



Alignment Committee Minutes April 20, 2015– 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: 5A North, Joe Pisani, Massaponax High School, served as chair; 6A North, Matt Ragone, South County High School; 6A South, Cherif Sadki, Gar-Field High School; 5A South, Dave Kannewurf, Atlee High School; 4A North, Ron Petrella, Heritage (LC) High School; 4A South, Randy Johnson, Dinwiddie High School; 3A East, Buddy Herndon, Spotsylvania High School; 3A West, Jon Hartness, (alternate for Steve Spangler) Cave Spring High School; 2A East, Dan Jones, King William High School; 2A West, Jamie Talbott, James River High School; 1A East, Nat Elliott, Surry County High School; 1A West Stan Dunham, Northwood High School; Ken Tilley, VHSL. Others: Tom Dolan, Joyce Sisson, Shawn Knight and Lora Bickley, recording secretary; as well as Bob Rose and Gerald Carsley, Colonial Heights High School.

Members absent: Dave Jeck, Fauquier County Schools.

- I. **Agenda Approval:** Ron Petrella moved, Stan Dunham seconded and the committee voted 12-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

- II. **Purpose of Meeting:** Chairman Pisani reviewed the following items in regard to the purpose of the meeting.
 - A. Discuss alignment issues and region concerns
 - B. Discuss survey results
 - C. Discuss proposed legislation and criteria policy
 - D. Provide recommendations to Executive Committee

- III. **Items included for Review:**
 - A. 2015 VHSL Alignment Survey Results
 - B. March 31, 2012 ADM Figures
 - C. VHSL By-Laws, Section 10: CLASSIFICATION (includes amendment proposal)
 - D. Criteria Policy Proposal
 - E. Alignment Power Point

- IV. **Region reports and alignment discussion:**

6A South:	No report.
6A North:	Region meets April 29.
5A South:	Region meets April 29 (ADs) and May 6 (all).
5A North:	Region meets May 5.
4A North:	Region meets April 30.
4A South:	Region favors four-year cycle with buffer and Option #3; ADs meet May 21.
3A East:	Region meets April 22.
3A West:	Jon Hartness reported his region is in favor of eliminating conferences and prefers
Option	#3 on the survey. Region ADs will meet April 22, and full region meets April 29.

- 2A East: Dan Jones indicated his region is already implementing Option #3 and they are satisfied with the current system, but are willing to move forward with Option #3. Region ADs will meet June 8.
- 2A West: Jamie Talbott noted his region has travel concerns and has already made adjustments. Region ADs will meet June 3 and (full region meets) June 10.
- 1A East: Nat Elliott reported his region prefers Option #3. They have addressed some of their concerns and the ADs will bring forward a recommendation for a vote at their next meeting on April 30 to cut football representation from 16 to 12.
- 1A West: Stan Dunham noted that they have difficulty in securing sites for region games and they do schedule both conference and district games during the regular season. Region meets April 29.

V. **Review 2015 Alignment Survey Results:** The committee reviewed the results from the survey. Ken noted that we received a good response. The following items were noted from their discussions:

- (1) There are three concerns that continue to warrant efforts to improve: travel, finances and loss of instructional time.
- (2) Unanimously feel we need to keep the six-classification system and work to address concerns.

VI. **Discuss proposed legislation and criteria policy:**

SECTION 10: CLASSIFICATION

10-1-1 Classification-To equalize opportunities in competitive activities sponsored by the League, schools shall be classified into classification groups according to the following procedures: a VHSL Alignment Committee, made up of one representative appointed by each region and a superintendent chairman appointed by the League chairman, shall develop a plan assigning all schools for a ~~two~~ four-year period to a district, conference, region and group classification. For classification purposes, the membership of a school shall be the March 31 average daily membership figures submitted by school divisions to the State Department of Education for grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. The alignment plan adopted for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years may be extended for an additional two-year period allowing for realignment as prescribed below during the mid-point of a four-year alignment cycle. Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, the Alignment Committee shall use March 31 average daily membership figures from an odd-numbered school year (e.g., ~~2011-12~~ 2017-18) and shall present its plan to the Executive Committee for approval at the first meeting of ~~an~~ the next even numbered school year to go into effect in the next odd-numbered school year. A school may appeal its assignment to the Alignment Committee. The Alignment Committee shall conduct a hearing to evaluate each appeal during which one representative of the school shall be permitted to present evidence in support of the appeal. The Alignment Committee shall render its decision in response to the appeal and shall inform the appellant school within 30 days. The Alignment Committee also shall publish a summary report of all appeals, and its justification in each case, as an appendix to its final formal recommended alignment plan when it is submitted to the Executive Committee.

A school may then appeal the Alignment Committee's decision to the Executive Committee. No hearing shall be conducted by the Executive Committee in response to the appeal. Instead, the Executive Committee's review of the appeal shall be limited to an evaluation of the written record of the original appeal as published in the appendix of the alignment plan. The Executive Committee shall then issue its decision in response to all such appeals as amendments to its final motion to approve the formal alignment

plan. The VHSL's Executive Director shall inform each appellant school of the Executive Committee's decision. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be final.

~~A provision shall exist for dealing with~~ A school may appeal to the Alignment Committee to change its specific individual classification and to be realigned to another specific classification ~~school realignments as determined to be appropriate by the Alignment Committee~~ during the mid-point of the four-year alignment cycle. The Alignment Committee shall determine ~~what~~ whether it recommends that a schools should be ~~realigned~~-classified, or a group of schools realigned, based on significant changes in school enrollment or other compelling reasons. After the committee obtains March 31 average daily membership figures from the odd-numbered school year for the mid-point of the four-year alignment cycle (e.g., 2017-18), it shall present any proposed changes to the Executive Committee for approval at the first meeting of the next even numbered school year to go into effect in the next odd-numbered school year. Schools may file appeals as described in the section above.

VII. **Recommendations to Executive Committee:** The following are recommendation to the Executive Committee.

A. **Option #3:** Dan Jones moved, Randy Johnson seconded and the committee voted 12-0 to recommend implementing Option #3 (see below) beginning with the 2017-18 and 2018-19 alignment cycle.

Option #3: Legislate four regions per class (12-14 schools per region**) and remove conferences altogether. Play a district schedule and then use the smaller regions as the playoff grouping.

**The committee noted that the actual number of schools per region will be subject to adjustments.

B. **Four-year Alignment Cycle:** Ron Petrella moved, Cherif Sadki seconded and the committee voted 12-0 to recommend implementing the four-year alignment cycle beginning with the 2015-16 school year based on the proposed criteria for mid-cycle adjustments (below). The justification for this recommendation is that it will help stabilize schools' status.

At the mid-point of a four-year cycle a school will remain in its current classification if the school is no more than 5% above the highest school's previous ADM within the classification in which they wish to remain.

VIII. **Alignment Committee Proposed Timeline:** The committee felt it is important to meet again in August after having had an opportunity to meet with their regions and begin educating their members. In August they will bring back any concerns that have been expressed to them. One of the major complaints of the six-classifications was the membership did not feel like it was adequately vetted, and this committee is adamant they want to educate the membership thoroughly.

IX. **Business from the Floor:**

(A) Ken noted one option that will be an agenda item for the May Executive Committee is to bring back the quarterfinals on the state level in all team sports beginning with the 2016-17 school year. Staff will ask that the Executive Committee approve quarterfinals for basketball for the 2015-16 school year as a test. Staff will adjust the calendar dates to accommodate this if approval is granted.

(B) Ken asked the regions to provide Lora with their next region meeting dates.

X. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:28 p.m.