



**Mohammed Choudhury**  
State Superintendent of Schools

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**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education

**FROM:** Mohammed Choudhury  
State Superintendent of Schools

**DATE:** August 24, 2021

**SUBJECT:** COMAR 13A.06.03  
*Interscholastic Athletics in the State*  
Permission to Publish

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this item is to request permission to publish amendments to Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.06.03 *Interscholastic Athletics in the State*. The amendments address the number of all-star contests students are eligible to compete in and provide additional scheduling flexibility within the season limitations for wrestling.

**REGULATION PROMULGATION PROCESS:**

Under Maryland law, a State agency, such as the State Board, may propose a new or amended regulation whenever the circumstances arise to do so. After the State Board votes to propose such a regulation, the proposed regulation is sent to the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR) Committee for a 15-day review period. If the AELR Committee does not hold up the proposed regulation for further review, it is published in the Maryland Register for a 30-day public comment period. At the end of the comment period, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff reviews and summarizes the public comments.

Thereafter, the MSDE staff will present a recommendation to the State Board of Education to either: (1) adopt the regulation in the form it was proposed; or (2) revise the regulation and adopt it as final, because the suggested revision is not a substantive change; or (3) revise the regulation and re-propose it because the suggested revision is a substantive change. At any time during the process, the AELR Committee may stop the promulgations process to hold a hearing. Thereafter, it may recommend to the Governor that the regulation not be adopted as a final regulation or the AELR Committee may release the regulation for final adoption.

**BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

The current athletic regulation pertaining to the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) limits the participation of students, who have exhausted their eligibility in a sport, to two all-star games. The all-star game rule found in COMAR 13A.06.03.04 *Operational Guidelines* has gone through two amendments over the years. When the bylaws that govern interscholastic athletics were first adopted, all-star competition was disallowed for all students regardless of completion of athletic eligibility. In 1981, the regulation went through its first change, when educators expressed interest in a means to showcase seniors who have completed their high school eligibility. The regulation was amended to allow one all-star

competition upon completion of eligibility. In 2004, Wicomico County Public Schools proposed to allow two all-star games upon completion of eligibility. The regulation was approved and has since remained in place.

The proposed amendment is to provide opportunities for students to participate in more all-star games following the completion of their eligibility in a particular sport.

The MPSSAA is proposing an amendment to the athletic regulations for wrestling found in COMAR 13A.06.03.03 *Sports Season*. The regulation proposal is to alleviate some scheduling concerns as it relates to the availability of student transportation, cancellations due to weather, and scheduling conflicts with other sports that utilize the school gymnasium. The regulation does not add to the total number of contests in a season and only provides an additional week of flexibility in scheduling the seasonal allotment of contests.

The process found in COMAR 13A.06.03.11 *Amendments* for amending the athletic regulations specifies that “amendments approved by the MPSSAA shall be forwarded to the State Superintendent of Schools who will receive recommendations from local superintendents of schools before the State Superintendent of Schools submits recommendations to the State Board of Education.” The local superintendents unanimously endorsed these proposed amendment, which is being presented to the State Board for consideration.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The regulations that govern interscholastic athletics provide for equity of competition and participation opportunities throughout the State. As such, regulations are the result of a collaborative process between the MPSSAA, local superintendents, the State Superintendent, and the State Board of Education.

The proposed changes are to amend the section regarding limits of participation in interscholastic athletics and weekly limitations for wrestling.

**ACTION:**

Request permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.06.03 *Interscholastic Athletics in the State*.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

COMAR 13A.06.03 *Interscholastic Athletics in the State*

# Title 13A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Subtitle 06 SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

### Chapter 03 Interscholastic Athletics in the State

Authority: Education Article, §§2-205 and 2-303(k), Annotated Code of Maryland

#### **.03 Sports Season.**

##### B. Maximum Number of Contests Permitted During a Sports Season.

(1) All school athletic schedules shall be established before the first MPSSAA allowable play date of each sport's season according to the following instructions:

(a) – (p) unchanged

(q) Wrestling:

(i) 14 regular season contests including dual meets and a maximum of three tournaments and three tri-meets;

(ii) Not more than two contests per week including a maximum of one tournament;

(iii) Multi-team events may be used to make up postponed contests between teams originally scheduled[;].  
*Three contests may be scheduled one time during the season on a non-tournament week;*

(iv) A city/county/conference tournament required to qualify for the state tournament will not be counted as one of the three allowed tournaments; and

(v) Wrestling tournaments and meets are defined by Regulation .04D(3) and (4) of this chapter.

#### **.04 Operational Guidelines.**

##### C. Limits of Participation.

(1) Each local school system and state tournament committee shall establish guidelines that ensure a minimum loss of instructional time for coaches and students involved in interscholastic athletic contests.

(2) Students who participate on both varsity and junior varsity teams may not play in a number of contests that exceed the maximum number allowed for that sport in a week or season. Students may not compete on both a varsity and junior varsity level against the same school on the same day.

(3) School athletic teams may not participate in any contests representing their school before or after the defined sports season.

(4) Member MPSSAA schools may not play or practice on Sundays.

(5) Individual students may participate in [two] all-star games *and events* [per sport], upon [the] completion of their eligibility in the sport in which this participation occurs.

(6) Member MPSSAA schools shall practice with or play against only high school teams as defined in §H of this regulation.

(7) Individual students or teams representing a member MPSSAA school shall participate only in games, meets, or tournaments which are conducted by appropriate educational institutions.

(8) Member MPSSAA schools may not enter competition preliminary to a college or professional game.

(9) A varsity or junior varsity team member of the previous season may not participate in interscholastic competition and in intramurals or school sponsored athletic programs in the same sport outside the sport season.