

## **Basketball Coaches Association of New York, Inc.**

**Re: Comments related to Request to NYSPHSAA to Restore the Number of Allowable Contests. A Request to Restore the Number of Allowable Contests.**

October 2, 2009

### Introduction:

The Basketball Coaches Association of New York, Inc. is a professional and service organization of basketball coaches from throughout the entire State of New York. We advocate for coaches, players and the game of basketball itself within our state.

We understand NYSPHSAA commitment to provide as many athletic opportunities for as many students as possible. We fully support the structure and goals of the NYSPHSAA. We do applaud NYSPHSAA's concern for budget issues faced by member schools.

We fully agree with the educational value of interscholastic sports programs as stated in The State Education Department's *Educational Framework for Interscholastic Athletic Programs*, including the four guideline documents: Mission Statement, Educational Goals of a Quality Interscholastic Athletic Program, Action Steps of a Quality Interscholastic Athletic Program and the Four C's of Athletic Excellence, *competence, character, civility and citizenship*. We also agree with the **General Objectives** of the NYSPHSAA and the **Constitution of NYSPHSAA, Inc.** We do think the reduction in contests has made it more difficult to fulfill some of the objectives in regard to adequate funding and encouragement of interscholastic activities.

### General Comments:

We understand the General Objectives of the NYSPHSAA for its member schools does not have as a top priority:

1. Scholastic sports governed by other bodies such as the PSAL, etc. (although as a member of the NYS Federation it does concern itself with rules and regulations, e.g. eligibility and number of allowed contests.)
2. School sporting events run for charitable organizations. (Concerned with exploitation of student athletes)
3. AAU teams and programs.
4. School Booster clubs.
5. Trying to get high school athletes college scholarships or spots on college teams.

### Concerning BCANY

1. We are NOT trying to tell the NYSPHSAA what to do. We are NOT trying to run the NYSPHSAA.
2. We are not a bunch of selfish people, we are trying to do what is best for our athletes and sport.
3. We are asking that the NYSPHSAA try to view the situation through our eyes.

4. We are asking the NYSPHSAA to please consider if the financial savings from the reduction in the number of games been worth the lost opportunities for student athletes.
5. We are asking the NYSPHSAA to please consider our situation and thoughts.

As an organization of Basketball Coaches, we are asking for the number of contests and games to be restored for all sports to their previous number. We do not speak for other sports, so the thoughts expressed relate directly to scholastic basketball.

### **Our Concerns:**

#### **A. Concern: The actual reduction in the number of allowable sports contests may have effected some sports more than others.**

1. The cut in the number of contests was done fairly and comprehensively. However the results seemed to effect some sports more than others. Some sports rarely if ever scheduled their full number of allowable contests, therefore they were not really effected. (e.g. gymnastics, winter track, rifle, skiing, etc. Sports that regularly scheduled their allowable number were effected. (e.g. basketball, soccer, volleyball, etc.)
2. While the total dollar figure of money that could be saved by reducing the number of contests in all sports in New York Sate was large, the actual amount probably saved by each school might not have been that large, depending upon the number of sports teams they have. The actual amount of money saved in relation to that school's total budget might not have been very large.
3. Based on the numbers provided by NYSPHSAA it was projected that a school would save approximately \$1,000. by having both their boys (JV and varsity) as well as their girls (JV and varsity) teams play two less games. The amount might have been less at those schools who charge admission to their basketball games.
4. In a survey compiled by BCANY the average savings per school closely agrees with the numbers projected by NYSPHSAA.

#### **B. Concern: There is a vastly differing number of games that are allowed by other governing bodies within New York State:**

1. Scholastic basketball teams within NYSPHSAA were already at a competitive disadvantage concerning the number of basketball games that could be played with their counter parts in the other governing bodies that make up the New York State Federation.(PSAL, CHSAA, and AISA). In some of the other organizations they can play 24 regular season games, which is a significant amount. In some instances this might cause a student athlete to transfer to a school which plays more games.

2. With less games, NYSPHSAA basketball players are at a disadvantage for development and opportunities in game conditions with their peers in the state. An objective of the NYS Federation is to have a “level playing field,” which is not happening with the disparity in the number of games allowed.

**C. Concern: There is a vastly differing number of games that are allowed in other states.**

1. We conducted a survey of the 25 other states that have state basketball coaches associations. (attached) Only Nebraska plays fewer games than New York.
2. The only other state to reduce the number of contests was Florida. In July, the Florida High School Athletic Association voted to restore the contests they had eliminated due to a Title IX lawsuit.
3. We know the NYSPHSAA is not in the business of trying to help student athletes get college athletic scholarships and positions on a college team. As scholastic coaches one of our goals is to help athletes do so. Our scholastic athletes who desire to compete in college are in reality competing against athletes within our state (PSAL, CHSAA, AISA) as well as from other states for scholarships and positions on sports teams. A reduction in games does not help them.
4. As with our concern for comparison within New York State, in comparing with student athletes in other states, with less games, NYSPHSAA basketball players are at a disadvantage for development and opportunities in game conditions.

**D. Concern: The reduction in games has adversely effected in season tournaments.**

The NYSPHSAA reduction in games does effect tournaments and games operated by members schools for charitable causes and organizations. With two less games to schedule many teams do not have available games to participate in such large events as: Glens Falls Coaches vs. Cancer Tournament, Stop DWI Tournament held in Binghamton, The Josh Palmer Coaches vs. Cancer Tournament in Elmira, etc. Some are also having trouble finding teams to participate are the many smaller tournaments hosted by individual schools throughout the state, named to honor individuals from their community. (Union-Endicott Jim Roma tournament, Oneonta’s Tony Drago Tournament, etc.)

With the reduction in the number of games, tournaments large and small have struggled to find teams to participate and some have ceased to exist.

**E. Concern: With one fewer home game, some athletic booster clubs have one less opportunity to raise funds.**

With one less home game per team, this could effect the fund raising ability of sports booster clubs who raise money to augment school athletic budgets.

**F. Concern: The reduction in the number of games could cause some AAU programs and coaches to increase their influence over scholastic players.**

As professional educators and NYS certified coaches we think we are in the best position to have a positive influence over school aged athletes.

Perhaps more than any other sports, basketball and soccer have to react to a significant impact of AAU programs and teams on scholastic teams. We do recognize that many AAU programs are correctly operated providing wholesome programming for athletes. However, there are AAU programs that may not be operated in such a positive manner. Specifically, basketball coaches throughout the country are unified in working very hard to reemphasize the role of scholastic programs and coaches. High school basketball coaches were concerned with the influence of **some** AAU programs for quite some time. The reduction in games exacerbates the issue. High School coaches are working to significantly reduce the influence of some of the “wayward” AAU programs and big money shoe companies on scholastic players.

Scholastic coaches organizations are communicating with the NCAA and the new *iHoops* program jointly formed by the NCAA and NBA to eliminate the all to often influence of “uncertified coaches,” The negative aspects of many AAU programs have been well chronicled in the media.

The high school coach in many instances is already losing the battle to AAU programs AAU coaches often have a tremendous influence over the college recruitment of a player. Some AAU coaches even tell players and parents that the high school coach is not properly developing the player. The increase in the number of “personal basketball coaches,” is also a big problem for the high school coach. We have high school players who practice or play with an AAU team after a high school team practice is completed for the day.

It was recently suggested by an AAU person that to make up for the two games cut by the NYSPHSAA that it “might be a good idea to register the high school hoop teams as AAU teams (which most of the kids play anyway) and then run the AAU "events" over the weekends that high school teams have as tournaments. (For example over Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays). These contests would not be school sponsored but the players get to play in additional games.

The New York State Education Department has established guidelines for certifying coaches and the NYSPHSAA works at providing safe, sound, guidelines for athletic competition. At this time, these same high standards do not exist in a large number of AAU programs and tournaments. Restoring the 2 games would be a small, yet important step to help scholastic coaches continue to have more opportunities to coach players in organized games. Playing fewer scholastic games further reduces the influence of the high school coach with a player as compared to the AAU coach.

We understand that many of these thoughts are parallel with the NYSPHSAA's mission and goals. All of them are of concern to us as coaches as they do effect the positive development of student athletes, something that is important to both the NYSPHSAA and BCANY.

We are respectfully asking the NYSPHSAA to help scholastic basketball coaches in New York State to be better able to do the job they are trained to do. **We respectfully ask the NYSPHSAA to please restore the number of allowable contests in all sports back to the number prior to January 2009.** As an option, individual Sections and School Districts could be allowed to set a lower number of contests.

We welcome the opportunity to work together with the NYSPHSAA on this issue and others for the betterment of athletics in our state.

State			Probable Total for Regular Season
Arizona	19	<b>PLUS</b> 2 tournaments	23
Florida	25	Cut from 25 to 20 in the spring -- then restored to 25 this summer.	25
Illinois		No response	
Indiana	18	<b>PLUS</b> 2 tournaments <b>OR</b> 20 regular season games <b>PLUS</b> 1 tournament.	22
Iowa	21	Lets schools do less if they deem it viable/necessary...	21
Kansas	20		20
Kentucky	21	<b>PLUS</b> 2 tournaments with up to 4 games in each Tournament, the 2 tournaments each count as 1 game <b>OR</b> you can play 23 games	23 to 29
Massachusetts	20		20
Michigan	20		20
Minnesota	26	Most play 24 or 25. It is a school decision not a state decision	24
Missouri	22	16 games & 3 tournaments <b>OR</b> 18 games & 2 tournaments <b>OR</b> 20 games & 1 tournament	22
Nebraska	17		17
New Hampshire	18	<b>PLUS</b> one Christmas Tournament, limit of one game per day or 5 quarters	20
New York	18		18
North Carolina	20	<b>PLUS</b> One Tournament (3 games) <b>PLUS</b> one Endowment Game	24
Ohio	20	<b>PLUS</b> 1 Foundation Game, Proposal to add 1 more game in each of the next two years	20
Oklahoma	23 or 25	<b>Football playing schools</b> get 16 games & 2 tournaments (tournaments are 3 games) <b>OR</b> 14 games & 3 tournaments for total of 23 games. <b>Non-Football playing schools</b> get 18 games & 2 tournaments <b>OR</b> 16 games & 3 tournaments for a total of 25 games.	25
South Carolina	18	<b>PLUS</b> 2 tournaments <b>OR</b> 20 regular season games <b>PLUS</b> 1 tournament.	22
South Dakota	20		20
Southern California	20	<b>PLUS</b> Tournaments, most teams play minimum of 26 games	26
Tennessee	24	Tournaments count as 2 games, <b>PLUS</b> 2 pre-season games if state assoc. gets 80% of gate	26
Texas	21	<b>PLUS</b> 3 tournaments, limited to 2 games per day = 6 games in a tournament.	27
Utah	21		21
Vermont	20	<b>Plus</b> 4 scrimmages, Up to 4 State Tourn games...most schools play 24 games	24
Washington	20		20