

Court rules in favor of TSSAA over James Wiseman high school eligibility case

By [Yolanda Jones](#)

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James Wiseman was still playing for East High School during the TSSAA Class AAA state basketball finals game against Bearden at MTSU in Murfreesboro on March 16, 2019. (Jim Weber/Daily Memphian file)

A local chancellor has ruled in favor of the Tennessee Secondary Athletic Association regarding the eligibility of former East High players James Wiseman and Ryan Boyce.

On Oct. 3, Chancellor Jim Kyle's granted the TSSAA's motion for a summary judgment in the case, filed by Shelby County Schools, challenging the ruling that the players were ineligible.

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The ruling regarding Wiseman's high school eligibility is a separate matter from the NCAA's ruling last week that the 7-foot-1 center is "likely ineligible" to play for the University of Memphis under coach Penny Hardaway.

The TSSAA case involves Wiseman and Boyce transferring to East High, where Hardaway was the head coach. The TSSAA declared the players ineligible to play for East during the 2017-18 season based on the state's "athletic coaching link" rule. The rule was adopted by the TSSAA in 2015. That "link" stems from the pair playing for Team Penny on the AAU circuit in the summer of 2017.

Boyce previously played for Houston High in Germantown, while Wiseman was a star for Ensworth in Nashville.

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Boyce and Wiseman both are members of the Memphis Tigers team under Hardaway.

After the players were declared ineligible to play for East, Shelby County Schools sought and was granted a temporary injunction by Chancellor Kyle that allowed Boyce and Wiseman to play for the school during the 2017-18 season until the matter was settled by the court.

The TSSAA was denied summary judgment on the issue of whether it is subject to the open meetings act.

Shelby County Board of Education was granted summary judgment on the sole issue of whether the TSSAA is subject to the open meetings act.

“Further all injunctions and restraining orders granted in favor of SCBOE are dissolved,” the court ruled.

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Yolanda Jones

Yolanda Jones covers criminal justice issues and general assignment news for The Daily Memphian. She previously was a reporter at The Commercial Appeal.
