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# Minnesota State High School League

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The Office of the Legislative Auditor completed an evaluation of the Minnesota State High School League in April 2017. The full report can be accessed at [www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us](http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us). As part of this work, we surveyed designated representatives of member schools for their perspectives on issues related to transfer student eligibility, League rulemaking, and League governance.

To survey our population, we obtained from the Minnesota State High School League the names and contact information of representatives to the League as reported by member schools. Most often, high school representatives to the League were activities administrators.

We used an online questionnaire as our survey method. To help develop the survey instrument, we requested and received feedback on a draft survey from several member school representatives.

In September 2016, we distributed our survey to member school representatives through email correspondence. We received a small number of return email notices with invalid or undeliverable addresses. We also sent two reminder notices to increase our survey response rate.

We received 340 responses from 479 member school representatives surveyed, for an overall response rate of 71 percent. Responses to individual questions and each question's response rate are reported in the attached document. For some questions, total percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.



Note: Survey respondents completed this survey online. For this document, the Office of the Legislative Auditor recreated the survey questions to post them and the results on the office's website. The appearance is different than the online survey, and some questions and instructions specific to the online medium are omitted. The question wording and general instructions are the same.

# Survey of High School Activities Administrators Minnesota State High School League



## State of Minnesota OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION

Thank you for answering these questions about the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) and student eligibility for interscholastic activities. We recognize that responsibilities for handling student eligibility issues may vary among high schools. This survey is intended for individuals who are currently designated by their school as responsible for certifying student eligibility and reporting decisions to the Minnesota State High School League.

Please answer these questions as they pertain to your experience working with MSHSL or applying MSHSL student-eligibility bylaws and policies. **To complete this questionnaire, you likely will need a copy of the MSHSL Official Handbook for reference purposes.** MSHSL makes available an online version of the handbook at [www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org).

**Please complete the survey by September 27, 2016.**

Only evaluation staff at the Office of the Legislative Auditor will have access to your individual responses. In our final report, you will not be identified and your answers will not be attributed to you or your school. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Valerie Bombach at 651-296-1803 or [valerie.bombach@state.mn.us](mailto:valerie.bombach@state.mn.us).

## **Background**

This survey is intended for the individual who is responsible for certifying student eligibility for League-sponsored activities and reporting to MSHSL on behalf of your school. If you do not perform these duties, please forward this survey to the individual who has been designated with this responsibility. Thank you!

1. Please enter your name. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please enter your e-mail address. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Please enter your school name. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which title best describes your current employment? *Mark one.*

(n = 340)

Activities Director	72.1%
Athletic Director	20.0
Principal	5.0
Assistant Principal	1.2
Administrative Assistant	0.0
Other	1.8

5. At your current school of employment, how long have you had primary responsibility for certifying student eligibility for League-sponsored interscholastic activities? *Please provide **total number of years and not full-time-equivalent estimates**. For example, two years with primary responsibility in either a full-time or a part-time position should be counted as two years. If less than one year, report as .5, for example.* \_\_\_\_\_ Range: 0-43 years Median: 5 years (n = 340)
6. Prior to your current school of employment, were you employed at a different school(s) in a position with primary responsibility for certifying student eligibility for League-sponsored interscholastic activities? *Mark one.*

(n = 340)

Yes	19.1%
No	80.9

- 6a. What is your total current and prior employment in positions with primary responsibility for certifying students for interscholastic activities. *Please provide **total number of years and not full-time-equivalent estimates**. If less than one year, report as .5, for example.* \_\_\_\_\_  
(Reported only for those who answered “Yes” to Question 6.)  
Range: 1-31 years Median: 7.5 years (n = 64)

**School Administration of Student Eligibility**

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about student eligibility at your school for League-sponsored events? *Mark one response for each statement. Refer to your MSHSL Official Handbook if needed. (We address Transfer Student Eligibility in the next section.)*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know or No Opinion
League Bylaw 300, section (1), provides reasonable procedures to contest a school's student eligibility decision and request a fair hearing. (n = 338)	4.1%	4.1%	29.3%	59.8%	2.7%
League Bylaw 300, section (2), General Eligibility Review and appeal processes provide adequate due process for students. (n = 336)	4.8	4.8	28.0	60.4	2.1
Student participation in interscholastic activities is a privilege and not a right. (n = 330)	4.8	1.2	5.8	86.1	2.1
My school has adequate knowledge and resources to determine student eligibility for interscholastic <u>athletic</u> activities. (n = 333)	3.3	3.3	16.5	75.7	1.2
My school has adequate knowledge and resources to determine student eligibility for interscholastic <u>fine arts and non-athletic</u> activities. (n = 338)	3.0	4.4	21.9	65.4	5.3
My school provides adequate, timely information to families regarding student eligibility for interscholastic activities. (n = 338)	3.6	0.9	18.9	74.6	2.1

8. Has your school adopted stronger penalties for student eligibility violations when compared with League student eligibility bylaws? *Mark one.*

(n = 338)

Yes	38.8%
No	58.9
Do not know	2.4

## **Transfer Student Eligibility**

Please respond to the following questions about League Bylaw 111, Transfer and Residence, and related transfer student eligibility criteria and review and appeal processes.

9. Have you been involved in the determination of at least one transfer student's eligibility under League Bylaw 111 in the past three years? *Mark one.*

(n = 338)

No, I have not been involved in handling any transfer student eligibility determinations for either a Sending school or Receiving school.	6.8%
Yes, I have been involved in handling at least one transfer student eligibility determination for either a Sending School or Receiving School.	93.2

- 9a. *If yes, mark all that apply.*

(n = 314)

On behalf of a Receiving School, I certified at least one transfer student's eligibility status to participate in League-sponsored events.	95.6%
On behalf of a Sending School, I provided information for at least one transfer student's eligibility determination to participate in League-sponsored events.	89.8

10. Which of the following, if any, is the most significant challenge to determining eligibility of transfer students? *Mark one.*

(n = 334)

I do not experience challenges determining eligibility of transfer students.	19.2%
My school rarely handles transfer students or I am unfamiliar with the process.	5.7
Activities administrators and coaches are not provided sufficient advance notice of students transferring into my school.	3.9
Most initial documentation from families is insufficient and requires follow up.	17.7
Most initial documentation from Sending school is insufficient and requires follow up.	3.3
League staff do not provide timely responses to my questions or transfer form.	0.3
League bylaws and policies are difficult to interpret and administer.	7.8
Students enrolled in online school courses involve additional complications.	8.4
Families do not understand the League bylaws and processes.	29.3
Other	4.5
<i>Please specify Other.</i> _____	

11. In your experience, how often do League member schools comply with transfer student eligibility and reporting requirements? *Mark one.*

(n = 337)

Always or almost always	82.8%
Sometimes	8.3
Never or almost never	0.9
Do not know or no opinion	8.0

12. Among students who transfer schools through open enrollment, how frequently is open enrollment utilized, in your experience, for the following reasons? *Mark one response for each reason.*

	Always or Almost Always	Sometimes	Never or Almost Never	Don't Know or No Opinion
Academic interests (n = 333)	11.4%	59.2%	20.1%	9.3%
Personal/family reasons (n = 332)	41.0	50.9	0.9	7.2
Athletic opportunities (n = 334)	14.1	53.9	23.7	8.4

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark one response for each statement. Refer to your MSHSL Official Handbook if needed.*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know or No Opinion
Overall, the League's current student transfer Bylaw 111 and related policies are adequate to help ensure competitive equity among schools. (n = 336)	4.5%	11.0%	38.4%	42.3%	3.9%
Overall, the League's current student transfer Bylaw 111 and related policies are adequate to control student transfers solely for athletic reasons. (n = 338)	5.6	12.1	37.3	41.7	3.3
Bylaw 111 and related transfer policies do not matter because families and/or schools will find a way to work around the rules. (n = 338)	20.7	31.7	31.7	12.4	3.6
Bylaw Policy 111 transfer eligibility <u>appeal and hearing process</u> provides fair and adequate due process for students. (n = 338)	3.8	7.4	37.0	43.8	8.0
Bylaw Policy 111.3(F)-(G) provides sufficient information about obtaining an independent hearing. (n = 337)	3.3	5.9	33.5	48.1	9.2

14. How would you rate the following aspects of League Bylaw 111, Transfer and Residence, and related appeal policies and procedures? *Mark one response for each statement. Refer to your MSHSL Official Handbook if needed.*

	Too Limited	About Right	Too Permissive	Don't Know or No Opinion
Under Bylaw 111, Board Policy Definitions, the League definition of a "transfer" student is: (n = 337)	5.3%	88.4%	1.2%	5.0%
Under Bylaw 111.B(i-v), the five provisions to allow transfer students to be considered eligible for interscholastic events are: (n = 332)	19.9	74.7	1.5	3.9
Under Bylaw Policy 111.2(A)-(F), the circumstances for allowing an <u>appeal</u> of a transfer eligibility decision are: (n = 333)	20.7	72.1	1.2	6.0
For a transfer student determined as ineligible, Bylaw 111 allows the student to play non-varsity, participate at the Sending school, or return to former school within 15 days. These participation options are: (n = 335)	7.5	78.5	8.7	5.4

15. What changes, if any, should be made to the League Bylaw 111, Transfer and Residence, or related appeal policies and procedures regarding transfer students?



**League Governance and Administration**

16. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of League governance and administration? *Mark one response for each aspect.*

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know or No Opinion
The division of responsibilities between the League and my school for handling student eligibility for League-sponsored events. (n = 337)	1.2%	5.6%	27.9%	61.7%	3.6%
Training and reference materials provided by League staff regarding student eligibility for League-sponsored events. (n = 335)	0.9	3.6	32.2	60.3	3.0
The League's online system for reporting student transfers. (n = 335)	0.9	4.8	29.3	60.0	5.1
The League's process for creating, adopting, and amending League bylaws. (n = 334)	2.7	8.4	33.2	46.4	9.3
Opportunities for member school input into League policies and procedures. (n = 334)	4.8	10.2	37.4	41.0	6.6
Availability of information about activities and decisions of the League's Board of Directors. (n = 335)	2.1	5.7	33.1	55.5	3.6
Information regarding <u>student eligibility requirements</u> posted on the League website for the public. (n = 335)	1.5	6.0	30.7	57.6	4.2
Information regarding <u>eligibility appeals and hearing procedures</u> posted on the League website for the public. (n = 335)	2.4	9.3	30.7	50.4	7.2
Ease of use of the League website when seeking information about student eligibility and transfer requirements. (n = 336)	3.6	8.6	36.9	47.9	3.0

17. What changes, if any, would you make to aspects of the League's administration referenced above in Question 16?

18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about League governance and administration? *Mark one response for each statement.*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know or No Opinion
The League Central Office makes the right decisions about student eligibility for League-sponsored events. (n = 335)	1.5%	4.5%	34.3%	51.9%	7.8%
The League Central Office makes the right decisions when processing requests for <u>independent hearings</u> . (n = 335)	1.2	5.1	20.3	37.3	36.1
The League's <u>bylaws</u> regarding student eligibility are well written and easy to understand. (n = 335)	3.3	14.6	41.5	37.3	3.3
The League's <u>policies/procedures</u> regarding student eligibility are well written and easy to understand. (n = 333)	3.0	12.9	42.3	38.4	3.3

19. What changes, if any, would you make to the aspects of League administration referenced above in Question 18?

20. How do you rate the following aspects of League administration? *Mark one response for each aspect.*

	Too Much	About Right	Too Little	Don't Know or No Opinion
League involvement in local decisions about student eligibility is: (n = 331)	8.8%	83.4%	2.7%	5.1%
League monitoring and verification of local compliance with League student eligibility bylaws and policies for <u>athletics</u> is: (n = 331)	2.7	87.9	5.1	4.2
League monitoring and verification of local compliance with League student eligibility bylaws and policies for <u>fine arts and non-athletic activities</u> is: (n = 333)	1.5	80.8	6.9	10.8

21. In what ways, if any, can the League be of more assistance to schools and activities administrators regarding student eligibility for League-sponsored activities?

22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark one response for each statement.*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know or No Opinion
The Minnesota Department of Education should be more involved in League processes for creating student eligibility bylaws and policies. (n = 334)	59.3%	22.8%	10.5%	1.8%	5.7%
The Minnesota Department of Education should be more involved in transfer student eligibility determinations. (n = 334)	61.4	22.2	9.0	2.1	5.4
The League Board of Directors should be more directly involved in transfer student eligibility determinations. (n = 334)	31.1	35.0	22.2	4.5	7.2
Member schools have sufficient input into activities of the League Central Office. (n = 332)	3.9	12.0	49.1	28.3	6.6
Members of the public have sufficient opportunities for input into League bylaws and policies. (n = 334)	6.6	16.2	35.3	16.8	25.1

23. What changes, if any, should be made to oversight of League activities?

24. Do you have any additional comments?

25. We are seeking examples of individual survey quotes for possible use in our final report. Would you grant permission to our office to use your survey response(s) for this purpose? Again, your responses to this questionnaire will not be attributed to you or your school in our final report.

(n = 328)

Yes, I grant permission to the Office of the Legislative Auditor to use my individual response(s) as an example in the final report.	64.6%
No, please do not use my responses as examples.	35.4

Thank you for responding to our survey!