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H.B. 625
136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Click and King

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SUMMARY

- Requires the governing body of a public high school to which the bill applies to adopt a policy that permits a student enrolled in a neighboring public high school that does not offer a team sport to petition to participate in that sport at its high school.
- Applies the bill to each public high school that (1) offers a team sport and (2) is a member of an organization that regulates interscholastic athletics.
- Entitles the bill the “Student Athlete Mobility” (SAM) Act.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Student Athlete Mobility (SAM) Act

The bill addresses a student’s participation in a team sport at a public high school that is different than the public high school in which the student is enrolled. The bill applies to high school students enrolled in a school district, community school, or STEM school.

Under the bill, beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, each school district board of education and public school governing body that operates a high school to which the bill applies must adopt a policy that permits a student who is enrolled in a neighboring public high school that does not offer that team sport to petition to participate in that team sport at the board’s or governing body’s high school. The bill applies to any high school that (1) offers a team sport and (2) is a member of an organization that regulates interscholastic athletics (such as the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA)).

The policy must include:

1. The form and manner in which a neighboring school student may petition to participate in a team sport;

2. A requirement that both of the following approve the student's participating in the team sport:
 - a. The neighboring school's superintendent or chief administrative officer;
 - b. The executive director of the organization that regulates interscholastic athletics (such as OHSAA);
3. A requirement that, if the student is enrolled in a school district that operates multiple high schools, the student must first petition to participate in a team sport at another high school operated by the district if one offers the sport. If a student is not approved to participate in the sport at another school operated by the district, the student may petition to participate in the sport at a high school that is not operated by the district.¹

The bill prohibits a student from participating in the same team sport at more than one public high school in any one school year.²

If a public high school participates in any regular season contest for a team sport and subsequently stops offering that team sport before the athletic season concludes, the bill prohibits a student enrolled in that school from being eligible to petition to participate in that sport until the next school year.³

The bill disqualifies a student from petitioning to participate in a team sport under the bill, solely because the student's school does not offer the competition level at which the student wishes to participate, such as varsity, junior varsity, or freshman team.⁴

The bill permits a board or governing body that operates a high school and is a member of an organization that regulates interscholastic athletics to partner with a neighboring school to establish a single team if neither school has a sufficient number of students willing to participate in the team sport. A "sufficient number of students" means the minimum number of students required for competition in a team sport during play plus half of that number, rounded up to the nearest whole.⁵

Definitions

Under the bill, a "neighboring school" is:

1. For a board of education, any of the following:
 - a. A high school operated by the board other than the high school in which the student is enrolled;

¹ R.C. 3313.5321(B).

² R.C. 3313.5321(C).

³ R.C. 3313.5321(D).

⁴ R.C. 3313.5321(E).

⁵ R.C. 3313.5321(F).

- b. A high school operated by a school district that directly borders the board’s school district;
 - c. If a board’s school district borders Lake Erie, a high school operated by an island school district;
 - d. Any other public high school that is located within the territory of either the board’s school district or a school district that directly borders the board’s school district.
2. For any other public high school governing body, any of the following:
- a. A high school operated by the school district in which the other public high school is located;
 - b. A high school operated by a school district that directly borders the school district in which the other public high school is located;
 - c. A different other public high school that is located within the territory of either:
 - i. The school district in which the other public high school is located;
 - ii. A school district that directly borders that school district in which the other public high school is located.

“Team sport” includes baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, tennis, volleyball, or any other sport that requires cooperative participation by multiple students and would be impractical to compete with a single student.⁶

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	12-08-25

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⁶ R.C. 3313.5321(A).