

## Extracurricular Opportunities for All West Virginia Children: “Every Child, Every Opportunity”

The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission states in their Beliefs and Objectives:

“The Commission believes that a controlled activities program is a strong factor in the development of courage, personality, cooperation and leadership. “ **This opportunity should be extended to all students in West Virginia.**

### COMMON ARGUMENTS AGAINST EQUAL PARTICIPATION:

1. **The student should be enrolled in the school.** The home-schooled or private schooled student must enroll or register with the public school of attendance, based on residency.
2. **If the student does not attend the public school, that student should not be allowed to participate in the public extracurricular activities.** A student, regardless of the method of education (home school, private or public) is a member of the community. As long as public extracurricular activities are funded with tax money, these activities should be available to all students.
3. **Students need to be part of the school to be part of the team.** Many public, private and home school students compete together on community sports leagues and programs. These children are not “outsiders” or “disrupters,” but residents of our state and members of our communities.
4. **It would not be fair. Homeschoolers have different academic standards.** Home schoolers may have different standards but they have equal outcomes – graduation from high school. Over 30 states have established acceptable academic standards for eligibility.
5. **Extra students will cost the school more money.** Most school sports teams will not add extra positions to a team. There is no additional cost if more students try out for a sport. Additionally, most school extracurricular activities are funded in part by fundraisers, which the home school or private school student would participate.
6. **These extra students will overwhelm an already crowded system.** According to 2015 Florida data (> 15 years of equal participation), 2.1% of Florida home school students participated in extracurricular activities and 0.6% of all Florida student athletes are homeschoolers. For WV, this opportunity would create approximately 1 extra student every 3 schools.
7. **Academically ineligible students will become home-schooled to get back on the team.** An ineligible public school student would need to spend one full year as a home schooled student to even attempt to regain eligibility. Research obtained from other states do not indicate this is a common problem.
8. **What about the liability?** Any insurance provided by a district school board for participants in extracurricular activities shall cover a student permitted to participate.
9. **What about disciplinary issues?** A non-public school athlete would be disciplined the same way as a public school athlete, by the teacher, coach or athletic director.
10. **What extra-curricular activities are included?** Includes but is not limited to any academic, artistic, athletic, recreational, or other activity offered by a school.
11. **It is not fair. This bill would allow a non-member (WVSSAC) school student to play at a member school, if their school doesn’t offer that sport. Member school students can only play at the school in which they are enrolled.** Other states (ie Colorado, Florida) allow students (public or non-public) to dual-enroll to allow participation in another public school if their attended school does not have a particular sport. The WVSSAC could change their rules to afford all students every opportunity to succeed.
12. **It is not fair. There is no attendance policy for home schooled students.** No there is not. But home schooled students are still required to put in sufficient time to achieve the required academic standards for participation.

**FACTS:**                   **33 states allow equal participation for all students**  
                                  **10 states had proposed legislation in 2015-16 for equal participation**  
                                  **7 states have non-equitable participation**

**This works in other states. Please allow all students in WV all possible opportunities to succeed.**