



Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>

Re: Football Realignment

1 message

Melching, Lance <lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us>
To: "Tackett, Julian" <jtackett@khsaa.org>

Fri, Dec 16, 2022 at 10:14 AM

Hello Commissioner Tackett,

I appreciate your time and feedback on these matters. At your suggestion, I have drafted a letter that I will post in the open comment section of the football reclassification form due on Dec. 21. It is my hope that these comments garner some attention from the Board of Control. I also hope that these comments help me find schools similarly affected, and that we might start some momentum to reform the classification process. I have pasted the letter below in case you would like to offer any feedback before I submit next week.

Thank you,

Organizing schools into classes should make competition between schools fairer and more competitive. Relying solely on enrollment numbers without any consideration for other factors affecting competitiveness works against this principle. The KHSAA should consider additional factors, or at the very least, create some mechanism that provides an opportunity for schools with a documented history of limited success.

The current system of classification by enrollment may work for the majority of schools, but it does not work for all. Boone County High School is one such school whose students suffer from the failures of the current classification system. The Boone County football program has had 2 district wins in the past 11 seasons, the most recent coming in 2016. In the four most recent years, the average score in district games was 41-3, meaning the games were so unbalanced that the typical game resulted in a running clock. In a sport as physical and violent as football, this also indicates an imbalance that is potentially dangerous, especially after successive weeks of lopsided district play. It should also be noted that this period has featured 3 different head coaches, all of whom were part of successful programs before or after their time leading Boone County.

And yet the current classification document lists Boone County as the 7th largest school in the proposed class 5A. Why would a school near the top of its class in enrollment experience so much adversity for such a prolonged period? The answer is that enrollment without context does not tell the whole story. The area around Boone County High School has grown dramatically over the last five decades, but in the last 30 years, that growth has increasingly been outside of Florence. Conner in Hebron (opened in 1970), Ryle in Union (1992), and Cooper in Union (2008) have been the beneficiaries of this growth since 1990. And while Boone County High School's enrollment is within roughly 100 students of Conner and Cooper, those numbers again do not tell the whole story. According to KDE school report card information

from 2021-22, 54.3% of the Boone County High School student body was eligible for free and reduced lunch compared to an average of 28.9% among the other three high schools in the same district. The number of Boone students eligible this year is currently 57.1%, continuing the trend of an increasing percentage of students at Boone County High School facing the challenges of income insecurity and the accompanying barriers to participation in school activities. Examining the number of students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) paints a similar picture. These students are often first or second-generation immigrants, and they face additional barriers to participation in school activities. According to KDE school report card information from 2021-22, 13.7% of the Boone County High School student body was identified as ELL compared to an average of 3.3% among the other three high schools in the same district. In the current school year, the number of Boone County High School students labeled as ELL has increased to 14.5%, continuing a trend.

Considering the trends, it is difficult to imagine a scenario where Boone County High School can be competitive in a district derived exclusively from raw enrollment numbers with no regard for context or prior success. Certainly there are other schools across the state similarly handicapped when they are judged by enrollment without any consideration for their own unique situation. If it is the goal of the KHSAA to make competition between schools fairer and more competitive, the KHSAA must consider additional factors in classification, or at the very least, create some mechanism that provides an opportunity for schools with a documented history of limited success.

LANCE MELCHING

Athletic Director
English & Journalism Teacher
Swim & Dive Team Coach
Boone County High School
lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us
p. (859) 282-5655 ext. 30518
f. (859) 282-5653
Boone County Athletics Website

From: Melching, Lance <lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us>

Sent: Monday, December 12, 2022 10:32 AM

To: Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>

Subject: Re: Football Realignment

Hello Commissioner Tackett,

I would like to speak with you this week for 10 minutes or so about football redistricting if you are available. Some of the questions I have follow:

- How likely is a 6-team district? If we have a 6-team district, the district weeks would be 6-10, correct?
- What options will we have to make a case for ourselves once the draft districts are released? My understanding is that the only options are to ask to be moved to another district in the same class, and the typical argument is simply geographical, nothing else.
- What advice do you have for Boone County through this process and moving further forward?

Thanks!

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From: Melching, Lance <lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us>
Sent: Thursday, December 8, 2022 7:56 AM
To: Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>
Subject: Re: Football Realignment

I can schedule something today before 10:30 a.m. or between 1 and 2:30 p.m.

LANCE MELCHING

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p. (859) 282-5655 ext. 30518
f. (859) 282-5653
Boone County Athletics Website

From: Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 8, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Melching, Lance <lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us>
Subject: Re: Football Realignment

EXTERNAL MESSAGE

Let me know if you have some time today

On Tue, Dec 6, 2022 at 9:38 AM Melching, Lance <lance.melching@boone.kyschools.us> wrote:

Hello Commissioner Tackett,

I imagine you're getting many e-mails on this topic. I was hoping I could briefly discuss realignment with you ahead of the Dec. 21 deadline to submit a request to either play up or withdraw.

Thanks!

LANCE MELCHING

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English & Journalism Teacher
Swim & Dive Team Coach
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Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Today's Challenge - Be a Leader!

"Ultimately, a genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus. And on some positions cowardice asks the question is it safe? Expediency asks the question is it politics? Vanity asks the question is it popular? The conscience asks the question is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor politics nor popular but he must do it because conscience tells him it is right." —Dr. Martin Luther King

Julian Tackett, Commissioner

Primary Sports Event Contact- Boys and Girls State Basketball, Football

Playing Rules Interpreter – Basketball, Football

jtackett@khsaa.org

859-299-5472 (phone)

@jtackettkhsaa



#ShotatSports