

**H.A.P.S.**  
**Houston Area Private Schools**  
**Bylaws**

(Updated 11/29/18)

## **SECTION 1**

### **Houston Area Private Schools (HAPS)**

HAPS is a group of member schools in and around the Houston area who have collectively agreed to enter into association for the purpose of providing a sports league for middle school athletics.

### **HAPS Mission Statement**

The purpose of this organization is to provide an organizational framework between member private schools that promotes safety, fairness, good sportsmanship, and developmentally appropriate competition in middle school athletics.

### **HAPS Values**

1. A safe environment is, above all else, the most important goal to those involved and peripheral to competition.
2. Positive sportsmanship should be promoted for all participants, coaches, and fans.
3. Member schools, their values, and their ultimate success are held dearly important. It is the vision of HAPS to promote the well-being and success of member schools.

## **SECTION 2**

### **HAPS Full Membership**

Inaugural membership into HAPS include the following schools:

Conroe Covenant Christian  
Houston Cypress Christian School  
Houston Northland Christian<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>  
Huntsville Alpha Omega  
Katy Faith West Academy  
Magnolia Legacy Christian School  
Spring Providence Classical School  
The Woodlands Christian Academy  
The Woodlands Methodist School (2018-19)  
Tomball Rosehill Christian

### **HAPS Partial Membership**

Founders Christian School

### **SECTION 3**

#### **By-Laws**

The HAPS Bylaws will be reviewed annually by the Executive Board. Any change in the bylaws must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the membership.

#### **Quorum**

For any decision to be rendered, a quorum is required. This is defined as 60% of those eligible to vote. There are no votes in absentia.

### **SECTION 4**

#### **HAPS Continuing Membership Requirements**

All member schools must:

1. Be private or parochial schools. Schools must primarily be supported by a non-government agency or through tuition.
2. Be in good standing with the financial obligations of the league.
3. Submit an annual "School Profile Form" and seasonal "Commitment Form".
4. Provide a minimum of one staff member to serve as the delegate between the school and league. The delegate will be required to vote on league decisions and act as the official point of contact between the league and school.
5. Provide adequate facilities and approved officials fit to host games, teams, and fans for all home competitions.
6. Make a good faith effort to compete in the HAPS league play in those sports the school sponsors and the league facilitates. The only exception to this is for Partial Member schools. For these schools, a good faith effort should be made to compete in those individual sports offered by the league.
7. Ensure that every home game is played at a site with a liability insurance policy covering the facilities and all participants, coaches, and spectators.

#### **Full and Partial Membership**

Members of HAPS will be considered Full Members or Partial Members.

1. Full Membership
  - A. Schools designated as Full Members may elect to participate in any of the activities offered by the league. This includes both team and individual

competition categories.

- B. Schools designated as Full Members will be invited to attend general membership meetings and will have voting privileges.
  - C. Schools designated as Full Members may have its designees serve on the HAPS executive board.
2. Partial Membership
- A. Schools designated as Partial Members in HAPS may elect to participate in any of the individual sport activities offered by the league. This includes boys and girls Cross Country, Golf, and Track and Field. They will not be allowed to participate for league championships in team sports.
  - B. Schools designated as Partial Members will be invited to attend league general meetings but will not having voting privileges.
  - C. Schools designated as Partial Members will not have its designees serve on the HAPS Executive Board.
  - D. Other than the exceptions listed above, Partial Member schools will be expected to perform and provide all of those items outlined in the HAPS Continuing Membership Requirements and HAPS By-laws.

### **New Membership into HAPS**

- 1. Schools wishing to gain inclusion into HAPS must meet the expectations as outlined by the Executive Board. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - A. Providing information regarding previous participation.
  - B. School administration attending a meeting with the Executive Board.
- 2. The addition of any new schools into HAPS require a majority of the Executive Board and a 2/3 approval from the membership.
- 3. All new schools will be admitted on a probationary period. Following this first year, the Executive Board will evaluate the school's participation history and make recommendations to the membership concerning further inclusion in HAPS.

### **Leaving HAPS**

- 1. Schools who leave HAPS for any reason will not be allowed to re-apply for entrance into the league for a period no less than two (2) full school years.

### **SECTION 5**

## **HAPS Executive Board**

1. The Executive Board consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Boys Coordinator, and Girls Coordinator. On a single year prior to a President's term ending, there will be a President-Elect position. Only official school delegates are able to serve on the Executive Board. Only one delegate per school can serve on the board at any given time.
2. Each position will be elected by a simple majority of the membership. Nominations can be made by the membership during the spring meeting. If an officer leaves his/her school during this time, a new election will be held to determine the replacement.
3. Each board position will be subject to only serving one term at each position before stepping aside or moving into another role.
  - A. President – Four (4) year terms. Starts in 2015 and ends in 2019. (Randy Hollas)
  - B. Vice President – Three (3) year terms. Starts in 2018 and ends in 2021. (Anthony Davis)
  - C. Secretary – Two (2) year terms. Starts in 2017 and ends in 2019. (Carolyn Lemm)
  - D. Girls Coordinator – Two (2) year terms. The inaugural position will serve a three (3) year term so as to stagger board turnover. Starts in 2018 and ends in 2020. (Clint McDonald)
  - E. Boys Coordinator – Two (2) year terms. Starts in 2017 and ends in 2019. (Diane Severson)
  - F. President Elect – One (1) year terms. This position only exists during the year prior to the President finishing his/her term. The President Elect will then step into the role of President the following year. Starts in 2018 and ends in 2019. (Dana Bass)
4. The Executive Board will fulfill the following responsibilities:
  - A. Determine conference divisions if necessary.
  - B. Determine league calendar dates. This includes playing dates, championship/tournament dates, commitment dates, league completion deadlines, etc.
  - C. Reviews the additions and/or subtractions of sports from the league.

- D. Select sites to host end of season tournaments and playoffs.
- E. Determine league play structure and post-season structure (e.g. double elimination vs. single elimination)
- F. Make decisions and resolve conflicts as they are brought to the committee.
- G. Review new member school applications and make recommendations to the membership regarding their inclusion.
- H. Set fees for membership per sport.
- I. Adopts league standards for awards and end of season honors.
- J. Sets the official league rules pertaining to each sport.

#### 4. Board Position Responsibilities

- A. President
  - i. Acts as the general communicator for the league. Communicates general league news, meeting dates, and decisions by the Executive Board.
  - ii. Sets the agenda for all Executive Board meetings as well as General Member meetings.
  - iii. Presides over all General Membership Meetings and Executive Board Meetings.
  - iv. Selects sites for all meetings.
- B. Vice-President
  - i. Serves as the President in his/her absence.
  - ii. Coordinates the scheduling of all league and post-season play.
  - iii. Coordinates information updates on the league website.
- C. Secretary
  - i. Serves as the official record keeper for the league. This includes meeting minutes, decisions, past-winners, and any other pertinent information.

- ii. Posts meeting minutes on the league website.
- iii. Annually updates the contact list for the league and school delegates.
- iv. Monitors the adherence of the group to the established By-Laws.
- v. In the event that both the President and Vice-President are unable to perform their duties, the Secretary will serve as President.

D. Boys Coordinator

- i. Communicates the league schedules, end of season schedules (brackets), and official league standings to the membership of the league.
- ii. Annually reviews the league rules of each boys sport and makes recommendations for changes.
- iii. Works with the Vice-President on setting league schedules for boys sports.
- iv. Keeps up to date league standings and coordinates win-loss percentages for boys sports.

E. Girls Coordinator

- i. Communicates the league schedules, end of season schedules (brackets), and official league standings to the membership of the league.
- ii. Annually reviews the league rules of each girls sport and makes recommendations for changes.
- iii. Works with the Vice-President on setting league schedules for the girls sports.
- iv. Keeps up to date league standings and coordinates win-loss percentages for girls sports.

F. President-Elect

- i. Assists the President in most matters in order to effectively train for subsequent years of service.

- ii. Attends all meetings of the Executive Board and has voting privileges.
5. Should any circumstance happen in which a decision must be rendered by the Executive Board concerning a school represented by a member of the Executive Board, that said member will abstain themselves from both the discussion and or vote.
6. Should a circumstance happen in which there is a tie on any Executive Board decision, a vote will take place with the membership delegates.
7. The Executive Board will be subject to the following limitations:
  - A. The Executive Board may not dismiss a school from participation in the league without a 2/3 majority of the general membership.
  - B. The Executive Board may not approve admission of a new school to the league without a 2/3 majority of the general membership.
8. Official league business must commence either in person or in phone conference.

## **SECTION 6**

### **Athlete Eligibility Standards**

1. All athletes must be full-time attending students at the HAPS member school.
2. No student should be more than 14 years of age on September 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year in which they play.
3. Academic eligibility policies are left to each individual school.
  - A. All students should fall under the same policy at the member school.
  - B. No favor should be shown toward any one athlete in regards to school policy.
4. Athletes who are ejected from a contest will be subject to a 1 game suspension in the next regularly scheduled conference game or contest.
5. Athletes are eligible for only one level of play.
  - A. When numbers warrant, athletes may be brought up a level to serve on the bench or play if they have communicated this to their opponent prior to the contest. However, athletes should not be moved down a level unless agreed upon by member schools in advance.



- B. Schools should faithfully protect the integrity of levels of play.
6. Students who transfer to member schools after September 1 must wait 14 calendar days before participating in official HAPS competitions. This does not include non-HAPS contests.
  7. Students can only play in the end of season tournaments if they have been playing with the team for one-half of the scheduled HAPS league games. The only exception are students whose participation with the team has been limited due to injury or grades.
  8. Schools found by the Executive Board to have used an ineligible player will forfeit all games in which the player participated.
  9. When gender is established in a sport, only that gender is allowed to participate on those teams.

## **SECTION 7**

### **Participation Fees**

1. HAPS is a community of like-minded schools who voluntarily associate with each other in sport competition. The fees associated with league are meant to only pay for the use of facilities for end of season competition, awards, and any publications related to website and marketing.
2. The Executive Board will set all sport fees based on criteria developed by the Executive Board and communicated to member schools during the spring meeting.
3. Fees will be paid to member schools who host the end of season events or who produce publications.
4. Schools will be required to pay fees based on the fee schedule set by the Executive Board. No school will be allowed to participate in any end of season HAPS competition until the fees have been paid.

## **SECTION 8**

### **Intent and Commitment Guidelines**

1. Each spring, member schools will complete an “Intent to Play: Non-Binding” form outlining those sports the school intends to field in the upcoming year. The

deadline for submitting this form will be provided by the Executive Board. Schools should make a good faith effort to provide accurate numbers for participation in all levels.

2. Prior to each season, there will be an “Intent to Play: Binding” form. Each school will be required to submit this form by the deadline set by the Executive Board to be included in league play.

## **SECTION 9**

### **Sanctions**

1. Schools that found to be in violation of any portion of the bylaws or other action deemed unbecoming of the league will face sanctions set by the Executive Board. This includes, but not limited to, the following possible actions:
  - A. Private reprimand.
  - B. Public reprimand.
  - C. Financial sanctions to the end of season host.
  - D. Restrictions from current or future end of season participation.
  - E. Restrictions of membership privileges.
  - F. Mandatory meeting of school administration with the Executive Board.
  - G. Actions deemed necessary by the Executive Board for future inclusion in the league.
  - H. Dismissal from the league. This must be approved by 2/3 majority of the membership.
2. Member schools will make every attempt to be accommodating to the circumstances regarding conflicts to league dates. When there is a conflict, member schools should communicate effectively well in advance of the date(s) in question. If this does not resolve the issue, an appeal to the Executive Board should be made in advance of the date(s) in question.
3. Schools that fail to show up for individual games may face the same sanctions as listed in section 1 above.
4. Schools who fail to play their scheduled contests by the league completion deadlines will be subject to sanctioning by the Executive Board.

5. Any coach ejected from a contest will serve a one (1) game suspension for the next HAPS scheduled contest. The President must be notified of the ejection immediately following the contest.

## **SECTION 10**

### **Levels of Play**

1. The levels of play are as follows:  
  
“Division I” – primarily 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.  
  
“Division II” – primarily 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders.  
  
“Division III” – primarily 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. No 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
2. Schools may elect to have more than one team per division with the exception of Division I. Only one team per school may play in Division I. If a school has more than one team in a Division, those two teams would operate and be scheduled as competing teams. (i.e. They would have to play each other in league and tournament play.)
3. The Executive Board may elect to suspend divisions in favor of other methods of organization when warranted by the number of teams participating. (e.g. softball only has one division)
4. Athletes may only play in one division per day and end-of-season tournament. Athletes who participate in more than two (2) games at the highest division must play at that division or higher for the rest of the year, including the end-of-season tournament.  
  
(e.g. Ashley plays 3 games in division II volleyball and 2 games in division I volleyball. Upon Ashley’s next appearance as a player at a Division I volleyball game, she will be considered a division I volleyball player for the duration of the season and may not appear any more as a division II athlete in volleyball.)  
  
**Definition of Participate:** To participate in a game means to sit on the bench as an eligible player or play in a game.
5. The intent of the divisional play involves developmentally appropriate competition. Schools should remain faithful to the intent of the divisional play when forming teams and entering into divisions.
6. Schools may elect to provide two teams for any division with the exception of Division I.

7. In any particular team sport, schools that only field one team must compete at the Division I level unless prior consent has been given from the Executive Board.

## **SECTION 11**

### **Season Guidelines**

1. Season competition dates are set by the Executive Board each spring. They are finalized when the “Commitment Forms” are submitted.
2. Schools that elect to compete at a certain level of play make an inherent commitment to play in the end of season competition. Failure to participate in the end of season tournament will result in outcomes outlined in the “Sanctions” section.
3. Home teams are responsible for arranging and paying an adequate number of approved officials.
4. Gate fees should not exceed \$6 for adults and \$4 for children per day. Children who are not yet in elementary school should not be charged admission.
5. The home team will provide an administrator on duty for all games. This person will be an employee of the school.
6. A round robin format will be adopted for league play. If regional divisions are adopted, accommodations will take this into account.
7. League games have scheduling priority over non-league games.
8. League standings will be determined first by win-loss percentage in league play. The next tie-breaker is head to head competition amongst tied teams/individuals. Finally, each tie breaker is determined per sport and contained in the sport specific portion of the Bylaws.
9. All regular season league games will be completed by a deadline established by the Executive Board. Schools who have not completed their regular season by this time will be subject to sanctioning by the Executive Board.

### **End of Season Guidelines**

1. Any end of season competitions are held at Executive Board approved locations.
2. Officials should be TASO unless approved by the Executive Board.
3. All teams participating in divisional play are expected to compete in the end of season competitions regardless.

4. Fees should be paid to the member schools hosting the events. No team will be allowed to compete unless all fees have been paid.
5. Member schools receiving the fees (hosting end of season competitions) shall be responsible for purchasing league approved awards. These should be given to the winners at the immediate conclusion of the end of season competition.
6. Team awards will be given to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers at the conclusion of the end of season competitions in each division. The size, shape, and nature of each award must conform to league guidelines as established by the Executive Board.
7. Individual event awards will be given to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers in each division. The size, shape and nature of each award must conform to league guidelines as established by the Executive Board.

### **Protests**

1. There are no protests of contests after the conclusion of the competition. The only exception to this is due to player eligibility.
2. Prior to a contest, a protest may be made in writing to the President. This must happen no later than 24 hours prior to a contest.

## **SECTION 12**

### **League Meetings**

1. The membership will provide a minimum of one (1) delegate to attend a spring, fall, and winter general meeting. Schools not in attendance will be subject to sanctions as deemed fit by the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Board will meet separately from the general membership during the spring and fall. In addition, the Executive Board will commit to meet (either in person or via phone conference) for events requiring a decision.

## **SECTION 13**

### **Sport Offerings**

1. The following sports will be offered for competition to member schools:
  - A. Fall Sports – Girls Volleyball, Boys Cross Country, Girls Cross Country
  - B. Winter Sports – Basketball (Boys), Girls Basketball, Soccer (Boys), Girls Soccer

- C. Spring Sports – Baseball (Boys), Girls Softball, Boys Track, Girls Track, Boys Golf, Girls Golf
- 2. Additions to the sport offerings will represent a change in the Bylaws and require a 2/3 majority vote by the membership and Executive Board.
- 3. Team Sports will be defined as follows: Girls Volleyball, Basketball, Girls Basketball, Soccer, Girls Soccer, Baseball, and Girls Softball.
- 4. Individual Sports will be defined as follows: Girls Cross Country, Boys Cross Country, Girls Track, and Boys Track.