

**WVSSAC Series 3: Provisions Governing Contests**

**Comment Log**

**Comment Period: May 9, 2017 through June 10, 2019**

<u>Action</u>	<u>Type</u>
N: No Response	- Negative
NA: Not Accepted	+ Positive
A: Accepted	o Neutral

DATE	INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATION	COMMENTS	ACTION/TYPE	RATIONALE
<b>§127-3-4.1 All Star Participation</b>				
2019-05-23 08:38:47	Parent Man High Man WV	I think as long as a kid is elected to participate in an all star game then that kid should have to the right to take part in as many contests as they are allowed. If their college has no issue with it then why punish the kid and tell him that he can only take part in x-amount of all star games.	A/-	
<b>§127-3-6.6 Coaches</b>				
2019-05-09 19:28:11	Tim Bongiovanni High School Volunteer Charles Town WV	<p>Allow volunteers to coach at a secondary school even though they coach a travel sport of the same grade or grade lower. Under certain conditions it can still maintain the integrity of providing no bias to certain players. The conditions are outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A coach that coaches at the same grade or one grade behind for a travel team is not allowed to be a head coach for a school team.</li> <li>2. The coach must be a volunteer</li> <li>3. The volunteer coach should not get paid</li> <li>3. The volunteer coach is not allowed to have input into the school team selection</li> </ol>	NA/-	

4. The volunteer coach must go thru all the State mandated certification training (if they are not a teacher)

The fact that a coach who coaches travel teams is oftentimes is a more qualified coach then the school coach, not all the time but some of the time. Sometimes the school coach is a teacher that coaches because they need the extra money and the schools know that. So they are usually selected to coach. But if you allow the travel coach to help coach it helps the players learn proper techniques, prevents injury, and it can also help the teacher that is coaching to learn from them. If they are allowed to volunteer you will know they are really there to help all players and coaches, not groom travel ball players if it is approved with the above conditions.

Just to identify what our surrounding states does when it comes to this:

Virginia has a rule where you can coach up to 50% of your travel team IF they go to the same school that you coach at.

Maryland has a rule where you can coach up to 60% of your travel team IF they go to the same school that you coach at.

Pennsylvania does not have any rule in place to prevent this

Travel sports are everywhere and the state is assuming that players will leave their travel teams to join a coach at a different club. There are several variables that are taken into account when it comes to that assumption:

		<p>1. The players love the travel club they play for and most time it is in a different school district.</p> <p>2. Commuting: Travel players travel oftentimes up to an hour to go to a specific travel club. There are rules in place that prevents transferring of players to different high schools</p> <p>Bottom line if a coach wants to volunteer at the school level they should be allowed to. All they want to do is help players get better and this rule is preventing this from happening.</p>		
		<b>§127-3-9.6. Coaches</b>		
		None		
		<b>§127-3-9.6n Game Officials</b>		
2019-05-10 14:48:03	Eddie Summerlin State sports follower Romney WV	Possibly pay the Refs more money to get more of them interested in Refereeing.	NA/o	
		<b>§127-3-9.7 Game Officials</b>		
		<b>§127-3-10 Classification</b>		
2019-05-10 09:15:45	Sean Meddings Teacher/Parent Wayne County BOE Genoa WV	I am in total agreement with the four class proposal. I am glad that the WVSSAC is finally seeing that something has to be done with competitive balance for sports in this state. I think the way they broke this down is the most fair way to do this. Thank You WVSSAC for doing this proposal for the small public schools around this state.	A/+	

2019-05-10 09:19:56	Aaron Smith Parent Winfield WV	This is PROFILING based on wealth. One of the most irresponsible rules ever. Get ready for the Law suits. Making Winfield High School with 800 students move from AA to AAA to face schools with 2000 students. ASININE!	A/-	
019-05-10 09:21:17	Brian Batman Head Football Coach Buffalo High School Buffalo WV	I coach football at one of the schools effected by this proposal. My football team would be negatively affected by this proposal. The school will have to play against other schools who have twice the enrollment. And while I understand that it will happen in other divisions, my school only has 300 kids from which to choose, while bigger schools have more kids from which to choose. There are several school that this proposal will not effect at all, so their opinion should be ruled invalid. The opinions that should be considered would be the schools that are impacted, either positively or negatively. I realize that whenever change is made, there are always people who are unhappy. But speaking from a small West Virginia community, my school will suffer in all athletics. Also, the school I teacher at will also be effected. Since we have been in the big class before, we have seen the effect of this. Playing in the higher class will decrease participation, decrease support, and negatively impact our student culture. I urge you to reconsider this proposal and vote no, for it will effect 2 communities that I spend time in on a daily basis.		
2019-05-10 09:24:08	Paul Huston Principal Long Drain School Metz WV	Great way to make things competitive. Pilot is a great option to see if will work. I strongly urge approval.	A/+	
2019-05-10 09:25:31	Shawn Gillispie Attorney Winfield WV	The classification proposal from the WVSSAC is unreasonable and patently unfair to many schools, but especially Winfield High School. This would move Winfield, who has an enrollment of 812 from AA to 4A is ridiculous. It would absolutely cause a collapse of Winfields athletic programs, cause further transfers from students, and would hurt a community that has long supported its kids in athletics and academics. Basing class certification on anything other than enrollment numbers, as it has always been done, is wrong. Using social status, income variations and other economic and social factors is not how this should be done (and honestly is	A/-	

probably not legal). While the SSAC and media state this is a "trial" run for basketball only, everyone knows that is not the case as all sports will move with this once that "trial" is over. Winfield would be asked to compete in the highest classification with schools having enrollments nearing 2000. Winfield would be the smallest, by far, school in the new classification. Winfield would also be the only school to jump two classifications, not because of enrollment numbers, but because of our economic factors, which is wrong and potentially illegal. Using median household income of the county and the number of students on free or reduced lunch has nothing to do with the athletic programs. While I understand that the SSAC is trying to reign in the private schools, this proposal severely hurts many public schools. To reiterate, if you pass the WVSSACs proposal regarding classification based on the factors alleged, it is wrong and will, no doubt, lead to litigation in the near future as it is based on social standing, economic factors, population and prying into private information regarding students on free or reduced lunch, none of which is information relevant to the WVSSAC or athletics. I hope you will see through this attempt by the WVSSAC and vote this proposal down. Sincerely, Shawn C. Gillispie.

I ask that you vote in opposition to this proposal. The students of Winfield High including my child who currently attends and my child who will attend would be negatively effected by this proposal. Winfield High and Buffalo High are both being negatively effected by this proposal due to their location in Putnam County. Winfield High would move up to 2 classes and there would be a large difference in student numbers between them and the next closest school in 4A. While other schools with larger enrollments would still remain in 3A. Buffalo High School would move to 2A and has less than 400 students. While Putnam County has prosperous areas in its county not every student that attends these school have the ability to access the extra training that is part of the reason behind the economic part of the equation. To ask Winfield and Buffalo High to compete with schools that have over double their enrollment is unfair to the students. Since being in the current 2A classification Winfield High has not dominated in every sport but has been competitive with its football team making the playoffs twice. Its girls and boys

2019-05-10 09:31:21

Kimberly Sayre  
Hometown WV

A/-

		<p>basketball team each make the state playoffs once. Its cheerleaders being state champions once and state runner-up once. Girls tennis has won twice and boys tennis once. While I could continue it shows that Winfield is in the right bracket currently. If 4A would be introduced, it would then make more sense for Winfield to remain 3A because it would be competing with most of the schools it does now. Again I urge you to vote against this classification change so that the students of Winfield and Buffalo High school remain where they need to be.</p>		
2019-05-10 09:38:28	<p>Rudy Moulder Vice President Mouldagraph Corporation Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>I believe Winfield jumping from a AA to a AAAA classification is completely unreasonable. Requiring Winfield to compete against schools 2-1/2 times their size will be detrimental to our athletic programs especially (basketball, football, baseball, and softball)</p>	A/-	
2019-05-10 09:43:29	<p>Jordan Toth Head Boys Basketball Coach Shinnston West</p>	<p>I would ask that you pass the 4-class proposal and give it a try in basketball first to see the pros/cons. I believe after looking at the structure of the new classifications, this makes the most sense for the greater good of athletics in our state. There will be no reclassification that is going to be perfect and appease everyone. However, this reclassification structure really does take into account fair and balanced efforts to allow each school to have an attempt to compete against alike schools both enrollment wise and socioeconomic wise. As a coach for 15+ years, I would ask that this is given a try in our state in basketball and can be tweaked at a later date if needed.</p>	A/+	
2019-05-10 09:55:41	<p>Randy Barrett Mayor City of Winfield Winfield West</p>	<p>I'm very concerned about the new proposals that are being considered in reference to the reorganizing of the sports classes in our state. Winfield and Putnam county is the only growing county in this part of the state and what's being considered could very well stop this growth in our area. I have young families with children moving in the Winfield school district all the time because of our three schools. We are one of the safest cities in the state and the three schools within a mile of each other is second to none in WV. When the young parents move the grandparents come also to be close to their grandchildren. Winfield went to 3A a few years back and</p>	A/-	

struggled in some areas because of the large difference of student ratio compared to the larger populated schools. If this were to happen those people exploring to move or stay in Winfield has to consider the struggles of our athletes in the smallest school in a class due to medium household income and the courthouse being in the middle of the city. Really, that has nothing to do with sports. I have a good working relationship with our schools due to many things but I know they are a major source of growing our city and this isn't good for Winfield or probably many places in the state. Our state is losing population and I don't have the answers for that but adding another class to an already shrinking population makes no since at all. Thanks for your time.

Randy Barrett  
Mayor City of Winfield  
12448 Winfield Road  
Winfield, WV 25213  
304.444.9386 (C)  
304.586.2122 (O)

I very much support the 4 class classification system, but I do not like the proposed system of how the schools would be chosen and divided into the four classes. Personally I think if you are going to go with a four class system continue to divided the classes solely off of enrollment numbers alone, because I feel that will make for the most competitive balance in all sports. A prime example of this would be Winfield, in this new proposed system they would be a AAAA school because of county size and the location to the county. So they would be forced to play schools more than double their size just because of the schools location. Where as is it was a four class systems divided like the current three class system they would be playing schools much closer to their sized based off of enrollment giving the just a better chance to actually compete whether the win or lose.

2019-  
05-10  
09:56:46

Scott Fitzsimmons  
Winfield WV

A/-

<p>2019-05-10 10:15:30</p>	<p>Teacher Teacher Putnam County Schools Winfield WV</p>	<p>I believe the reclassification should not take place. This will hurt many students that are wanting to play sports for their school. The way they plan on determining how a school is classified is a terrible way to do it. This way is not fair to schools that are small but are close to the county seat. That should not be a reason to make a school move up a class because of where the school is located. This proposal will keep many students from wanting to play organized sports. We should keep the classification just like it is now. If something isn't broken, why would you need to fix it. This will only make it worse.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-05-10 10:24:08</p>	<p>Jay Hesse Teacher / Athletic director Frankfort High School Ridgeley WV</p>	<p>I would like to express my support of the proposal by the WVSSAC to change to a four-class system for basketball. As an athletic director, I believe this proposal will create more parity and create a more level playing field across all classifications.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-05-10 12:18:04</p>	<p>Kevin Robinson Golf coach Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>After reading the proposed athletic classification changes for 20-21 I would like to comment. I agree that changes need to be made in the process but I don't feel using economic and location metrics should be used to determine a school's classification. The biggest discrepancy I feel is the private schools that are allowed to recruit and pull from any area. They should be in a class by themselves.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-05-10 13:00:49</p>	<p>David Baker citizen none Bluefield WV</p>	<p>I think this is a good idea. While I realize WV is a small state the enrollment differences between the largest and the smallest schools in each class are too great. Urban private schools also have a definite competitive advantage over rural small schools. This is a good first step and a good test to see how this works out. Please pass this proposal.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-05-10 13:18:50</p>	<p>Damion Maynard Teacher WHS Winfield WV</p>	<p>I feel as a whole we agree that the re-classification that has been suggested of Winfield High School would have a negative impact on our student and teacher body as a whole. Student involvement in sports and education should be a positive influence on their lives and activities, and reclassifying Winfield into another division where the students would be pitted against other student bodies of much larger scale, may not be the most positive. Please consider this in your</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

classification. If the students are not involved in sports activities, many of them may not be engaged as well in their academic studies due to a lack of motivation.

127-3-10 would be detrimental to the students and community of Winfield High School as well as two other Putnam County Schools including Buffalo High School and Poca High School. The proposal on classifications is statistically biased and the economic and location factors are clearly penalizing Winfield High School. West Virginia simply is too small in terms of the number of high schools to have 4 classes. The problem is there are too many schools at the high end of enrollment to force schools that are much smaller to compete with. This proposal is not competitive balanced. Enrollment is the only true factor that drives competitive balance. The location score simply does not have any bearing on athletic competition. The closer you are to the county seat doesn't make you have better athletes. The proximity to a city with 10,000 does not make you have better athletes. Looking at championship history in all sports, one can see that many rural schools have a history of having better athletic programs. The economic score is discriminatory towards schools like Winfield High School because competitive balanced cannot be based on the median household income of a county. The number of free and reduced lunch students is a subjective number also as each county submits in two possible ways. If this proposal is such a good one, why are we only using boys and girls basketball for a 2 year period. Why wasn't another sport chosen? How can a proposal be passed to put a school with less than 850 students in competition with schools that have enrollments nearing 2000? The concern of this proposal is more than about athletic competition. If a school like Winfield High School with outstanding participation rate in athletics is forced to play against schools of 4A size enrollment, the school culture will be impacted negatively. Less students will participate. Less students participating means less accountability which in turn impacts, GPAs, behavior, school climate, community involvement and overall successful functioning of a school. No matter what classification system is used, the spectrum of enrollments in WV creates an issue. An issue that is only resolved by taking schools with an enrollment of 1100 and above and putting them in a classification of their own. This proposal will have a negative impact on many schools as well as athletic

A/-

2019-05-10 13:39:38  
Bruce McGrew  
Principal  
Winfield High School  
Winfield WV

		competition overall in the state of West Virginia. The potential for a school to go up two classes in classification due to factors that have nothing to do with athletics simply is not good for students.		
2019-05-10 14:12:06	Joe Douglas Sturgill Teacher/Coach John Marshall High School Moundsville WV	I believe that the classification into 4 categories should be for all sports. Football is such a mess. Martinsburg at the point and others have over 2000 students and then you have smaller AAA schools with around 1000 students. How can these two compete on a level playing field? The answer is simply they cannot.	A/-	
2019-05-10 14:48:03	Eddie Summerlin State sports follower Romney WV	I am all for the new classification and would like to see this actually take place sooner than later for all sports not just basketball but I am open for the trial period as well.	A/+	
2019-05-10 16:04:25	Steve Atkinson Winfield WV	As you know there are only so many students that play sports so why would you consider putting a 800 student school in a 4A division against much larger schools with 2,000 students??? Not even fair to the school, student body and the community. Do the right thing and what is fair to the students.	A/-	
2019-05-10 18:59:45	Sharon M. Rotenberry Winfield WV	The proposed system creating 4 athletic classes is unnecessary for WV's population. The imbalance is illustrated specifically by comparing Putnam County, (population 50,000 in 4 high schools), to neighboring Cabell County, (population 96,000 in 2 high schools). The new formula matches Winfield High (812 students) with Cabell Midland (1,900 students) and Huntington High School (1,650 students), in the same competitive class due to Winfield's position as county seat. An addendum prohibiting ANY school from moving up or down more than one class would help to prevent unintended disparity. The current three class system would be more equitable if schools not limited by geography (e.g. private schools) were positioned in the class above their class by population, due to the advantage obtained through avoidance of school district boundaries.	A/-	

<p>2019-05-11 12:51:17</p>	<p>Ann Smith Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>The reclassification being considered makes absolutely no sense. Factoring in criteria that has nothing to do with the size of a school is bizarre. A schools classification is for the purpose of having comparably sized schools competing with each other for fairness. I will also point out that schools that are designated as the hub of resources services are unfairly penalized because their enrollment is larger than it seems because students come from all over the community to attend, and the nature of the services provided mean those students do not participate in the athletic program. Winfield High School in Putnam County is one of those schools. The proposal puts Winfield competing in a classification with schools twice its size. Winfields athletes won have a fair chance because of this policy. Please reconsider and do away with criteria that has nothing to do with the size of school, such as income and do factor in student population that is not reflective of the size of the community the school serves.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-05-11 23:06:04</p>	<p>K Wolfe fairmont WV</p>	<p>changes to the classification system will bring about more equity for all schools throughout the state. this is a positive step for fairness to all schools</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-05-12 09:41:35</p>	<p>Jennifer Beam Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>Mr. Bernie Dolan, I am writing today in regards to the proposal by the State School Board to move Winfield Athletics from a Class 2A status to a Class 4A status. Clearly this is a biased and discriminatory proposal. Never before has athletic class been based on economic status. It is totally unfair in regards to competitive balance. The proposal is statically biased and economic factors are penalizing our student athletes. We would be the smallest school in a 4A Class in the state. We only have an enrollment of 812 students. How can it be fair to move us up 2 classes to compete against schools more than twice our size? I am asking the school board to please reconsider this proposal. It will be detrimental to all our sports programs and setting up our student athletes for injury and failure.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		Sincerely concerned parents, Chris and Jennifer Beam 235 Mandy Drive Scott Depot, WV 25560 740-272-0589		
2019-05-12 09:49:47	Mike Baldwin Winfield WV	We believe it's in the best interest of the kids and programs to classify schools solely based on enrollment. The new system would jeopardize healthy competition and athletic symbiosis. We want the programs to be compatible in skill and equality. This seems impossible when the enrollment and talent pool is sometimes 50% greater in other locations. This holds true for all classifications.	A/-	
2019-05-12 12:26:09	Robert Willard Winfield Wv	I support going to a 4 class system but using economic status as a classing factor is a bad idea. It will penalize school in high economic status counties because they will be forced to compete with school that have significantly more enrollment. Achievement in sports is not tied to socioeconomic status.	A/-	
2019-05-13 09:23:28	Eddie R. Dingess Signal Maintainer Norfolk Southern Corp. Fort Gay WV	I firmly agree with the 4 class proposal. With the dominance of the private schools the rural public schools need to be able to compete against schools their own size.	A/+	
2019-05-13 11:12:46	Gwen Samms Mother Buffalo HS Eleanor WV	This is too small of a school to put in AA. You tried this with Winfield with AAA and that didn't work out so why try it again with Buffalo. This isn't fair to any of our smaller schools. And proximity to county seat makes no sense. Who cares! Being close to the county seat does not make them more able to compete with larger schools!	A/-	
2019-05-13 15:46:44	Mindy Thornton Eleanor West	As a parent of 2 students at Buffalo High, I do not support the proposed reclassification of Buffalo High to a AA school. The new rating system is unfair to the Eleanor and Buffalo community as it factors in the county socio-economic status and proximity to both Charleston and Huntington. If you look at the	A/-	

		<p>socioeconomic status of the Buffalo area, you will find that the Buffalo median income is around \$40000. This is well below anywhere else in the county. This is also an area that is not heavily populated. The classification to AA would be detrimental to athletes as they would be forced to compete with schools almost twice their size and with access to multiple resources that the average student athlete at Buffalo has no access to. Student athletes at Buffalo do not need another adversity to overcome. Please reconsider the new classification process.</p>	
<p>2019-05-13 15:50:35</p>	<p>Dr John Brock Parent Buffalo Red house Wv</p>	<p>To force a school to compete in sports on a higher level of classification, when there clearly had been no significant change of incoming students not only is insured , but is discrimination!!!! To force Buffalo High School which is clearly a Single A school, to participate at the level of AA against schools that are significantly larger in enrollment, all for the sake of SPORTS is unconstitutional!!!! Example; force Buffalo High to compete football against Winfield ( which was just recently a AAA school .... is like making the superintendent of Putnam Co schools who is clearly a male in gender...wear lipstick everyday!!!!!! There are enough mental health issues with our youth these days , so your going to add fuel to the fire , and make these kids suffer and seem punished and belittled for your own pleasure? Enough is enough!!!! Let kids be kids !!! I will NOT support this ridiculous endeavor and will certainly pursue any legal action necessary to support my community!!!!</p>	<p>A/-</p>
<p>2019-05-14 00:11:17</p>	<p>Chris Baker Moundsville West</p>	<p>Four classes in some of the big sports would be a major improvement of the current system.</p> <p>For lesser sports, I would go to two classes.</p>	<p>A/+</p>
<p>2019-05-22 08:45:59</p>	<p>Jared Robertson Athletic Director Greenbrier West High School Charmco West</p>	<p>The current 3 class proposal system has proven to be outdated. With research of how states all across the nation are doing their classification, many states have adequately shown that simply classifying by enrollment does not accurately create a competitive balance for sports in schools. This issue is not something that has become a West Virginia issue, but rather a national issue. The proposed four-</p>	<p>A/+</p>

classification system for basketball gives our state a chance to be ahead of the curve and create a mathematical formula to more accurately place schools in a competitive balance atmosphere. I believe that this will be very successful and will eventually be expanded to other sports beyond just basketball.

Location is a huge advantage to schools with a closer proximity to larger populations. At Greenbrier West we are far away from any type of summer leagues, AAU programs, athletic facilities, colleges, etc. that all give opportunities for student-athletes to further their development in the off-season. We are a very rural school with limited opportunities, and to participate in any of these opportunities becomes a huge time and financial commitment to our parents. That is why the economic factor is also so important to consider. At Greenbrier West our parents realize that financial commitment it takes to get student-athletes not only to but to participate in these opportunities, and very few of our families can financially afford that.

Obviously enrollment is a factor in the competitive balance scenario. However I believe the SSAC considering location and economics as additional factors is a huge step in the right direction. The number of championships and championship contending teams have been won year-in and year-out by the schools that have the location and economic advantages. This proposal does a great job of trying to address those situations.

Going to four classes rather than three has long been debated. West Virginia does not have a large number of schools compared to many states. However, the diversity of the schools in West Virginia very obviously lends itself to have more than three classes. I believe changing from three classes to four would help create a much higher competitive balance situation and shrink the diversity factors that our great state has faced.

I have been a coach in the SSAC system for 16 years, and before that my father was a coach for 25 years. As someone that has watched a lot of changes in this states athletics in four decades, I believe this proposal is a great opportunity for us to address the current issues that have been complained about all across the state.

Jared Robertson Athletic Director  
Greenbrier West High School

The SSAC is either negligent or intentionally causing damage. But one or the other must be true. We shall soon see whether the State Board of Education is to join by adopting the SSAC plan. But if it does a lawsuit will be filed. It must be. I am a business owner and sponsor of two local schools, both of which will be harmed by this proposal. We already know this from history. They will be compelled to compete against student bodies twice their size. As a sponsor, I do not appreciate the damage caused to these schools and my business.

In this new effort to balance competition the SSAC has no data to suggest that its current proposal will affect change as it is hoped. There is no relevant study nor is there history of this plan in another state that indicates factors such as proximity to a larger city or to a county seat have a significant factor on competitive balance. Anecdotally, someone recently joked that we could sit 50 coaches and athletic directors down and ask them this question: "What made your team win?" We might actually get as many as 50 different answers, i.e. "great players, great hustle, great game plan, 100% buy-in, etc." but nowhere in those answers would we hear "it means so much to have the local board offices just down the road."

So the issue is, the SSAC is intent on fixing a problem (that not all agree is a problem) and there is no data or percentage of likelihood that the currently proposed solution actually has any degree of certainty to fix the problem. It is just someone's idea. Let's call the issue out: schools that can acquire students from anywhere in the world ("recruit") have the inherent ability to compete at any level. As long as they are competing against schools that do not have that same inherent ability they are only limited by themselves. Attempting to place all schools in a rubric that does not account for the recruiting variable is just plain silly.

In the meantime, the plan does have an absolute degree of certainty to cause damage to certain programs, schools and communities – and the SSAC and the

2019-  
05-22  
10:00:19

James Atkins  
Managing Attorney  
Atkins & Ogle Law Offices, LC  
Buffalo West

A/-

State Board of Education do have the data and the history on this.

My business sits in Buffalo, West Virginia and routinely sponsors Buffalo High School and Winfield High School. Under the currently proposed plan, a school such as Winfield High School will jump from Double A all the way to Quadruple A, and will compete against the most highly populated schools in the state. But this isn't new for Winfield. And several schools like it. Buffalo will also compete against schools twice it's size. Not too long ago Winfield High School mercifully dropped down into Double A, from being the school in Triple A with the smallest attendance. After a few short years in Triple A, athletic participation in several sports was at an all-time low. Gate attendance and concessions were at an all-time low. These statistics are already in the possession of the SSAC. With attendance and participation plummeting, sponsorship and local sales took a substantial hit. This affected many local businesses, even so far as influencing numbers in part-time jobs. And, the same statistics for when schools like Winfield compete against schools of like size (in student population) are also in the possession of the SSAC and show the exact opposite result. Student participation went back up, patronage went back up. Sponsorship went back up and the local vendors all noted and will attest to the boost in sales. Schools like Buffalo and Winfield High Schools will attest to the value of not only the dollars coming through the gate when like rivals can compete but the also the value of the morale to the student body altogether. School attendance, grades, graduation rates and participation across all school activities showed increase.

It is unclear why the SSAC would purposefully want schools to compete athletically against other schools that have student body sizes that are significantly different, particularly when the SSAC has statistics that show the clear participatory and financial detriment to such schools, and when the SSAC has no data to support the current proposal. And while a proponent of the plan would likely argue that the need for data is the reason for the two-year trial run in boys and girls basketball, one could also argue that any trial run that fails to account for schools that can acquire students from any district versus schools that acquire students from only

within a single district is simply a flawed trial.

Interestingly, how will we know if the trial is successful? In the short term, if it appears that private schools are comparable to their new competition, the trial will be deemed a success. Whereas, these schools that wish to compete at a high level have always (and will always) move and adjust as the system demands. And, in the meantime, several dozen other communities get damaged.

So the initial question remains. Is the SSAC negligent, in that it has the data of schools and communities like Buffalo and Winfield being harmed in participation, finances, sponsorship and morale, and the SSAC has not properly taken notice before implementing this detrimental plan? Or, is the SSAC completely aware of all the past harm caused and knows that this plan will certainly cause similar harm, and just does not care as much about this result as it does the current perceived issue – and is therefore willful and intentional?

The students of the high school will have standing to file suit for damages inflicted, but so will individual businesses. So will my business. The SSAC has the data to see this coming and could have avoided this.

At least the State Board of Education will have an opportunity to avoid this. Unfortunately, the Board will not be able to claim only negligent infliction of harm. The knowledge is clear.

James Atkins, Esq.  
Atkins & Ogle Law Offices, LC  
Buffalo, West Virginia

People are outraged over the fact that one school could move from Class AA to Class AAAA if this proposal passes.

It is a proposal of how the classes would look using the current enrollment numbers

2019-05-23 08:38:47  
Parent  
Man High  
Man WV

A/+

from the 2015-2016 school year. I believe this proposal will create a lot of parity in sports and it will also keep certain schools from fudging the numbers to stay in a certain class for athletic purposes. Believe it happens from what I have been told.

This proposal would create a fair playing field and give the little guys a chance to compete for state championships. Every system has its flaws as some will point out but even if the county seat provision was to be taken out of the equation would it really make that much of a difference? I don believe it would and as for economics well its simple people are going to move where they can find work! Its as simple as that and for some areas that can create an unfair playing field for the small guys.

It is what it is and I am not here to lobby for either side. As a coach, teacher and resident in the Man area I see firsthand the struggles that our school, athletics and community has gone through.

Our coal industry, once booming is declining and our kids parents are being laid off, which has an effect on our population. In 2015-2016 we were the only class in the state of West Virginia to move up when others moved down from a class, but we didn cry about it! We packed up and accepted the hand we were dealt and done it with class! Sure some of us may have complained to other coaches, but nothing was printed in the media nor did we run to the SSAC with a lawyer so we could stay down in class.

I think the plan the SSAC has came up with is fair especially when you talk about economics of one area. Everyone in our state is at a disadvantage somewhere and unfortunately for us our population is declining at a rate that our residents fear the "C" word with another rival school. Despite the rumors and the repeated comments from our board members that consolidation is not in the plans our residents are still worried.

I am not here for the classification proposal nor am I against the classification proposal. I am here to say whatever the SSAC decides then accept the hand you are

2019-05-23 09:12:00  
Bill Lusk  
Assistant Basketball Coach  
Man High School  
Man WV

A/o

		<p>dealt and play. I can say that we have adjusted quite well at Man High School, but as for the future, we will accept it and move on!</p>		
<p>2019-05-28 10:02:42</p>	<p>Michael Laughery N/A N/A Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>Please accept these comments as "against" the proposal for change to 4 classifications, including the trial in basketball.</p> <p>First, with only about 105 participating high schools, the last thing we need is 4 classes. We should be looking at less classes(2) instead of watering down an already small number of schools. North Carolina for example in basketball has 4 classes for their estimated 400 schools. Less is more!</p> <p>2nd, by reducing the number of schools, we put an increase in economic impact on the residents of these schools. If you want to play a schedule comprised of like classification schools, you will now have to travel farther based on less schools in each classification. This not only creates more travel expense, but time out of class for our student athletes.</p> <p>My final comment is about the basis of how to classify each school, going away from the traditional school population and using other variables that many could consider inappropriate in todays world. Basing a school classification on income, that would surely fall under some discrimination factor. While not punishing low income, you are reverse discriminating based on higher income.</p> <p>And then, using the criteria of location to higher populated cities as a criteria brings into question that race is a piece of this criteria. In West Virginia a higher population of minorities live within the larger cities. Maybe unintentionally, this question has arisen in many circles since the release of this rule.</p> <p>Please consider that we are a small state, we do not need more classes, and the criteria for which you use to attempt to create more classes is greatly flawed.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

<p>2019-05-28 19:49:30</p>	<p>Michelle Morris Parent Winfield WV</p>	<p>I am commenting to OPPOSE the reclassification system that is being proposed. With a child at Winfield High School which is set to jump 2 classes (nobody in the state is moving up 2 classes). I feel this will adversely effect the school, students and community. Winfield has been AAA in the past and because of the low number of students to pool athletes from they were just unable to compete with the schools that most were double in student body size. This made the athletes have low moral and seen some of the smallest numbers of participation in school history. When you aren't winning you don't have committed support which in turn means low ticket sales and low concession sales. Also, with a child who is a 3 sport varsity athlete, how fair would it be he compete in AAAA in basketball and AA in football and baseball for the opening trial period. I just feel that the distance from county seat and income should not determine what class the students of Winfield compete. I feel this would be a disaster and would scar the athletic programs for years to come. I'm asking that this be rethought and if you are only looking for a way to get the private/Christian schools out of A, I feel there are better options for that move than punishing the students of Winfield High School</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-05-29 08:38:19</p>	<p>Jennifer Sette Hurricane WV</p>	<p>My son spent his first 9 years of education in a small private school education. His first year of high school he transferred to our public school district which is Winfield High School. The greatest benefit of Winfield High school is there class size compared to other area high schools (coming from a class of 16 anything was tremendously large but he would have been lost in some high schools where 400 plus kids in a class is common).</p> <p>This is partially why I was so shocked to hear Winfield would be lumped into a Class 4 with the new classification codes. I find it hard to believe that WV has enough schools to support 4 classes to begin with. And creating such a system is designed to put certain schools at an obvious disadvantage. I am not familiar with the school board political system but this classification system seems to be showing government intrusion is not based on betterment for those it serves.</p> <p>I also believe that the formula that uses distance from county seat as part of the</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

weight in classification is arbitrary and random. Winfield may be the county seat of Putnam County but it is not the growth or financial district of the county.

Seems to me in a state where teacher strikes are routine and we make the national news on the basis of our failures, the WVSSAC and the school boards should focus on the current and growing issue of students transferring for athletic purposes and police this much more closely. Our children are in public schools first and foremost for an education that will lead to them bettering our communities and our economy once they graduate. Sports should be a secondary focus although many of these LARGE high schools thrive based on their sports programs. That is not the case at Winfield High School where the enrollment numbers are much smaller than the other Class 4 schools. Nor do these classification take into consideration the large portion of Special Education programs that Winfield High School offers as part of their enrollment numbers. Our high school is the county seat but in no other regards would it qualify to be in a Class 4 ranking.

I employ your board to do the right thing and revisit these plans.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Sette  
Concerned Parent and County citizen

I hope I have selected the right place to post my comments about the reclassification of single-A schools. I listed myself primarily as a parent, but I am also an alumnus and an educator and a community member in Buffalo of Putnam County. I am in the throes of completing all of my Medicaid billing for the students I serve as a speech language pathologist in public schools. This is why it is difficult for me to fathom the Buffalo high school will be reclassified based upon its proximity to the county seat of Winfield and other communities who have far more vast resources than we do. Over half of our elementary school gets free or reduced lunch. I am certain BHS is similar. We have never had more than 400 students at Buffalo high school as far as I know, so how on earth can We compete with AA

2019-  
06-03  
21:27:39

Laura Whittington  
Parent  
Buffalo High School  
Buffalo WV

A/-

schools? We barely won three games in football and certainly I think less than half of our basketball games because we are constantly having to play bigger schools than ourselves and private schools who recruit. Re-classifying Buffalo high school as a double A school will result in harm to the students. Proximity to the county seat and other communities you have far vast resources than we do. Over half of our elementary school gets free reduce lunch. We have never had more than 400 students at before high school as far as I know, so how on earth can I compete with AA schools? We barely went to the three games in football and certainly I think less than half in basketball because we are constantly having to play bigger schools in ourselves. Reclassifying buffalo high school as a double A school will result in harm to the students. Athletics are a reason for kids to strive for good grades, a reason for kids to attend school regularly, and a reason for kids to stay out of trouble such as drugs and alcohol. Why would they want to be on a team when they will always lose? I was never an athlete, but my children are, and I see the value in all the lessons they learned from the hard work and teamwork being in high school athletics. Many of our students receive financial aid for their performance in single A athletics, and this move will take that opportunity away. It will also take away community pride and camaraderie. Please don't ruin this for the students of Buffalo high school in Putnam County

Or any of the schools you a're considering are re-classifying which I have been told is more likely because of private schools who recruit. They really should have their own class. Sincerely, concerned parent, educator, and community member, Laura Whittington.

2019-06-06 08:23:42

Catherine Carter  
Teacher  
Putnam County BOE  
Winfield WV

I am fortunate to work in a school that has high participation in extra curricular activities; however, changing the classification system will impact that. Student participation will go down if teams can be competitive more students will not participate. When participation goes down student involvement in the classroom will go down. My students deserve a fair chance and, do not deserve to be thrown two classifications above where we are now because our school is sitting in the county seat. I am not sure what being physically close to where people pay their taxes and fines has to do with athletics. My students deserve a fair chance. We do

A/-

		not belong in a classification with schools more than double our size while schools with larger enrollment will be in the classification below us. This not only impacts athletics, but will impact my classroom as well.		
2019-06-06 08:27:07	John Cochran Teacher/Coach Winfield HS Winfield WV	As a coach and teacher at Winfield HS, I feel that the reclassification proposal is wrong and should not be implemented. Using criteria other than student enrollment numbers is an incorrect and biased assessment of scholastic activity classification. If the goal is to affect private schools participation then make a rule that affects only private schools such as that those schools must play up one level on classification or make a private schools only state championship, etc. Using criteria such as "county seat geography", or "free and reduced lunch enrollment", is biased to minority as well as affluent schools. Please reconsider.	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:30:24	Amanda Darnley Buffalo High School Buffalo WV	Placing Buffalo High in AA Classification is a huge mistake. I have daughters that play Volleyball, Basketball, and Softball. They work extremely hard at everything they do. They are not the best basketball players but are always putting in 100%. This past year they had their first winning record in a number of years. Placing them in a higher classification will rob them of the hard work they have put in and discourage the girls from playing in future years. This policy needs to be revisited and revised to be fair. I always say a busy kid is a good kid, but allowing students to compete in a category they do not belong in will only discourage all but the best students from participating in these activities and Buffalo CANNOT afford for this to be the case!! There just are not enough students!!!	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:32:49	Leslie Downey Teacher/Parent Putnam County BOE Winfield WV	I strongly discourage the passage of this classification system. Not only would the school I teach at be negatively effected, but so will the school my own children attend. This will effect participation and will effect involvement and classroom behaviors. We should not be punished for living close to where people pay for their taxes. This will also be a financial burden because we will have to travel so much further. Please reconsider and do not pass this.	A/-	

<p>2019-06-06 08:34:39</p>	<p>Kristin Swisher Teacher Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>This policy seems to be unfair to the schools that have a lower student population, like WHS, to be put in a class that is competing against schools that are so much larger than them. This policy does not seem to take into consideration the culture of schools and sports. If we are constantly losing then why would our students want to play sports anymore?? This will ultimately have a negative impact on some schools.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:34:44</p>	<p>Amy Facemyer Teacher/Parent WHS Winfield WV</p>	<p>This policy is very unfair to several schools for several reasons. Under this policy WHS will be in a classification with huge schools which will devastate our athletic program. It will adversely effect our school culture and morale.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:35:49</p>	<p>Amanda Postle Teacher Putnam County Schools Winfield WV</p>	<p>This policy is unfair and nonsensical. How far the county seat is from the school has nothing to do with the athletic ability of the students. How far the school is from a large city has nothing to do with with athletic ability. Quite simply, West Virginia doesn't have enough teams to warrant 4 classifications. Many schools will have to travel much farther to compete and schools with smaller enrollment will have to compete with schools double their size. This could cause safety issues as well. This policy is bad for our schools and our students.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:36:10</p>	<p>Nicholas Hanna</p>	<p>Based on the information that I have seen, the classification proposed will have an impact on student moral and culture that will impact student achievement in a negative way due to lower student participation for schools jumping from AA to 4A. Travel time will impact time in the classroom decreasing the athletics attendance which may also impact academic performance.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:36:39</p>	<p>Geary Jack Band Director and Parent Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>This proposal will hurt my school, my school culture, and put our students at risk. To expect Winfield High School athletes to compete against schools with over double enrollment is arrogant presumption at best. How exactly having a higher SES, and location in comparison to county seat makes better athletes is beyond me, and is at best, class warfare! This will mean much longer travel times for students, which hits me directly as the</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		<p>band director, because I can not afford 3 buses to travel to locations as far away as we would be travelling, thus eliminating performance opportunities for my kids, thus taking away from their education.</p> <p>This is a bad idea! I understand the issues in single A, but then why punish those schools who have nothing to do with it? Please, vote against this travesty!</p>		
2019-06-06 08:36:44	Stacey Rhodes Winfield WV	<p>A four class system is not in the best interest of our students and school system. West Virginia is not large enough to reasonably support this. Our students will spend more time traveling to and from ballgames and forcing our students to play against schools that are much larger than us simply because our school happens to be in the same town as the county seat and our proximity to Charleston is ludicrous. This will hurt our student participation in sports programs and our school culture in general. School classification should be based solely on student enrollment and the other factors really have no impact on athleticism.</p>	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:38:23	Christie Foy Teacher Winfield High School Winfield WV	<p>I feel that the new classification system is unfair. What does location to the county seat, how close we are to a 10,000 population city have to do with school classification? This will adversely affect our students by asking a school of 830 compete with school of nearly 2,000.</p>	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:38:47	AP Teacher Winfield High School Winfield WV	<p>This policy is going to negatively effect our school culture, athletic involvement, which will bring down our community support. Students in our school are going to struggle playing against students from a body size of 1800! There are not enough schools in WV to place four classifications; which is going to spread thin the playing field, cause our students to have to travel further causing them to be home very late which could bring down attendance and grades. It would be better to have schools with 1,000 or more placed together to allow for more equality among schools. Please think about how this is going to NEGATIVELY effect our STUDENTS which is the whole reason we are here; without them there would be no sports to even be discussing!</p>	A/-	

<p>2019-06-06 08:39:09</p>	<p>TS Teacher Winfield High school Winfield WV</p>	<p>I feel as though this is not fair to our school culture. It will be a disadvantage to our students and may cause low enrollment in sports, which in return could lead to more discipline issues in the school. The formula does not make sense. When a school has over a 1000 students more it is not an equal playing field.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:39:15</p>	<p>TS Teacher Winfield High school Winfield WV</p>	<p>I feel as though this is not fair to our school culture. It will be a disadvantage to our students and may cause low enrollment in sports, which in return could lead to more discipline issues in the school. The formula does not make sense. When a school has over a 1000 students more it is not an equal playing field.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:39:39</p>	<p>Kelly Mills Teacher Winfield High School (Putnam County Schools) Winfield WV</p>	<p>The magnitude of this this tremendous change in our athletic classification has a trickle down effect that I do not believe leadership has considered. I completely understand wanting to "level" the playing field so to speak; however, this will not be the case. Assuming that an area has superior athletes based on socioeconomic status, as well as, location to urban areas is absolutely absurd and has no bearing on athletic ability. True competition should be based on school size. The governing body is asking small schools to compete with larger schools based on obscure statistics and flawed reasoning. This momentous decision doesn't just effect athletes; it effects ALL students of these schools. Athletics are ways for students to be a part of a school, learn discipline, and skills for life. This policy discourages participation of all athletes of varying abilities. Numerous amounts of research has proven that athletics prepare students for life. This policy would demolish that notion. This policy would be a strain monetarily on counties under new classification due to transportation. As an educator, I have seen what sports can do for typical underachieving students. It gives them a niche, a reason to succeed, and does not send the message of success for today's youth and the generation of tomorrow. Please reconsider the way you vote with our students in mind.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:39:43</p>	<p>Pissed off teacher Teacher Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>I am a math teacher and this formula you are using makes zero sense in determining classification of schools. I was not aware that living close to a county seat and getting reduced lunch makes you a better athlete. My brother lives right next to the county seat and he is not a great athlete. You should change back to the way it was</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		<p>before. Why fix something that doesn't need fixing. You are going to screw many students out of the opportunity to play sports at school. This way of classifying schools is one of the most stupid things I have ever heard of. Attendance is the only thing that should be looked at when determining which classification the school falls under. This is ridiculous and makes zero sense. The math teacher that came up with this formula should not be allowed to teach the youth of West Virginia. Why not make a score of how many McDonalds are within a 10 mile radius of the school and make it 20% of the overall score. Or do the same thing but with how many Walgreens are near by. Or you could count how many students own a dog and make that 60% of the score. That makes the same amount of sense for this stupid formula you are wanting to use.</p>		
<p>2019-06-06 08:39:51</p>	<p>DM Teacher Winfield High School Winfield Wv</p>	<p>This policy is going to negatively impact our school and its culture through the unfair advantage of schools that have a student body that doubles that of our own. Also, the formula that determines this policy is misconstrued due to incomplete evidence. One of the reasons why our school would be placed into such a division, one example being the use of free and reduced lunch numbers being a factor that is unevenly weighed and computed into the matrix.</p> <p>Please consider the fact that a school such as Winfield high school being placed into a four class system due to location of the school, between the two cities of Charleston and Huntington, does not accurately create a basis for the students being placed into the four class system.</p> <p>Thank you in considering this policy a bit more deeper and fairly.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:40:03</p>	<p>D.venugopal Teacher WHS Winfield WV</p>	<p>It is not fair to have such a small school competing with bigger schools and it will affect the whole system.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

<p>2019-06-06 08:40:29</p>	<p>Leeann Hesson Putnam County Schools WV</p>	<p>West Virginia is too small of a state to be divided into four classes. The formula proposed to create these divisions includes factors that have no influence on athletic ability such as how close you are to the county seat. This proposal puts an unfair strain on schools that are in the middle range of enrollment. This will not only affect our athletics but will negatively influence our entire school culture with factors such as travel time and days out of school.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>019-06-06 08:40:52</p>	<p>Ana Baber Teacher/Parent Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>As a parent of children that attend Winfield High School and as a teacher at Winfield High School I believe this is the most unfair proposal to be considered by the WVSSAC. Winfield High School is being punished because of the new criteria being used to classify schools. Ripley has 200 more students than Winfield and is moving down a class, while Winfield moves to the highest level. It just doesn't make sense.</p> <p>I am also concerned with the safety of our students. Enrollment numbers matter and it is not unfair that our students would have to compete against schools with significantly higher enrollment.</p> <p>I am also concerned with the travel time. As a teacher, this means students would spend more time traveling to these schools and missing precious class time.</p> <p>Please fix this. It is not fair to our students. There are just too many discrepancies with this policy.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 08:48:08</p>	<p>Shawn Anderson Physical Education Teacher/Head Boys Track and XC Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>The proposed four A classification will be not only detrimental to our school, but surrounding schools as well. There will be more travel time involved for teams which will lead to more money being spent or the inability to possibly fund certain sports at school. It will directly affect the culture of our school, affecting participation numbers in our athletics program. It could have a direct affect on the health of our athletes as well, having to play schools double our enrollment and the depth that these other schools have on Winfield. WINFIELD IS THE ONLY SCHOOL IN THIS STATE THAT IS BEING REQUIRED TO STEP UP TWO CLASSIFICATIONS!!! WHY??</p> <p>The formula being used to calculate this new classification is asinine. A better way can be found if THE SSAC wants to go this route. Ask people that are in the trenches.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

2019-06-06 08:48:56	LA Teacher Winfield High School Winfield West	The change in classification would create an unequal playing field for a lot of schools causing students to be less involved in sports which in turn would cause the school culture and environment to change in a negative manner.	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:50:28	Joe Rumbaugh Winfield High School Winfield WV	The four A classification is not good for our school (Winfield High School). The enrollment numbers are so different between our school and the other 4A schools. Our students will be at disadvantage when trying to compete with the larger numbers. I can see student participation dropping due to not being able to compete on a more equal basis. I don't understand this formula that you have come up with. What do living near the county seat have to do with participation in sports? I hope you will reconsider this proposal and think about the students.	A/-	
2019-06-06 08:55:16	Linda Wollaber Teacher Winfield High School Winfield WV	<p>This proposal is not for the benefit of students, educational advancement, schools, or communities.</p> <p>The formula is discriminatory against schools that are in midrange population that would have those schools compete with schools of higher populations. Schools that move from AA to AAAA ranking are at a significant disadvantage. Schools moving into a new ratings now have further to travel for competitions which increases expenditures, time spent in travel, and more financial demands on the parents and communities. Attendance will drop from students participating due to the parental expense to be able to attend away competitions and other logistical variables that affected by this new classification.</p> <p>School moral would also be subject to decrease for the school that have drastically changed in the competition venue if they are not at the same levels of athletic abilities since the pool of potential athletic students is now similar. Negative impacts on this new classification trickle down to all aspects of the schools function.</p>	A/-	

		Please reconsider this new classification as not the best or ideal solution for the schools of WV.	
2019-06-06 09:13:10	Celeste Campbell Coach/Teacher Winfield High School Winfield West	Classification should be based off of the number of students enrolled. Other factors such as proximity to county seat, the number of free and reduced lunch, etc. should not play any factor in the classification status. All this does is penalizes schools based on the socio-economic status and location of their students.	A/-
2019-06-06 09:21:39	Bill Henson Counselor Winfield High School Winfield WV	This reclassification as proposed, will do much damage to schools in our district. Most of what makes our school special, is we primarily compete very effectively with Winfield born and raised students. The community takes great pride in the success of born and raised students. To invent an algorithm that produces the intended results for making private "Catholic" schools move up a classification because people who are in charge refuse to do their job, is just as sad as schools that actively recruit great athletes year in and year out without reprisals. The WVSSAC needs to have the resolve to institute and enforce rules that make competition in athletics fair and safe for all participating schools. The lack of desire to address the obvious problems that are well known throughout the state by the WVSSAC is not an excuse to penalize schools and communities that will be affected by this ridiculous rule change.	A/-
2019-06-06 09:29:08	Pamela Morris Counselor Winfield High School Winfield WV	Please help us, and understand what we are really facing with this re-classification. We have a wonderful school! I have been a counselor in many counties in WV and the culture in this school is so positive. Kids love their classes, sports and for the majority each other. This classification would give us virtually no chance ever to win any sporting events. We would be one of the smallest schools competing in 4A and it would kill our culture. When kids have no hope of ever winning, they finally stop attending games, they get so down on themselves that they don't even want to play anymore. When that happens, it gives drugs, alcohol and other vices the opportunity to surge. If we as a state and a nation do not get our kids INVOLVED more in constructive activities like sports, they will most definitely turn to other things to take up their times. Please help us, we feel like we are fighting for a way	A/-

		<p>of life that has helped us to defeat the odds of drug addiction in WV. Our kids want to be competitive, and with this formula they won even have a chance. They will fail, and after years of failing, they will lose hope. Our culture as we know it will cease to exist. Our kids need to BELONG to something to stay away from the ever increasing DRUG CULTURE EPIDEMIC in WV. Please don take our competitive sports ability away. Please consider working with the language of this policy to target the heart of what you need to accomplish without schools like us becoming damaged. It is my hope that my comments have been delivered with respect but honesty.</p>		
2019-06-06 09:43:40	<p>Will Isaacs Athletic Director/Coach Winfield High School Winfield WV</p>	<p>My concerns with this proposal are as follows and I would encourage you not to support this measure. 1. The WVSSAC must have safety concerns because they are only implementing in Basketball for two years. 2. The use of arbitrary formulas instead of enrollment numbers to determine classification (competitiveness depends usually on depth and overall numbers of players) 3. what is the criteria for success of this proposal? 4. This will lead to confusing sectional and regional alignments that have athletes in the same school competing in different classes that may limit the opportunities of some for scholarship opportunities. I respectfully ask you to not support this measure.</p>	A/-	
2019-06-06 09:47:18	<p>Richie Wyant Girls Head Basketball Coach Buffalo High School Buffalo High WV</p>	<p>The new system was implemented mainly to move the private schools from the small schools classification to level the playing field. The private schools can freely bring student athletes from out of their immediate area and often from out of state to fill their rosters with needed players. For example, take a look at Parkersburg Catholics Girls Basketball team roster. Many of the contributing players are from Ohio.</p> <p>Along with a few other current single A schools, Buffalo was moved up to the AA division from the middle of the current Class A ranks. We are the last school in the new AA division. We are placed just above two private schools, making them the top two schools in the new class A division. So much for leveling the playing field. Also, I would suggest you look at the gap between Buffalo and Doddridge County, two schools with a one student difference and similar rural settings that are now rated quite differently in the new classification system. I am perplexed.</p>	A/-	

The socioeconomic status in the new classification system is flawed in our case as well. With two elementary schools feeding Buffalo High I can assure you our students that qualify for free and reduced lunch are much greater than the 36% the first study showed at BHS. At Buffalo Elementary where I teach we are at 68% that qualify, and this is a conservative number. The other elementary, George Washington Elementary is at 64%. Nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our area elementary students qualify free and reduced. I understand that there was a "formula" that was used by the state to get the 36% and I admit I'm perplexed what bumped us up to such a favorable rating. At Buffalo High the percent of students that applied and qualified was 51%. I fear many more didn't apply.

We are victims of the old saying, "guilty by association", or in our case, "guilty by proximity". Just because we are the community across the river from Winfield, doesn't mean that we reap the benefits from their prosperity and good fortunes. In fact, that's not the case at all. As you know, Buffalo is quietly tucked away in the back corner of Putnam County. Far away from I-64 and all the businesses that come with it. Toyota is the one business that makes this plea seemingly and somewhat difficult, or it would if they were a backer or supporter of Buffalo High athletics. In the twenty some years that Toyota has been in our community they have never, to my or the current administration's knowledge, given any money to Buffalo athletics for any reason.

Buffalo is, simply put, a rural community. No advantages that a city such as Parkersburg would bring. No outside training facilities to allow our students to better their skills. Our middle school in Eleanor, George Washington Middle School is the only school in the county that only has one gym. Which makes scheduling practices difficult and eliminates a number of students from participating due to transportation issues. We are disadvantaged in many ways.

I am not against the new classification system, but it is obviously flawed. We "Buffalo High School" are being punished. We are the epitome of the small rural school with less advantages than others. We are the school this new system is being considered for.

I appreciate your time and God Bless

Richie Wyant  
Buffalo High Girls Head Basketball Coach  
304-389-8678

Putnam County Poverty by Census Tract

Geography - Census Tract 9549, Mason County  
Cities/Towns/Places - Leon  
High School District - Buffalo  
Total; Estimate; Households - 3,032  
Households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 620  
Percent households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 20.4

Geography - Census Tract 202, Putnam County  
Cities/Towns/Places - Buffalo, Eleanor, Liberty, Leon  
High School District - Buffalo  
Total; Estimate; Households - 1,898  
Households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 273  
Percent households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 14.4

Geography - Census Tract 201, Putnam County  
Cities/Towns/Places - Bancroft, Hometown, Liberty, Red House  
High School District - Pt Buffalo, Pt Poca  
Total; Estimate; Households - 2,146  
Households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 244  
Percent households receiving food stamps/SNAP; Estimate; Households - 11.4

Putnam County Poverty by Census Tract

Geography - Census Tract 201, Putnam County

Cities/Towns/Places Located at Least Partially in Census Tract – Bancroft,  
Hometown, Liberty, Red House

High School District – Pt Buffalo, Pt Poca

Total; Estimate; Households – 2,146

Total; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level –  
363

Percent; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level  
– 16.9

Geography - Census Tract 9549, Mason County

Cities/Towns/Places Located at Least Partially in Census Tract – Leon

High School District – Buffalo (a few students come from Mason County)

Total; Estimate; Households – 3,032

Total; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level –  
496

Percent; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level  
- 16.4

Geography - Census Tract 202, Putnam County

Cities/Towns/Places Located at Least Partially in Census Tract – Buffalo, Eleanor,  
Liberty, Leon

High School District – Buffalo

Total; Estimate; Households – 1,898

Total; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level –  
232

Percent; Estimate; POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS - Below poverty level  
- 12.2

<p>2019-06-06 10:32:17</p>	<p>Craig Shanholtzer Teacher Winfield High School WINFIELD WV</p>	<p>I am emailing to express my concerns for going to 4 classes. As a teacher at Winfield High School, the new class (4 A) that we would be in will have an adverse effect on our school as a whole. We will be competing athletically with schools two to two and a half times larger than us. This will cause students not to want to participate in sports. Studies show that when students participate in extra curricular activities, the school environment is very positive. Discipline issues decrease with a high participation rate. Winfield High School has a very high participation rate. This takes a sharp turn down if we move to class 4A. The formula used to reclass schools makes no sense at all. Distance from county seat and number of free and reduced lunch has absolutely no bearing on athletics. Winfield High School currently is AA. Based on this formula, we would be the only school in the state to move up 2 classes to 4A. Winfield High School is one of the best high school in the state. Our test scores, graduation rate, participation rate for extra curricular activities are among some of the best in the state. Moving up 2 classes will have an extreme negative effect on our school. Also, West Virginia is a small state. We are constantly losing population. This state is not big enough to have 4 classes. I also understand that the number of schools in the bigger classes will decrease. My understanding is one of the reasons for going to 4 classes is to increase the number of schools in those classes. The numbers that I have seen show that there will be less schools in those classes. This is certainly not the best way to change classification.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 10:34:03</p>	<p>Dave Eason AD Pendleton County High School Franklin WV</p>	<p>Pendleton County is very in favor of the trial a 4 classification system. Basketball is the ideal place to try this as the competition at the state tournaments the last few years show a desperate need for adjustment to competitive balance in all classes. I think we are all aware this system is not perfect but it is a great starting place for improvement.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 11:21:54</p>	<p>Micah Bailey HS PE/Health Teacher Pendleton County High School Franklin WV</p>	<p>I am in favor of the new classification recommendations.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	

<p>2019-06-06 11:29:10</p>	<p>Joey Eason Teacher Pendleton County Schools Brandywine, WV WV</p>	<p>I think this is a good potential step to fixing the lack of competitive balance that has been evident in WV high school basketball recently. This year at the state tournament, 13 out of 21 games were decided by 10 points or more. In the AA bracket, all 7 games were decided by a double figure spread, and the two semifinal contests were decided by a total of 63 points. This type of imbalance creates a product that will only be appealing to fans from the participating schools. This trend will create a lack of interest from basketball fans and a loss of revenue at the state level. The goal should be to provide a system that allows for an entertaining balanced product that showcases the talent from our great state. I feel this reclassification is a step in the right direction.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 11:30:23</p>	<p>Darla Young Head teacher Pendleton county schools Franklin WV</p>	<p>In favor of this because it will restore competitive balance between all 4 classifications</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 13:23:10</p>	<p>Deborah Booth Dodd Teacher Poca High School Poca WV</p>	<p>The proposed classification will be a detriment to high athletics. The new changes will reduce fan following. It will increase costs and reduce revenue to the schools and their sports programs. Which in turn reduces the money earned by WVSSAC.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 13:45:49</p>	<p>Meghan Stevens Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>I am against adding an additional class for WVSSAC Athletics. I teach at Poca and it will add a lot of travel time for my students because they will now travel much longer distances to play teams in their classification. The cardinal conference would cease to exist. Our population is rapidly declining in this state. We do not need more classifications for sports. The number of private schools winning state championships every year is minimal. I do not believe we need to alter the entire system because of the dominance of two programs.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-06 14:07:37</p>	<p>Ronald McDade Eleanor WV</p>	<p>Although I do agree that steps need to be taken in the classification system, I do not think this is a fair and balanced way to handle it. Buffalo High School, for example, would be heavily penalized for a section of Putnam County that is successful and</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		<p>even growing. This is opposite of the majority of our state but it influx of money and business has done very little if anything at all for the Buffalo HS community. The one major employer in the area everyone knows about is Toyota. This plant has been here almost 25 years without creating an enrollment change in the schools, I don think its going to happen now. To be blunt, Buffalo has struggled quite a bit in athletics the last several years. The wrestling team was scrapped. Girls and boys basketball can even field JV teams. Out once proud softball team had 10 girls. In 2018 baseball finished with 11 players. Football has won 4 games in two seasons. Now imagine if these kids have to play AA teams on a regular basis. It will destroy athletics. Along with ruining the confidence of many innocent kids.</p>		
2019-06-06 14:14:31	Hilary Gibson School Counselor Poca High School Poca WV	<p>I do not feel that this will benefit our students in any way. The majority of games fall on school nights and with this classification, our students will be traveling hours to schools that will fall under the same classification. This isn feasible for bus drivers who are up early to drive our students to school, the coaching staff, or the students who need to finish homework/assignments and function productively during the next school day. I am asking for this proposed classification process to be overturned.</p>	A/-	
2019-06-06 14:32:43	David Harper Principal Poca High School Poca WV	<p>As Principal of Poca High School I am vehemently against the increase of school classification from 3 classes to 4 classes. It will effectively dismantle the Cardinal Conference which has existed for more than 20 years. Poca is a Charter Member of the Cardinal Conference. It will force Poca to travel to schools much farther away to compete. This will increase travel expenses and decrease revenue for schools because their fanbase will not travel in large numbers to support their teams. This will then create financial hardships upon school athletic programs which will eventually be passed on to student athletes. Increased travel time will also have a negative effect on the amount of time our student athletes must spend on buses especially those sports that compete during the middle of the week.</p> <p>I feel that increasing the amount of athletic classifications in a state whos student enrollment is consistently declining is ludicrous. This attempt to reclassify should be soundly rejected by the state board.</p>	A/-	

<p>2019-06-06 15:02:36</p>	<p>Kim Parsons Counselor Buffalo High School Buffalo West</p>	<p>Moving BHS to AA classification would be detrimental to my students and this community. Putnam County has pockets of wealth and pockets of poverty. Although geographical close to the county seat, this is a fact. Due to an economic disadvantage, lots of my students have to attend school while working to help take care of themselves and contribute to their household. Therefore, they are unable to take advantage of additional resources in the community to improve their athleticism like travel teams, speed and agility and other goals. As a mother of a student from the other side of the county, my son has taken advantage of these opportunities along with several of his peers at the two biggest high schools. I rarely see students from BHS take advantage of these opportunities to improve and compete at a higher level due to issues with transportation to various business that offer these opportunities, a lack of money to pay \$30 per hour or \$180 per class and the fact that they are working and doing school work while also trying to be involved in community service and leadership roles in clubs and organization so they can compete for academic based scholarships too.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-07 08:09:38</p>	<p>Ashley Ellison Fraziers Bottome WV</p>	<p>I am in opposition to the reclassification of high schools to 4 classes due to the negative impact that it will have on the students, parents, community, and athletic association as a whole. Schools and athletes would benefit more if the classes were kept as they are now.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-07 08:21:31</p>	<p>Susie Konstanty teacher BHS Buffalo WV</p>	<p>I feel this proposal is unfair to smaller schools in a county. Our high school is a tiny school in Putnam County that barely survives competing in a "A" class. Given the much larger schools we would have to compete against and how we fair currently in "A" sports we would not be very competitive. By including the populations of Winfield and Hurricane as a total to ours is completely unfair. A lot of people in that side of the county are not even sure where Buffalo High School is. My child will be a freshman at Hurricane High School next year and I know a lot of her friends have never even been over the bridge to Eleanor and Buffalo. In the current proposal, as written, BHS is being punished for the success of its neighbors. Athletics are an important part a schools atmosphere. They can make or break the general attitude of a schools culture for a year. Athletics also provides opportunities for talented</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		<p>students to go to college on scholarships it also provides reason for many to come to school and strive for better grades. Please do not "lump" a county into new classifications just because there are other athletically successful schools in the same county. Keep this individualized per school and not county!</p>		
<p>2019-06-07 08:50:27</p>	<p>Sandra Taylor Teacher BHS Family and Consumer Science Teacher Buffalo WV</p>	<p>If Series 3 Proposal 127-3-10 passed, it would be detrimental to Buffalo High School. Given the much larger schools we would have to compete against and how we fair currently in "A" sports, we would be less competitive.</p> <p>Athletics are an important part of a schools atmosphere. They can make or break the general attitude of a schools culture for a year. Athletics also provides opportunities for talented students to go to college on scholarships and this might be severely affected if the Classification is changed.</p> <p>Please consider our request to keep the Classification of Buffalo High School as it is currently... Class "A".... in all fairness to the students of BHS.</p> <p>Thank You.</p>	A/-	
<p>2019-06-07 13:46:44</p>	<p>Travis Franklin WV</p>	<p>I feel strongly that the classification of high schools should be changed. Private schools have dominated girls basketball in single a for several years. Boys basketball hasn't been as bad, but many times private schools keep small public school teams from advancing. Public schools use the students that live in their counties. Many private schools go outside their boundaries to bring students in. It's just unfair for schools, coaches, players and parents. Public school teams work hard, but they just don't always have the player options that private schools have.</p>	A/+	
<p>2019-06-09 10:59:39</p>	<p>Tyler Hodge Coach Kermit WV</p>	<p>The classifications now based off of enrollment is the fair way to do things. Some schools in the higher populated areas, whether they're public or private shouldn't matter. Some schools that it doesn't effect are the ones recruiting players. Once a player attends a school A his freshmen year, then they shouldn't be allowed to transfer to school B the following year for football then back to school B for</p>	A/-	

		<p>basketball. I think the transfer rule is what needs looked into. Leave classifications along unless going to do it based off of enrollment only to make 4 classes.</p>		
<p>2019-06-09 14:06:39</p>	<p>Ryan Childers Father Parent Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>To Whom it may concern.</p> <p>I am against the class 4A proposal for Winfield High School. I think this would put Winfield at an extreme disadvantage against the other much larger schools who have a lot more students and talent to choose from. Please vote against this proposal and let our school play against other schools of the same size in order to keep sports fair in Putnam County. Thank you for you time and consideration.</p>	A/-	
<p>2019-06-09 14:06:45</p>	<p>Melissa Mother Parent Winfield WV</p>	<p>I am against the Class 4A Proposal. This will negatively affect the basketball program at Winfield. I do not feel that our economic status or proximity to the county seat has any impact on my sons athletic ability. By moving these children up to a 4A classification, they will be at a disadvantage compared to the other schools in the same class. A 2 class jump is ridiculous. Please think about the students and their desires to play sports on the same competitive level. Would you want to play a sport for a school if you knew you had little chance to win or even get looked at by a college??</p>	A/-	
<p>2019-06-09 14:43:24</p>	<p>Tom Wamsley Teacher/Coach Tygarts Valley High School Mill Creek WV</p>	<p>I find it quite ironic that the 2A and 3A schools are using the same logic to defeat this proposal that we small 1A schools have been using for the last 40 years in our protests of our situation. I just completed my 42nd year of coaching at the small school level and we have been complaining the entire time about the advantages that the private schools and the schools within high-density populated areas have over the rural schools in WV.</p> <p>Finally we have a proposal that addresses both of those concerns and now we have schools who have enjoyed those benefits for years complaining of unfairness. In the 1990s Tygarts Valley won 8 of 10 Boys Sectional Tournaments and won 2 Regional Tournaments, sending us onto the State Tourney each time. Since 1999, TVHS has won ZERO sectionals because of reclassifications due to consolations and private</p>	A/+	

		<p>school dominance. Please note that TVHS has had the same coach (me) and the same population for the entire period of time.</p> <p>So while the Pocas and Winfields have enjoyed great success due to their inherited advantages, I saw no pity from them in regards to our lack thereof. Now we finally have a proposal that is at least a tentative step in the right direction to correct this and THEY want to complain??? Lets give this proposal a chance for 2 years, then give the WVSSAC a chance to fine tune it or throw it out altogether. They are trying to solve a problem that states across the country are also working on. The WVSSAC has investigated all of those policies from across the USA and is trying to find one that fits our state. Lets at least give the WVSSAC the benefit of doubt and allow this proposal to have a 2 year trial period.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>		
2019-06-09 15:11:27	Ric Morrone Asst. Principal Tolsia High School Fort Gay WV	The proposed policy is definitely a step in the right direction. It should be approved without question to level the playing field for all schools in our state and not benefit just a select few. I am in full support of the recommended 4 class system for a pilot program.	A/+	
2019-06-09 15:50:05	Hattie Frazier Winfield wv	We as a young Winfield family due not agree with the new classification status. We feel it will be crushing for our students and feel it's a biased rule. Please take into consideration your constituents and the community it will be affecting.	A/-	
2019-06-09 15:51:28	J Mark Gladwell Teacher Meadow Bridge High School Meadow Bridge WV	The four class proposal needs to pass. This is one step towards competitive balance in the state. Small rural school athletes do not have the access that others enjoy regarding travel teams, training facilities, and qualified individuals that can improve athletic skills. Passing the four class proposal can help solve these issues and improve competition during the season which will provide more school with an opportunity for post season success.	A/+	

<p>2019-06-09 16:05:48</p>	<p>Anthony Johnson Parent Tolsia High School Crum Wv</p>	<p>I think some changes need to be implemented. The 2A schools are complaining because they don't want to deal with the "recruiting" private schools either!!! Single A schools don't have much of a chance against the private schools because of their recruiting. It's really not fair to any class of public schools. Private schools need their own state tournament. St. Joe girls were a prime example last season, they beat top 5 3A schools by 30+ points. How are single A schools supposed to compete with that?</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-09 16:16:46</p>	<p>Erin Crouch Teacher Winfield Wv</p>	<p>Having four classes in a small state like WV isn't intelligent. Some schools will have to travel too far to find teams in their class. It's not a fair way to judge schools. Moving up two classes is crazy. This will affect the number of students who participate in sports in Winfield.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-09 23:18:59</p>	<p>Michael Wagoner Assistant Football Coach Pendleton County High School Franklin WV</p>	<p>In favor</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-10 07:59:27</p>	<p>Eric Mason Magnolia High School New Martinsville WEST</p>	<p>The county seat needs to be removed from the classification process. The county seat has nothing to do with how a school will perform in athletics. All that does is hurt some smaller rural schools whose high school is located close/in the county seat.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	
<p>2019-06-10 08:07:50</p>	<p>Christopher L Hahn Basketball Coach Romney WV</p>	<p>I have coached multiple sports at the Class A level in the past 13 years; basketball, volleyball and football. It is near impossible to build a program in the current system when you have virtually no chance of success against programs that have access to opportunities that our kids do not. Something needs to be done to expand the opportunity for small rural schools to succeed and I believe this proposal has a solid start at doing that. I know you will hear negative comments about this proposal but if you do nothing the same voices that have been being affected will continue to suffer. Please pass this proposal so we can at least have an opportunity to try and find a better way.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	

<p>2019-06-10 08:28:42</p>	<p>Jeremy Kelch AD, Teacher, Coach Hundred High School Hundred WV</p>	<p>I have lived in the small town of Hundred, WV for almost my entire life. Growing up I played every sport that the school offered. Only having a little over 100 students, we rarely compete at a state qualifying level. However, when we do the community comes to life and it is good for everyone. During my playing days in high school, I was on 2 teams that were good enough to play at the state tournament only to be knocked out by schools that had players from other states and attendance zones. My sister had the honor of being on great basketball teams only to be knocked out of contention by these same schools. I didn't really ever understand the problem wholeheartedly until I began coaching. Not only did these schools knock us out of going to states, but were taking our student athletes as well. They would offer them free tuition and even offer their parents jobs. It is sad to see that our small community never really has the chance to go to states because we are in a section with the biggest power house in the state. If the 4 class system doesn't work and Charleston wants the most competitive games, we need to seed the entire state. I've been reading comments from AA and AAA schools not liking the changes, it's probably because they don't want any part of the private schools, because when they play them they get beat. There is a problem when the double and triple A state champs get beat by the single A Champ.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-10 08:34:53</p>	<p>Jack Withrow Scott Depot WV</p>	<p>As a parent of a Winfield High School student, I'm in favor of the new WVSSAC 4-Class Proposal.</p> <p>I'm glad the WVSSAC Board of Controls has taken a step towards a more competitive system. I understand this is a pilot program for basketball and that it may not work and some will not like it. But at least the WVSSAC is willing to try something new.</p> <p>If the pilot program does not work, I would like to see the WVSSAC go back and even out the number of schools in each class.</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

<p>2019-06-10 11:27:11</p>	<p>Steve Wamsley Principal Tygarts Valley Middle/High School Mill Creek WV</p>	<p>I would like to ask the State BOE to support the proposal put forth by the Competitive Balance Committee. The proposal involves all WV schools without prejudice breaking us into 4 classifications. The only schools complaining about the proposal are those only thinking of themselves competing with private schools. The WVSSAC is attempting to do the "right thing" while others are selfishly fighting it. The vote passing the proposal was overwhelming and should be considered much more important than the disagreements of those trying to protect their egos.</p>	<p>A/+</p>	
<p>2019-06-10 13:03:40</p>	<p>Tawny Stilianoudakis Principal Buffalo High School Buffalo WV</p>	<p>Numbers and formulas do not tell the entire story. I am not sure that this is the best solution for kids and sports. I truly worry for the safety of our students. Our students here at BHS may be close to the county seat but that does not mean that our students have opportunities like other students in close proximity. When a sport has ended for our students, they get jobs and are working to pay for their cars, their car insurance, and other necessities such as their cell phone. This is the reality that the numbers do not show for our students.</p>	<p>A/o</p>	
<p>2019-06-10 13:25:36</p>	<p>Keith Wickline Lindside WV</p>	<p>My comments are towards the classification of schools only for basketball. The proposed 4 class system is much better than the current three class system. Although, my views are very simple, the new 4 class proposal is, as it should be, the SSAC admitting the current system is WRONG. But why is it only wrong in basketball. The current AAA teams is surprising fair based upon teams in the top 25% of enrollment compared to the lower 25% in appearances and in winning of state championships. Double A and Single A appears to be the major problem. Based upon double A enrollment numbers the top 25% has won or appeared in state title games in the six major sports 18 times while the lower 25% of enrollment schools only 3 times and no titles. Of the 18 state titles over the last three years in major sports (football, volleyball, boys basketball, girls basketball, softball, baseball) the top 25% has won 12 of the 18, and six was state runner-ups in the same title period.</p> <p>The current system does not provide a fair and level playing field for all schools and more importantly the student athletes. In my opinion that should be goal #1 for the WVSSAC. The new four class system appears to be somewhat better and long</p>	<p>A/o</p>	

		<p>overdue. But only using the new proposal in basketball in like saying "the field is on muddy when one team has the ball." I hope that the WVSSAC and the State Board of Education will put students first and fix the problem across the state in all sports. Create a level field given ever kid a fair opportunity to experience the playoffs and competing for a championship in all sports.</p>		
2019-06-10 14:07:46	Robert Price Wetzel Paden City WV	<p>I think the proposal of a new reclassification system in athletics is a great idea. Not only does this aid in leveling out competition, it actually gives smaller schools in West Virginia an opportunity to succeed.</p>	A/+	
2019-06-10 14:18:54	Paul Armstrong citizen none WILLIAMSTOWN West	<p>After studying the proposal to create four classes for girls and boys basketball only, I do not believe this proposal is in the best interest of our schools or our students.</p> <p>Some of the questionable items in my mind are: 1) I do not feel the distance from the county seat really has any bearing on athletics over our state 2) I am not convinced the number of free/reduced direct certified numbers will fully represent the numbers as it only recognizes the students known to DHHR. When I was a principal, many students qualified that had no relationship to DHHR. 3) Four classes would require an additional day of the basketball tournament and add to students missed class time by a full day.</p> <p>Finally, my opinion is this "competitive balance" is a term used to make it look like something is being done to solve some the debated "advantages" of private schools over public schools. To this end, this proposal fails greatly because, in reality, it will give the private schools an opportunity to win 50% of the basketball titles, whereas today the private schools can only win 33%.</p> <p>I urge the rejection of this proposal.</p>	A/-	
2019-06-10 14:44:33	Michael Goddard Coach/contributor	<p>Simply put, I am in favor of trying a four classification system for West Virginias high schools that participate in basketball. I think the parity it will create will enhance competitive balance among the schools.</p>	A/+	

	Greenbrier County Schools Rainelle WV		
2019-06-10 15:41:59	Derek Ragle Scott Depot WV	<p>Mr. Dolan,</p> <p>I am asking you to please move forward with this proposal. While enrollment numbers play a large part in athletics, they are not the only factor. Location and Economics absolutely play a role in the success level of athletic programs. I applaud you and your colleagues for looking for a solution. I think this has been done to try and find the best method to truly make things as equal as possible, while treating all schools the same. If we can currently operate with 29 schools at the AAA level then surely it will work for other levels.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	A/+
2019-06-10 15:54:29	John Hudson Superintendent Putnam County Schools Winfield WV	<p>I commend the dedication of the WVSSAC staff and participating member school principals that diligently work to make improvements that impact student athletes. The pilot classification for basketball (girls and boys) scheduled to begin this fall (2019) which includes a move for many schools to a higher classification including two schools in Putnam Count is, in my belief, not in the best interests of all student athletes. Winfield High school would perhaps be the only public school to move from AA to AAAA using the factors to classify schools based on new criteria using economic scores, etc. Buffalo High School would move to AA which could result in greater travel and expenses. Poca High would remain in AA but could result in greater travel and expenses. Hurricane High would move to AAAA which again could increase travel and expenses. I would suggest that the West Virginia Board of Education consider delaying this action and instead suggest a study whereby the methods and factors involved in determining the classifications are further debated to provide more equity. It is my understanding that less than 50% of eligible schools voted for the proposal. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	A/-

		<b>§127-3-13.5 Contracts</b>	
2019-05-10 14:48:03	Eddie Summerlin State sports follower Romney WV	I feel that all coaching contracts should come with a 3-5 year right to dismissal by the school for team performance.	NA/o
		<b>§127-3-17.1 WVSSAC Tournaments</b>	
2019-05-10 14:48:03	Eddie Summerlin State sports follower Romney WV	I feel that the State tournaments should alternate between different areas to benefit those teams that travel longer distances and not benefit the Charleston WV area teams to give them a somewhat home field advantage.	NA/o
2019-05-23 09:12:00	Bill Lusk Assistant Basketball Coach Man High School Man WV	<p>After hearing the displeasure of the Class AA softball coaches concerning Field Two in Vienna and given the lighting situation on Field One maybe now is the time to move the State Softball tournament to another location if changes can not be made.</p> <p>As for the other sports I am perfectly fine with the other sports but given the issues with the fields at Vienna, which is not the first time, now is the time to start accepting bids from other places and move the tournaments from Vienna.</p>	NA/o
2019-06-06 08:33:34	Adam Jones Teacher Putnam County Schools Winfield WV	School is about learning, not about sports. I do not really care about this, but my principal is making me type something in here. This is the dumbest thing I have had to do in this job.	NA/o
		<b>§127-3-20.9.f Basketball</b>	

<p>2019-05-23 08:38:47</p>	<p>Parent Man High Man WV</p>	<p>Got to start somewhere so why not start with basketball but also why not include other sports.</p> <p>Baseball and softball would have the same teams in the region as basketball would and I think it would give you a better opportunity to gather data to see if such an idea would work for other sports.</p>	<p>NA/o</p>	
<p>2019-05-23 09:12:00</p>	<p>Bill Lusk Assistant Basketball Coach Man High School Man WV</p>	<p>Some of these kids that play on the AAU circuit may play two, three or as many as four games in one day, which begs the question why only five quarters in West Virginia?</p> <p>If a kid was allowed to play more than five quarters in West Virginia then you could see a increase in JV basketball programs across the state. Schools with small enrollments suffer from the lack of a JV program because they simply don have enough players to divide quarters.</p> <p>For example in Kentucky, there is no quarter limit, but JV basketball games are six minutes long, which in West Virginia is equivalent to three quarters of playing time.</p> <p>I have never understood the five quarter rule and I think it is time for West Virginia to eliminate the rule and allow the kids to play as many quarters as the coach allows them.</p> <p>You see a lot of JV games end with four players or even three players on the court because kids foul out in tight contests and that coach is restricted to use a player that is a varsity player and has already played his amount of JV quarters that the varsity coach allows. Luckily as a coach I have never encountered this but I have played against schools that have had it happen to them and quite frankly it looks bad on the coach but what can you do when your hands are tied.</p> <p>I would not be opposed to see JV contests shortened to six minute quarters like</p>	<p>A/-</p>	

		Kentucky. All I am asking is that the SSAC looks at other states to see how they handle quarter limits but also take into consideration that most of these kids, who take part in summer activities, will more play two or three games in one day.		
		<b>§127-3-Appendix 1</b>		
2019-05-13 10:23:20	Denita Fertig Buffalo Football Eleanor WV	I feel this is so unfair and uncalled for, you are hurting the kids at this small schools by doing this. They cant help that the areas they live in a small and poor communities. whatever happened doing what is best for the kids. so areas like the small schools and believe in what they have.	A/o	
2019-06-06 14:48:29	Daniel Aaron Carr Teacher Winfield High School Buffalo WV	Competition should be based on enrollment only as it has always been. You cannot make a formula that is better than simple enrollment. No school should be punished for its proximity to the county seat or major urban areas.	A/-	
2019-06-09 23:44:54	Timothy Willard CPA Scott Depot WV	I have concerns regarding the impact of the new factors of location and economics on certain schools throughout the state. It is my understanding that Winfield High School, where my twin daughters will attend, will be moved from AA to AAAA after consideration of the new factors, while schools with a much greater number of students will still be AAA. Being moved up 2 categories seems grossly unfair. The fact that Winfield High School is located in the county seat of Putnam County seems irrelevant to what sports classification they should be in for contests. In Putnam County, the county seat is not the largest city in the county and the schools location in the county seat does not give them a competitive advantage over other schools in the state. The economic conditions in the county also vary greatly, so using a county average is very unfair to Poca and Buffalo. If the intent of moving to 4 categories instead of 3 was to address the fact that certain private schools competing in Class A seem to have a competitive advantage over the other public Class A schools, this revised methodology does not seem to accomplish that goal	A/-	

		and instead adversely impacts other schools around the state. I urge the WVSSAC and State Board of Education to reconsider this proposed methodology.		
2019-05-10 10:16:51	David Williamson Parent/Teacher/Coach N/A Madison WV	As a former coach/current parent to future high school athletes, I'd like to see this go through. It gives more teams the chance to make it to Charleston to the state tournament. I'd actually like to see it implemented in all sports.  The 1 caveat that I'd like to see is that each school cannot be moved more than one classification. For example, the numbers I've seen has Winfield in AAAA. Going from AA to AAAA is a huge discrepancy.  Thank You	A/+	
2019-05-10 21:59:32	S G Perry Grandparent Chas WV	This is so wrong. Winfield has a great special ed. program. Now the athletes have to pay?	A/-	
2019-05-14 10:45:51	Trent Sherman Principal Martinsburg High School Martinsburg WV	The proposal of 4 classifications for basketball is a move in the right direction when it comes to fair and balanced play in WV. It will also get more students involved in extra-curricular activities by allowing success at more schools. This proposal may not be the end all be all but it is a step in the right direction.	A/+	
2019-06-03 16:59:27	James Bailes Booster President Buffalo Bison Football Eleanor WV	4 Class Proposal (SSAC) Please take a look at the information, comments, concerns that our group has put together concerning this proposal. We are extremely troubled about the long term effects on many WV high school athletic programs this new proposal could have. For some schools it will be a problem competitively; for some a financial issue; for some it could decrease participation and for several it will affect all of the above.  We believe this to be the most negative and unfair proposal of change that has come out of the SSAC office concerning WV high school sports in the past 50	A/-	

years.

In the past classification for WV high schools has been based solely on student enrollment. This new classification uses a model that involves other criteria in addition to enrollment to figure schools position in the final classification process. A formula is used. The formulas other three areas are areas and numbers that allow the SSAC to get done what they couldn't get done with enrollment figures only. I will try the best I/we can to explain our issues with the formula and the proposals. Its numbers, its complicated—Its meant to be like that although the SSAC will disagree.

We think the numbers for some of the criteria are skewed, inaccurate, inconsistent and unfair and maybe even illegal.

(WHY)

Why the 4 class proposal; Why use additional criteria besides enroll; Why use this additional criteria and mathematical formulas.

Answer- The current leadership of the SSAC and some membered (Class A) schools in the current classification structure want some/most (successful athletically) current Class a Catholic/Private schools moved out of Class A and into a higher classification and they cannot get it done by using enrollment alone.

(The Criteria For The 4 Class Proposal)

70% School Enrollment

10% —(Location 1) How Close Your School Is To County Seat

2) How Close Your School Is To Cities With Population of 10,000 (and above). We have 13 in WV.

10%—(Economics) Has To Do with Free/Reduced Lunches and Medium House Hold Income Of County

\* \*And Yes Theyve made these figures and the formula so complicated a person gets tired of looking and trying to figure it out.

\*\*Again We feel this particular area (Economics) is manipulated to get the results

they need to move those private/Catholic Schools in class. We believed this area to be inaccurate and in fact statistically bias.

Proponents of this proposal say they are seeking competitive balance. I believe their committee was called the fair play committee.

What is competitive balance? What are we trying to achieve? It looks to us that 3 classes based on enrollment with the same number of schools in each class would be equal and balanced.

Again the criteria for the new proposed classification and the reason for it is questionable. it is so blatantly evident why location and economics were added to enrollment as criteria. -- To make sure private schools were moved into Class AA. Yes Greater Beckley, Parkersburg Catholic, Madonna ell remained A. What separates them from the other private schools (Charleston Catholic, Huntington St. Joe, Wheeling Central, Trinity, and Clarksburg Notre Dame)? It is simple, total up the state championships of the 5 that moved and the 3 private schools that remained A. CHAMPIONSHIPS FOLKS CHAMPIONSHIPS!

What does how close you are to a city of 10,000 or how close you are to a county seat have to do with anything? Not being demeaning, Lincoln County is one of the current largest AA schools in the state; they are right outside Charleston and I believe in or near county seat. Those folks have had little or no success in football, baseball, basketbali. The new criteria moves Buffalo of Putnam from Ato AA which means location factors were involved. They struggle to compete in football, basketball now. And theVII move to Class AA. We carry a few schools to failure with the new proposal/criteria so we can move those five private schools and then say we are creating competitive balance and we are being fair.

Webster County—Low in both location and economics. Did they not win state championship? Chapmanville Regional—Best basketball team in the state, state champions. Location low, economics low.

STOP. Please don questions my intelligence. its not how many students, where the school is located or economics. Its not about any of these things. Its about which

Jimmy and Joes/Mary or Mary Anns you have. The oldest saying in athletics.

At Chapmanville you think the 6-9 kid adopted from another country; the starter at Huntington transferring; the two starters at Scott transferring, had anything to do with their success? I think so. And I don't think the kid transferred from Huntington to Chapmanville for academic reasons.

Winfield High School —They are being penalized because of the new criteria. Ripley and Hampshire with 200 more students than Winfield move down a class, while Winfield moves to the highest class. Statistical bias (another casualty) but we got those five private schools moved. I think those four players Chapmanville got would help Winfield more than great location and economics.

Only 3 of 8 Catholic/Private schools use a form of free reduced lunch program.

Public Schools in 55 Counties

Forty counties use the Community Education Provision to figure how many students get free/reduced lunch. Fifteen counties use the traditional (individual signup) method to figure how many students get free reduced lunch.

IS THIS MEAN CALCULATIONS are accurate, consistent, fair. Or is there statistical bias?

Example—Putnam County uses the traditional method for figuring numbers of kids receiving

free reduced lunch; however if Putnam used the Community Education Provision, Buffalo and all other

Putnam County Schools would have many more students getting free and reduced lunches thus keeping Buffalo High School Class A in the new classifications.

Economic Scores From Schools In Same City (note the higher the score, the higher your total score, the higher your classification in the new system)

Public School

Private School

Morgantown HS — 0.45

Trinity HS -0.94

Capital HS -0.33

Charleston Catholic — 0.97

Wheeling Park — 0.38

Wheeling Central Catholic — 0.91

Huntington HS -0.22

Huntington St. Joe — 0.65

Weir HS -0.41

Weirton Madonna — 0.95

Please don't tell me that this economic score is not a bias, skewed, statistically biased figure used in this formula to again affect the classification of Private Catholic schools. Look at economic scores of students in different schools in same cities.

Fifty of West Virginia's 55 counties lost population between 2017 and 2018. Yes, this impacts student population. Kanawha County lost 540, Putnam lost students — POPULATION DECREASING, yet we are going from 3 classes to 4.

NEVER EVER IN ITS HISTORY HAS THE SSAC changed classification alignment and not been prepared to do it in all sports. If this new classification system is so good/ Let's Go. Why just a trial in basketball?

Conflict Interest

Is there a conflict of interest?

Two SSAC Board Members Are Also On the WV Department of Education Board So Mr. Dunlevy and Mr. Wilson belong to a body that makes proposals such as this current 4 class one. And also part of the body that votes to pass or turn down the said proposal. Legal Issues?

If this new proposal and new classification is so good, let's go in all sports. Why don't they, SSAC has plenty of time to get ready.

Why not try a Fall, Winter, and Spring sport? Football, Basketball (boys & girls), and Baseball (boys), Softball (girls). They are considered our so-called major sports. Why not go ahead if this new classification is so good.

How will anything about basketball tell us its okay to go in football, wrestling, or certain girls sports. Is there another formula we are waiting on or is it

1) Add one day state tournament; SSAC will show great financial gains from regionals and state tournaments, so its a success.

2) Or is it because Catholic/Private Schools have more state championships in boys, girls basketball than any other sport. So someone else gets a trophy. Lets give every team one. (We lowered standards for an "N in the public grading system from 93 to 90/Lets lower our athletic standards also —Who Cares!) Lets get back the beginning. As to why didn SSAC go forward in other sports.

SAFETY

SAFETY

They had safety concerns in some sports and that comes from people inside the SSAC office. Hey maybe those enrollment numbers do mater more than the SSAC lets on.

In other words this body (SSAC) goes forward with a proposal of new classifications based on a formula they created and have major concerns of their own if immediately going with it in all sports. UNBELIEVABLE! Legal Issues?

Athletes for two years at some schools would be playing basketball in one class and all other sports in another.

Your telling me that some parents (and should be) concerned that their son/daughter playing a higher class in basketball would not have the same opportunity as other athletes at the same school in another lower class.

Is there a legal question — Equal Opportunity for Success — Schola rships?

- Have you studied first round football playoff scores since we went from 8 to 16 teams? Youll see more isn better.

How many schools not seeded 1, 2, 3, 4 ever won state football championships?

Look at scores of first round games (most not competitive) more teams, more money made, NO SUCCESS

HOWEVER

Mrs. Sullivan pointed out how many different schools in each current class have appeared in the state tournament play in various sports.

Mr. Dolin (not exact quote) said, "Well Ws just not about being in the state tournament, its about winning championships."

Well, Lets go back to 8 or even 4 teams in football playoffs; 8 to 4 teams in basketball — see what schools and their supporters think about that.

Mr. Dolin has an agenda and a targeted group.

- Many people were upset with the small number of schools in Class AAA in the past reclassification — Said AAA became watered down.

In AAA a team could be in a 3 team sectional. Have top seed to automatically in sectional final

(lose) move on to regional and win and then of course be in state tournament. WIN ONE GAME TO GET TO SATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT now thats an accomplishment. Is that really what we want? 5 OF 8 AAA teams lost in sectional finals and advanced to state tournament. One became AAA state champions.

With new proposal that possibility will exist in 4A, 3A, 2A because all those classes will have less schools than current AAA which I described above has now

New Proposal — 28 schools (4A) 28 schools (3A)

27 schools (2A)

41 schools (A)

You also see with new proposal why most top two classes (their schools) not saying

anything negative.

4A mostly old AAA

3A mostly old AA

However when you got to 2A & A— PROBLEM (and thats over 50% schools) thats where most movement occurred and why?

Mr. Dolin has an agenda and a targeted group.

Again why try just basketball?

Number of state championships by Catholic/ Private Schools since 1977.

Cheerleading 4

Cross Country

Football14

Golf16

Volleyball4

Soccer6 (1988 Boys)

Girls Basketball 30

BOYS Basketball

Swimming

Wrestling

Baseball

Softball 0

Boys Tennis

15

Girls Tennis

18

Boys Track

2

Girls Track

2

Mr. Dolin has an agenda and a targeted group.

- State basketball tournament would be extended one more day, start Tuesday. That's another day out of class for athletes and student bodies. Participants for sure like to watch other teams in other classes. More time (days) would be needed for state tournaments in several sports if the new classification spreads. Maybe that's the goal — more time out of classroom. WE DONT NEED MORE CLASSES

- Martinsburg won 7 consecutive football championships. Do we need a formula to move them to  
What about George Washington's 11 consecutive boys state championships in tennis, do we need a formula to move them?

Poca won state football championships in 2001, 2002, 2003 and didn't have another winning season for almost 15 years.  
Same location from county seat Same distances from cities of 10,000  
Same economics.

IT IS PLAYERS. IT IS PLAYERS

\*So many examples by runs by different schools in different sports having runs of championships in the history of high school sports in our state.

When this was first leaked out me and some other coaches thought someone was having some fun, playing a joke, we at it. Then we found it was a bad joke unfortunately coming from SSAC.  
I've been told the SSAC didn't think it would even pass state board for comments.

\*But politically all the homework was done and it passed!

Vote to pass new proposal — only 47.5% voted.  
They (SSAC) brag about the vote to pass this proposal 111-26.

(in 2017 there were 288 membered schools in SSAC) 137 participated in this vote to pass 4 class proposal — 47.5%

Well thats all that were there —well that still less than 50% of members passed a major proposal for 100%.

DONT MAKE THE MISTAKE. IF IT DOESNT AFFECT MY SCHOOL- WHY BE CONCERENED?

BECAUSE THE NEXT FORMULA THEY COME UP WITH... IT JUST MIGHT TARGET YOU!!

6/10/19

The Honorable Eric J. Tarr  
The Senate of West Virginia  
Capitol Building 1, Room M-441  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0800

I have concerns with the WVSSAC suggested changes in athletic classes. I believe the suggested formula causes too severe of a change in classes for schools on the fringe. Winfield High School, for example jumps from upper AA to lower AAAA. In addition to risking injury to athletes who compete in a class that produces a significantly higher number of exceptionally larger athletes, it greatly limits the school's ability to compete.

I have expressed my concern with the WVSSAC chairman after the formula was proposed. From that conversation I understand that States vary greatly in their approach to stratifying their classes. The suggested formula change was not based on a precedent. Rather it was based on the following assumptions: Population (70%) has been the traditional base. Proximity to the county seat (20%) has to do with how many potential athletes could be lost or gained relative to their proximity for travel to/from the school and a coach's ability to solve those travel challenges. Income per capita (10%) has to do with how likely students are to have access to supplemental training or extra-district sport participation to grow their skillset.

While these criteria all affect the athlete pool available, the numbers are arbitrary. The formula obviously produces problems with schools jumping two classes at a time and becoming placed with much, much larger schools. I recommend that the WVBOE ask the WVSSAC to reconsider their formula recommendation. For example, a rolling 4 year average of student population may soften class changes. Different weighting on income certainly needs reconsidered as well, especially in the changing economy of the State. A significant change in a small district, such as where there are gas booms, could doom a school to non-competitive athletics.

A/-