

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - July 30, 2025

LHSAA Welcomes Dialogue with State Legislators During Oversight Committee Meeting

BATON ROUGE, LA — The Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) participated in a public meeting on Tuesday, July 29, with members of the Legislative Study Committee formed under House Concurrent Resolution 24. The meeting, held at the State Capitol, marked the first official step in a comprehensive review of LHSAA policies, practices, and governance structure.

Executive Director Eddie Bonine and LHSAA staff responded openly to every question posed by lawmakers. The meeting room was filled with supporters of the Association, including LHSAA staff, Executive Committee members, school principals, athletic directors, compliance officers, and other key stakeholders. The Association addressed a wide range of topics, including school classification, playoff structures, transfer policies, financial operations, governance, and emerging issues such as Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL).

“We welcome the opportunity to work with lawmakers in a constructive, transparent way,” said Bonine. “This study is an important chance to clarify how we operate, why certain decisions are made, and how we can better serve all student-athletes across Louisiana.”

Lawmakers voiced particular concern over the current “select” vs. “non-select” playoff split and the one-time transfer rule. LHSAA officials acknowledged the complexity of both issues and provided important historical context. Executive Director Eddie Bonine explained that the one-time transfer rule was recently brought before the membership for a vote at the Annual Convention. He presented the official voting results, which showed that 81% (Yes 66/No 273) of member principals voted against implementing the rule—demonstrating that the policy was not supported by the membership and reinforcing the LHSAA’s role in enforcing, not creating, such rules.

It was clarified during the meeting that neither the Executive Director, the LHSAA office, nor the Executive Committee has the authority to unilaterally change rules such as classification or transfer eligibility. All official rules and policy changes must be proposed and adopted by a vote of the full membership—principals from LHSAA member schools—during the Association’s Annual Convention.

“We operate based on rules passed by our member schools,” Bonine explained. “Our job as a staff is to implement and enforce those policies, not to create them.”

Bonine also addressed the topic of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), noting that the LHSAA was one of the first high school associations in the nation to take proactive steps in this area. The Association adopted a formal NIL position statement well before many states had policies in place.

“We wanted to be ahead of the game,” Bonine told the committee. “Our NIL policy ensures student-athletes can benefit while maintaining compliance with LHSAA rules and protecting the integrity of high school sports.”

Additionally, LHSAA emphasized that all of its Executive Committee meetings and annual conventions are open to the public. The Association welcomes public engagement and encourages transparency throughout its process.

LHSAA... Beyond the Game

Speaker Pro Tempore Mike Johnson, author of HCR 24, stressed that the purpose of the study is collaborative in nature.

“We’re not here to settle scores — we want to do something good for student-athletes,” said Johnson during the meeting.

While some legislators acknowledged frustration with certain policies, it also became clear that many are still developing a full understanding of how the LHSAA operates and how its rules are formed and amended. LHSAA staff expressed their willingness to continue engaging in open dialogue to ensure that the legislative committee has the full picture.

“We recognize that our structure is complex, and we’re committed to being a partner in this review,” Bonine added. “We believe in the work we do, and we welcome this opportunity to build understanding and trust with state leaders.”

The LHSAA looks forward to continued participation in the legislative study and will remain available to clarify policies, share data, and support efforts that benefit Louisiana’s student-athletes and school communities.

The public, media members, and all stakeholders are encouraged to attend the next meeting of the Legislative Study Committee. The date and location of that meeting will be announced as soon as it is finalized.

For more information about the LHSAA and updates on this process, visit www.lhsaa.org or to watch the full meeting visit the link below.

https://house.louisiana.gov/H_Video/VideoArchivePlayer?v=house/2025/Jul/0729_25_LHSAA

LHSAA... Beyond the Game