

# NCAA gave high schools a bigger role in basketball recruiting. Most states are abstaining.

[Samantha Pell](#)



The NCAA's revamped recruiting schedule for prospective college basketball players is bringing more uncertainty than clarity. (Anthony Geathers/The Washington Post)

When the NCAA made sweeping [policy changes in August](#) to college basketball's recruiting landscape in the wake of alleged corruption uncovered by the FBI, its stated goal was to reform the sport and reduce the leverage of outside influences on high school recruits.

Almost nine months later, there is uncertainty and confusion over how some of these NCAA rule changes are being executed. That's been particularly true in the case of one major change to the summer recruiting schedule, which put restrictions on the type of youth basketball events college coaches can attend.

The NCAA decided to eliminate July's middle evaluation period for nonscholastic events -- also known as shoe company-sponsored AAU events -- and added two weekends in June for high school federations to put on basketball tournaments. College coaches are allowed to attend these three-day scholastic-only evaluation events, with the NCAA's aim to develop and strengthen the "relationships between

college coaches and high school basketball programs," over AAU circuits.

However, only 18 out of 51 eligible state high school state associations are set to hold scholastic events in June, according to the [National Federation of State High School Associations](#) (NFHS). Concerns among the state associations that won't be hosting a showcase include Title IX issues, cost and oversight, insurance and liability questions, and uncertainty over whether college coaches will attend.

*[\[NCAA wants to clean up summer hoops. Parents, kids trust shoe companies more.\]](#)*

With the power in the hands of state high school associations to put on large recruiting events, some admit they aren't equipped to handle it.

"Our states had a choice," said Theresia Wynns, the director of sports and officials for the NFHS. "It is a voluntary situation . . . and some determined that they didn't have ample planning time and [they] will see how it goes this year and get involved next year."

The NFHS implemented and managed all aspects of the event approval process, with only NFHS-member schools allowed to participate in the scholastic events. All financial responsibility for the event is in the hands of the state association, with no third-party sponsors allowed.

In the D.C. area, the District of Columbia State Athletic Association (DCSAA) is the only state high school association that will be holding a June scholastic event. D.C.'s is a multistate event, meaning other

invited states with member-approved schools are allowed to participate.

The Virginia High School League (VHSL) will not be hosting an event due to a multitude of concerns, but will allow its member schools to participate in the D.C. event if they wish. In Maryland, area coaches have been told the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) will not be holding a June event, and are uncertain if Maryland public schools will be allowed to participate in other states' events. MPSSAA has not responded to a request for comment.

"Many concerns are shared by other state associations and a lot of them have taken the same tact," said Tom Dolan, VHSL's Associate Director in charge of compliance. "They are going to at least sit a year and see how this gets adjusted and whether they feel comfortable with moving forward after this . . . We are not saying never, but we want to see a little bit more about this, how it works and what the issues may be and get some answers about Title IX before we jump into that pool."

Dolan said that concerns over Title IX, which requires states to provide equal resources to boys' and girls' sports, were the main factor in VHSL deciding not to host an event. He was unsure that if Virginia put on a June evaluation event for boys, it would have the resources to do the same for girls.

One of the [biggest complaints](#) about the NCAA's policy change was that only NFHS-member schools are allowed to participate in June scholastic events, limiting the pool of players. With only one

association per state eligible to play, players at private schools that aren't NFHS-member schools aren't allowed. Some states, including [Texas and New York, announced in January](#) that they canceled their June events due to these restrictive rules.

Nonmember schools that wanted to host or participate in these June evaluation weekends were able to apply for an NCAA-certified event, Wynns said. An NCAA spokesperson said the governing body will start reviewing nonmember applications this week and will have an approved list on or before May 15.

The Washington Catholic Athletic Conference (WCAC) has submitted an application to host an NCAA-certified event for both weekends in June at DeMatha Catholic High School. All WCAC schools that are non-NFHS members would be eligible to participate. Gonzaga and St. John's, which are DCSAA member schools, would have to play in the D.C. event.

The DCSAA is approved to host two multistate events. The first has 10 confirmed teams, according to DCSAA director Clark Ray, with plans to include 16 teams total, and will be held June 21-23 at the Maret School.

But with this being the first year of the newly implemented NCAA recruiting rules, there is still skepticism as to how all these events will come together, how college coaches will decide to attend, and whether these scholastic tournaments are really the best way to help correct the college recruiting landscape.

"It is the first time we've been involved and we will evaluate after the period is over and make a determination of how we are going to go

about it the next year," Wynns said. "It may look different than it may look next year, but we are glad to be involved and looking forward to more states being involved."

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