



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 230917

Introduced December 7, 2023

Councilmember Thomas

RESOLUTION

Calling on the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association to remedy discrepancies in athletic eligibility and team classification caused by the placement formula known as the "Competitive Balance Rule."

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) is a statewide interscholastic sports and athletics governing body comprising 12 districts. Philadelphia is represented by PIAA District XII; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, the PIAA instituted a policy that students transferring from one school who were eligible for more than 50 percent of the season would not be eligible to play for their new school; and

WHEREAS, There are exceptions for this policy, such as a school or court-ordered transfer, transfer due to military and employment, or demonstrable change of income, but the duties of management, logging, and tracking such transfers are delegated to the Principal of a school, not a Superintendent, Athletic Director, Coach, or School Board Director; and

WHEREAS, Further, "demonstrable" and "hardship" are not clearly defined terms whose meanings are largely up to the discretion of individual administrators. This introduces an issue in enforcement of PIAA rules because enforcement is largely dependent on individual ability and effort of that Principal, thus creating a patchwork of policy and practice from one school to the next; and

WHEREAS, The PIAA's "Competitive-Balance Rule" dictates that teams that accumulate six or more "success points" in the current two-year cycle are eligible for promotion if they also reach the transfer threshold for that period. If a 6A team accumulates a high number of transfers and goes to a championship game, their points increase but they have no other classification to be placed in, creating a large talent gap in the middle divisions, making those teams move up in the classification formula difficult. Likewise, a smaller school with open enrollment, for example,

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 230917 continued

can receive a high number of transfers and be forced to move up a classification despite their talent levels not matching their respective classification requirements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we call on the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association to remedy discrepancies in athletic eligibility and team classification caused by the placement formula known as the “Competitive Balance Rule.”