

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015**

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**HOUSE BILL 572**

Short Title: Study HS Interscholastic Athletics. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Whitmire, Blackwell, Dobson, and Ford (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.*

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

April 6, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE CURRENT  
ADMINISTRATION OF HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS BY THE NORTH CAROLINA  
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Establishment. – There is established a Legislative Commission to Study the Current Administration of High School Athletics by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA).

**SECTION 2.** Membership. – The Commission shall be composed of 12 members as follows:

- (1) Six members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, to include:
  - a. A representative of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
  - b. A person recommended by NCHSAA.
  - c. A high school athletic coach or athletic director.
  - d. A representative of the Matthew Gfeller Sport-Related Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center at The University of North Carolina.
  - e. A representative of the North Carolina Athletic Trainers Association.
  - f. A parent of a high school student athlete whose school is placed by NCHSAA in the same classification as member schools with fifty percent (50%) or more students.
- (2) Six members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to include:
  - a. A representative of North Carolina's school district superintendents.
  - b. A person recommended by NCHSAA.
  - c. A principal of a high school (i) that is classified 1A or 2A by NCHSAA and (ii) that is in the same classification as member schools with fifty percent (50%) or more students.
  - d. A principal of a high school (i) that is classified 3A or 4A by NCHSAA and (ii) that is in the same classification as member schools with fifty percent (50%) or more students.
  - e. A physician specializing in sports medicine.
  - f. A parent of a high school student athlete whose school (i) participates in NCHSAA and (ii) has fewer than 400 students.



1 The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate one member as  
2 cochair, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall designate one member as cochair.  
3 The Commission shall meet upon the call of the chairs. A quorum of the Commission shall be  
4 seven members. Any vacancy on the Commission shall be filled by the appointing authority.

5 **SECTION 3. Duties.** – The Commission shall study the following matters related  
6 to North Carolina's high school competitive athletic activities:

- 7 (1) The adequacy of the current conference classification system under which  
8 schools that have access to athletes from other North Carolina counties and  
9 even other states compete with schools whose student athletes must reside in  
10 a single school attendance area, and whether the classification system should  
11 apply a multiplier to the number of students at schools with greater access to  
12 athletes to place them in a higher classification.
- 13 (2) Formulation of a playoff system that caps the student population of schools  
14 in the smallest conference at 400 students to ensure that the number of  
15 students in the schools of each conference, except for the largest one and  
16 smallest one, varies no more than thirty-five percent (35%).
- 17 (3) The need to classify schools into up to eight classifications to ensure safety  
18 and competitive balance.
- 19 (4) The need to minimize the number of split-classification conferences.
- 20 (5) The current appeals process for schools to challenge classification and  
21 conference assignments, and whether schools should be permitted to appeal  
22 their placement at all steps of the process, including its finalization.
- 23 (6) Safety issues for student athletes from a high school with a small student  
24 population playing in the same conference as a high school with a large  
25 student population because of the limited pool of players, including:
  - 26 a. Reduced rest time for students during play.
  - 27 b. Injuries from contact sports when students are matched incompatibly  
28 with opposing players.
- 29 (7) Alternative methods of classifying schools and assigning those schools to  
30 conferences to improve statewide student participation and safety in  
31 competitive athletic activities.
- 32 (8) Means to improve officiating, including (i) increased flexibility among  
33 member schools to select officials from more than one association based on  
34 availability, geographic proximity, and preference and (ii) an opportunity for  
35 schools to evaluate and rate the performance of officials.
- 36 (9) The ability of participating schools to change the procedures governing high  
37 school athletics, and whether the current requirement that seventy-five  
38 percent (75%) of all members vote for a change is appropriate.
- 39 (10) The need to amend G.S. 115C-12(23), which is the General Statute that  
40 controls the relationship between the North Carolina State Board of  
41 Education and the organization it designates to apply and enforce State rules  
42 governing participation in interscholastic athletic activities at the high school  
43 level.

44 **SECTION 4. Compensation; Administration.** – Members of the Commission shall  
45 receive subsistence and travel allowances at the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6,  
46 as appropriate. With the prior approval of the Legislative Services Task Force, the Legislative  
47 Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the  
48 Commission. With the prior approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Commission  
49 may hold its meetings in the State Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The  
50 Commission may also meet at various locations around the State in order to promote greater  
51 public participation in its deliberations. The Commission, while in the discharge of its official

1 duties, may exercise all the powers provided under the provisions of G.S. 120-19 and  
2 G.S. 120-19.1 through G.S. 120-19.4, including the power to request all officers, agents,  
3 agencies, and departments of the State to provide any information, data, or documents within  
4 their possession, ascertainable from their records or otherwise available to them, and the power  
5 to subpoena witnesses.

6 **SECTION 5.** Report. – The Commission shall make a final report of its findings  
7 and recommendations to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Joint  
8 Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services on or before March 1, 2016.  
9 The Commission shall terminate upon the filing of its final report.

10 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective when it becomes law.