

Pull Down to Select School Bethlehem High School

Name of Administrator (Principal/AD) Submitting this information Gilly Simpson

Position of Administrator Designated Representative / Athletic Director

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Withdrawal from district competition

Does this school desire to withdraw from postseason competition for the period of 2027 and 2028? No

Other General Commentary Including any geographic placement suggestions

Please mention any other desired comments on behalf of your school: On behalf of Bethlehem High School, I am submitting the following response to the recently announced 2027 and 2028 Football Reclassification plan. As you know, Bethlehem High School is a Christ-centered college preparatory school built upon Catholic teachings. Utilizing the 1.35 multiplier, which forms the basis for the reclassification plan, Bethlehem High School is to move up to Class AA for the 2027 and 2028 football seasons. Bethlehem High School was one of eight private schools which is to be reclassified based on the multiplier. The reclassification plan is deficient and problematic on several grounds:
1. The Board of Control has articulated that the motivation behind the use of the multiplier is to “level the playing field” between private and public schools due to the perceived advantage private schools have in recruiting student-athletes regardless of a student’s residence. If this is the true motivation for the use of the multiplier, the reclassification plan must apply the multiplier to independent city schools, which utilize open enrollment and/or allow non-resident students to attend

with the payment of tuition. As such, for purposes of the reclassification plan and the application of the multiplier, there should be no distinction between a private school and an independent city school. To my knowledge, the Board of Control has not articulated any difference between private schools and independent city schools, yet it has decided not to apply the multiplier to independent city schools. The result is an arbitrary application of the multiplier.

2. The 1.35 multiplier was seemingly developed in 2000 by the Alabama Athletic Association, which had as its source so-called “eligible athletic rolls” in Alabama which indicated to the AAA that the athletic participation rate among private schools was 35% higher than that in public schools. The Board of Governors, in developing its reclassification plan, has not relied on any studies of Kentucky schools and certainly has not demonstrated a disparity of participation rates between private and public schools. Instead, the Board of Governors has relied on a study conducted by an athletic association of another state (the similarities of which to Kentucky athletics have not been articulated) and which was conducted twenty six years ago. The action by the Board of Governors to institute an enrolment multiplier in Kentucky applicable to only private schools, without reference to the applicability or timeliness of the AAA statistics and based merely on the Board of Governor’s statement that the multiplier has passed undescribed court cases (without further explanation of the legal arguments previously made or holdings made) appears, at best, to be arbitrary, capricious, and without a reasonable basis.

3. Of even greater significance to the Bethlehem High School community, of the eight private schools which will be impacted by the 2027-28 multiplier, seven are religiously affiliated. Therefore, the application of the multiplier will have a disparate impact on religiously affiliated schools. This fact alone will form the basis for a legal challenge to the application of the multiplier, and will likely result in Board of Control’s action being held to be in violation of law. Compounding any defense the Board of Control may present is the fact secular independent city schools have not been subject to the multiplier.

In light of the above, we request that the Board of Control “table”

the 2027 and 2028

Football Reclassification plan, at this time, so that it can spend more time studying this issue, seeking further input from constituents and formulating a plan that truly and fairly addresses any perceived inequities in the current structure of KHSAA football.

Thank you for your consideration of this submittal.