At-Large members from each of the association’s leagues and groups. Any athletic director or associate/assistant athletic director of a member school can serve on the Executive Board as an officer or as an At-Large member.
The PAISAA officers are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The composition of the officers should provide diverse representation of the leagues/groups and of various schools in the PAISAA membership.

Each full league and the group of collective schools from multi-state leagues or who have independent status will select one athletic director or assistant/associate athletic director to serve on the Executive Board as an At-Large member. Each officer and at-large position serves a term of two years. All positions except the president and Vice President are eligible for re-election.

As of the 2019-2020 competition year, the leagues and group represented are:
- InterAc (Inter Academic League)
- FSL (Friends Schools League)
- G7 (Group of seven schools from multi-state leagues and schools with independent status)

Should any officer be unable to fulfill their term of service, the Executive Board will vote on a successor, which will be another member of the Executive Board. A new member will then be added to the Board from the appropriate pool of league/group representation.

Section II - Duties of the President
The President is the chief executive officer of PAISAA and is responsible for the administration, direction, and progress of the Association. The responsibilities of the President include, but are not limited to:
- Serving the needs of the association and member schools by crafting the direction and vision of the association, and leading the steps necessary for progress of the association.
- Appointing special committees and task forces for the purpose of meeting the strategic objectives of PAISAA.
- Organizing the work of the membership and events that benefit member schools and their athletic leaders, including business meetings and professional development sessions.
- Synchronizing the work and scope of the Executive Board to best represent the interest of the membership.
- Administering the process of addressing infractions and any appeals for consideration of special circumstances relative to a tournament and/or championship event.
  - This constitutes convening appropriate board members and/or coaches’ committee members of a sport to render decisions.

Upon completion of term of office, the President serves on the Executive Board for two years as the Immediate Past President, with voting privileges. The Immediate Past President assumes the responsibility of Historian for the Association, archiving tournament/championship events and significant Association achievements and recognition.
Past Presidents may remain as resources for the Executive Board beyond two years, without formal responsibilities or voting privileges.

**Section III - Duties of the Vice President**
The Vice President is responsible for supporting the efforts of the President and therefore of the association. The Vice President performs the duties of President and of the Secretary if and when the need arises. The Vice President moves to the position of President at the end of their term. The responsibilities of the Vice President also include, but are not limited to:

- Producing an annual report that is distributed to the athletic leadership and school leadership at each member schools.
- Coordinating the promotional and marketing efforts of the association and its events, to enhance the stature and status of the association.
- Serving in the President’s role if the President is recused from addressing a situation, an infraction or an appeal due to a conflict of interest.

**Section IV - Duties of the Secretary**
The Secretary is the chief correspondence officer responsible for record-keeping, communications, and proceedings of the association. The responsibilities of the Secretary include, but are not limited to:

- Taking minutes for each session of the Executive Board and of association meetings, then archiving those minutes and making them available to the membership.
- Communicating news of association events, including the opening communication for each sport championship tournament or event.
- Serving in the President’s role or the Vice President’s role if either of those officers are able to perform their responsibilities.
- Coordinating the ordering and distributing of championship plaques, medals and any other recognition items.

**Section V - Duties of the Treasurer**
The Treasurer is the chief financial officer of the association and is therefore responsible for providing an accurate perspective of the financial status of the association. The responsibilities of the Treasurer include, but are not limited to:

- Keeping accurate financial records and transactions, then archiving those records and transactions so that they are accessible to association members.
- Collecting membership dues, collection of entry fees, collection of tournament fees,
- Payment of invoices and bills accrued as a result of association events
- Managing the association’s insurance policy and providing COI when required.
- Providing a report at each PAISAA meeting and at appropriate Executive Board meetings.
Section VI - Succession, Selections, Elections
The four officer positions are each elected by the Executive Board, with the President and Vice President each serving a two-year, non-renewable term. The Vice-President succeeds to the office of President in July of the next school year. The Secretary and Treasurer may serve consecutive appointments upon approval of the Executive Board.

Should the President choose, or be unable, to fulfill the term of office, the Vice President moves to the office of President and the Executive Board selects a Vice President to fill the term of that position. Depending on the timing of this occurrence, the Vice President and President positions may be renewable for a full two-year term.

The next Vice President should be chosen by the Executive Board prior to the spring meeting; this selection should be communicated to the membership prior to league and group selections of At-Large members.

At-Large members of the Executive Board should be presented by each league and group at the association’s spring meeting. At-Large positions serve a two-year term; persons can return to an At-Large position after two years or in the case of extenuating circumstances.

All Executive Board members—officers and At-Large members—are presented to the membership at the spring meeting for ratification.

Article IV – Tournament Committees
Each PAISAA sanctioned championship tournament or event is led by a sport Tournament Committee. Committees are composed of one coach from each league and group, who is selected by those leagues/groups prior to the start of that season.

The committee is chaired by a coach from any of the leagues/groups, selected either by the Executive Board or by coaches within that sport. An Executive Board member serves as the liaison for each sport tournament committee. The responsibilities of the tournament committees are detailed in the PAISAA Tournament Committee Guidelines.

Article V - Membership
Section I – Eligibility
PAISAA membership is open to Pennsylvania independent schools that are members of the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) and/or are accredited by the Middle States Association.
Full membership includes participation in championships and professional development. An associate membership includes professional development only. Schools that are members of the PIAA are eligible for associate membership.

Section II - Dues
Annual dues as established by the PAISAA Executive Board and are payable prior to October 1.

Section III - Association Year
The PAISAA administrative year spans from July 1 to June 30.

Section IV - Application
An application is required for any school that seeks association membership. In addition to the membership information detailed in Section V, full member schools are expected to sponsor a minimum of three sports per gender enrolled at the school, with at least one sport each of the three seasons.

Application for membership comes with a formal written request from the Director of Athletics and Head of School/Principal from the interested school. In this letter, the school should provide:
- The school's mission statement and athletic philosophy.
- Proof of membership with PAIS and/or accreditation by Middle States.
- A listing of the varsity sports the school offers.
- The school's admissions profile and enrollment profile (grades, enrollment by gender, boundaries and/or qualifiers for enrollment)
- League memberships and any other associations
- Description and imagery of athletic facilities available for hosting contests

This documentation must be submitted to the PAISAA President and Executive Board by February 1 of the year prior to the anticipated membership year. The application will be reviewed and voted on by the Executive Board within two weeks and the President will convey the decision to the applicant school within one week after that vote. An application must be approved by two-thirds of the Executive Board for admission into the association.

Article VI - Meetings
The PAISAA conducts two annual meetings, which serve for business and professional development.

A business meeting is held as part of each annual meeting. This business meeting can include new proposals, election of officers, and any other agenda items submitted for consideration. Actions are recommended to the Executive Board based upon a simple majority vote of the eligible member schools present, with each school casting one vote.
The Executive Board and other committees may meet as often as deemed necessary to administer their business. All such meetings shall be called by the chairperson of the group.

PAISAA provides professional development opportunities each academic year for the athletic leadership and coaches of member schools. Professional development may be offered at one or both of the two annual meetings, number which will be set by the Officers and Executive Board.

**Article VII - Legislative Procedures**

Proposals shall be submitted to the PAISAA President thirty days prior to a regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting by members of the Executive Board, Ad Hoc Committee chairpersons, or the general membership. The President has the authority to amend this time period, if needed.

Approved proposals shall be sent out to the membership at least thirty days prior to the next scheduled business meeting.

A simple majority vote of present and eligible member schools, each with one vote, on each new proposal shall determine the appropriate course of action.

By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the association membership.

**Article VIII – Student Eligibility for Participation**

Those eligible to participate in PAISAA sponsored tournament play include all students starting in 8th grade who are fully enrolled, engaged academically on campus, and who do not turn 19 prior to July 1st. This includes international exchange students as well as students from recognized programs such as the English Speaking Union (ESU).

- Individual member schools are responsible for health and safety guidelines relative to participation in PAISAA events.

Transgender students are eligible to compete in PAISAA sponsored tournaments in accordance with their gender identity. PAISAA relies on the gender determination of the student made by the member school; the association does not make separate gender identity determinations.

Transfer students must be officially enrolled by the following dates:

- **Fall** – Two weeks after Labor Day
- **Winter** – by December 1st
Spring – by March 1st

Eligibility rules have no exceptions and no appeal process.

**Article IX – Terms for Participation**
Participation in PAISAA sponsored tournaments and events is the choice of each member school. Schools should participate in a minimum of two events each year, unless there are extenuating circumstances, and are not limited to a maximum number of events.

Participation is contingent that a school has fulfilled the expectations of membership, including payment of dues by the October 1 deadline and continued good standing in the association.

**Article X - Violation Consequences**
Should a member school openly commit a bylaw or conduct of events infraction, or have an allegation leveled against the member school, the PAISAA President presides over research and discovery of the infraction or allegation. The President determines a timeline for this research and discovery and may utilize the Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer as needed. Once research and discovery have provided what the President deems appropriate information, the President calls the Executive Board into session. The Executive Board discusses and votes on a response. There is no appeal of the Executive Board decision.

If a member school is found to have committed an infraction, the following levels and variants of consequences can be invoked.

- Forfeiture of the next contest or event, should the infraction occur during a PAISAA tournament or championship event.
- An official warning, with citation of the infraction and the expectation for correction.
- Probation of one year, with an improvement plan set and progress points provided.
- Suspension from a specific sport championship tournament or event for one year or more.
- Suspension from participation in multiple sports championships and events for one year or more, with evidence of an improvement plan set and progress points provided for reinstatement.
- Other measures deemed appropriate for the situation and violation, including the possibility of revocation of membership from PAISAA.