

Timeline of Facts:

AS of 8.1.2021- WHSRA rules for eligibility required that along with the NSHRA rule book requirements that students must have completed their prior year's education to be eligible to be a member for the 2021-22 season. An incomplete was considered 'Not done with prior year's work'.

For the 2021-22 rodeo season we had several students who did not submit membership paperwork in time to enter the first fall rodeo or submitted paperwork that showed they were not eligible due to the 'incomplete'. They were not allowed to enter the first rodeo.

The current NHSRA rulebooks states:

- 1) Students must be in good standing; not ruled undesirable for misconduct at school;
- 2) Minimum requirement of having made passing grades in at least 70% of the classes taken or met the state activity requirement of the state they are members in;
- 3) Each state/province may adopt their state/province academic policy for grade or credit requirements;
- 4) Students attending schools, which apply to high school credits, are eligible if he/she meets all other requirements;
- 5) Students attending a home school, private school, religious school or correspondence school are eligible for membership if the school is recognized and approved by the state/province board of education or national board of education in the state/province the members is applying for; (*contestant would need to show proof that the school they are attending is accredited and that they have met the grade requirements*).
- 6) Students attending a school that IS NOT accredited shall demonstrate composite grade-level academic proficiency on any State Board or National Board of education recognized achievement test or other mechanism as provided for in State or National Board of education rules;
- 7) Student shall be eligible if they achieve a minimum composite score or survey test score within the average or higher than average range as established by the test service utilized on any nationally normed test. Demonstrated proficiency shall be used to determine eligibility for the current rodeo season.
- 8) NHSRA has a home school form available on the NHSRA website for students to verify the type of home school they are using for the current rodeo season.

During eligibility discussions for the fall 2021 rodeo season it was discovered that the WHSRA had not asked for the 'proficiency test' for non-accredited home schoolers in recent years. We have had a very limited number of non-accredited home schooled members in the past, it had not been an issue and inadvertently missed for ALL non-accredited home schooled members.

NOTE:

The deadline for membership application forms to be submitted (uploaded on the NHSRA website) is midnight on Friday before the Rodeo Entries Close on Monday. This deadline has been in place for many years and has not been amended since implementation. NO ACCEPTIONS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED!

Here are some Bullet points of what has happened and things to consider:

- Information regarding a situation was sent from a student member to the student president, Haiden Thompson. Haiden then gave everything to the secretary. Following proper protocol.
- A student claimed to be done with school. Evidence heavily leaned in the direction that they were not done with the prior school year yet. Which was a rule for WYHSRA at that time.
- The school the student was enrolled in has a grandfathered policy in place that anyone can get on and see another student's school info unless the parent or student requests a password change. Everyone enrolled in this school knows and understands this. This has nothing to do with WYHSRA or its members.
- The student's family initiated legal action against us for trying to follow the rules we have.
- We then got legal counsel on retainer and most of the board tried to follow our legal counsel's advice to not speak about the issues out of executive session
- With trying to do what was best for all students Legal counsel advised we allow the student to rodeo until cleared up as it could become an issue that some or all of the rodeos would not count for anyone from the fall if the law suit was not dropped or won.
- Treat all students of similar schooling programs the same to not set a precedent.
- In order to follow rules in the rule book all non-accredited home schooled students had to turn in a proficiency test by January 1. The board was very lenient and made sure that they had plenty of time to do this
- Mid December we did receive the final grade transcript (dated 10.15.21) from the student that showed they had then finished last year's school.
- Due to the transcript Lawyer said we could prove the cheating and that they were not done with school prior to the start of the rodeo season.
- Legal counsel said It will be a long expensive drawn out process as is any and all court cases.
- We did not want bankrupt the association or use all of the kids award or National money, etc.
- The court case could also potentially not allow WY to take a HS National team to Nationals with the probability of it still being in court.
- So in the best interest of the WHOLE association it was decided to not pursue legal action at that time. Right or wrong this was the board's decision on this specific matter. Not every board member agreed with this. The board was between a rock and a hard spot. The board was very upset with the position that they were placed in by the student and family's perceived attempt to cheat and the rumors and allegations that were being made by others by not knowing the facts.
- The board decided to not look at any transcripts for members from the fall as they felt it wasn't fair to the accredited students that they were the only ones being truly held accountable due to the fact that if you are in non-accredited school your parent can say you are done and passing even if you are truly not. The board appreciates the non-accredited home school students and parents who are doing things honestly and correctly.
- Just because this was the decision does not mean that we are going to throw all of the rules out or "bend" rules for anything and everything .
- If any one feels like they need to bring a lawsuit then go ahead and we will deal with it and sorry to say we may not have awards for the National team or a national team depending on the nature of the law suit.
- We are not going to continue to be subject to foul language, bashing, threats, etc.

- Please know that the draw for the rodeo is and has been recorded every week and if you would like to see it please see Shelly.
- All rodeo entry receipts have authenticity marks in them and cannot be falsely replicated.
- Thank You to the parents who are teaching their kids what is right and not trying to cheat.
- For anyone that feels like the National Director, president, secretary, or board members are not doing a good job or you feel you can do better please let that person know and you can have the position! Please remember these are volunteer positions.
- Please know that the President only votes on matters if there is a tie
- Please note that the secretary is not a voting member. They are the person that just carries out the rules that the board sets
- For anyone that would like the National Director position, the secretary position, president position or a board position you are more than welcome to them!
- If you need more info, have other concerns, or questions please come straight to the source so you get the actual facts.
- Board minutes are on the website (9.1.21; 9.6.21; 1.6.22 all approved & draft of 2.6.22)