

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 343  
 Ways and Means

(Delegate Boyce, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Education - Public School Athletics - Basketball Schedule**

This bill establishes statutory requirements for public school athletic schedules for basketball. A basketball team may not play more than 2 games per week, but a team may elect to play 3 games per week twice during the season. The basketball season must consist of 22 regular season games, or 20 regular season games for a team that elects to play in a tournament; tournament games are not counted as regular season games. Each county board of education must decide whether to authorize a team to play in a tournament or showcase game. Authorization may be given to play in an already scheduled tournament or showcase game or one scheduled by the county. Subject to this authorization, a team may play in up to 4 tournament games and a number of showcase games determined by the county board per year, including during a National Collegiate Athletic Association Evaluation Period. A tournament or showcase may be scheduled outside the normal basketball season. A team in the State may play in a tournament or showcase game against a team from outside the State if the out-of-state team has equivalent qualifications to those required of the in-state team. A student may not be disciplined in any manner for not participating in a game or practice that occurs outside of the school year. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Minimal. The bill generally conforms statute to existing regulatory and league requirements. In counties where the county board of education authorizes out-of-season basketball tournament or showcase play, certain school system expenditures increase. However, the bill does not require county boards to authorize participation in tournaments or showcases outside of the regular basketball season. Therefore, the bill does not require a substantial increase in local government expenditures.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

## Analysis

**Current Law:** The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), as adopted by the State Superintendent of Schools, governs the athletic program for all high school students in Maryland public secondary schools that are members of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA.) Local school systems may adopt rules governing their athletic programs that are more restrictive than those of MPSSAA; less restrictive rules may not be adopted.

Per COMAR, basketball is limited to a 20-game regular season or 22 games with designated optional tournament play. Not more than 2 games per week are allowed, but 3 games in one week may be scheduled twice during the season. A team may elect to play in one designated optional 2- or 3-game tournament. If a team elects to play in a designated optional 3-game tournament, only 19 regular season games may be scheduled. A member MPSSAA school or school system may decide whether or not to participate in a tournament. Local school systems may approve the participation of member schools to practice and compete in sanctioned National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and MPSSAA events outside the defined sport season. Students or teams representing a member MPSSAA school must participate only in games, meets, or tournaments which are conducted by appropriate educational institutions.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** The bill authorizes each public school team to make decisions as to whether to participate in tournament or showcase games outside of the winter sports season, including those not sanctioned by NFHS, subject to county board of education approval. The bill otherwise closely conforms to existing regulatory and MPSSAA standards for the number of contests in a season.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1429 of 2020.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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