



September 23, 2016

Dear WIAA Executive Board Members:

We appreciate the hard work of the Basketball Tournament Committee in attempting to find the best solution to the Basketball State Tournament. Mindful of 76% of Superintendent's desire to return to the traditional 16-Team Tournament while being told by the WIAA that such a tournament was not a financially feasible solution, the Committee's task was an unenviable one! We commend the attempt to survey the stakeholders and create a mandate to follow the will of the majority. However, we have concerns with the Committee's recommendation that the 2016-17 State Tournament follow Option B and now the WIAA Executive Board approval of this format. This decision is based solely on a survey whose results are overwhelmingly inconclusive. We believe the following cast doubt on the reliability and validity of the survey:

- 700 responses means an estimated 26% of stakeholders responded, an invalid sample size especially given the evenly split vote.
- The fact there were THREE choices made receiving a clear mandate difficult. No sample group gave a majority of their votes to Option B except 2B. The majority of stakeholders voted AGAINST Option B.
- Many voters were unfamiliar with Option A and the survey's description of it was inadequate. This is apparent when one considers the UNANIMOUS approval of Option A at last June's Committee meeting. What would account for this discrepancy? Very likely the description on the survey failed to give the voters the understanding that informed the Committee.
- To survey educators in June as school wraps up assures low participation. Again, to send out the second edition while people are overwhelmed with the start of the year may explain the underwhelming sample size.

The results of this survey do not give a clear mandate. The inconclusive survey results contrasted by the unanimous June committee vote of Option A create serious questions about the committee's recommendation and subsequent executive board decision. Option A most closely aligns with the 16-team tournament favored by the superintendents: all 16 teams meet at a marquee site maximizing the "State" experience for teams and communities.

Obviously, the sentiments of this letter do not reflect all of the boys' and girls' coaches in the state. Though the sample size is small, it appears a clear majority voted for RPI installation this year and we want to respect a clear majority decision on this issue. However, regarding State tournament format we recommend the following:

- A runoff survey between Option A and B returned a week before your next meeting. Two choices in October will likely create a more valid sample size as well as a more definitive result. It will be up to the Coaches' Associations to educate their members and increase the sample size.
- Certainly the B schools were strongly against Option A. This is most likely because their Option A Tournament would be on Tuesday and Wednesday. On Q6 of the survey, 71% supported differing formats for different classifications. The solution might be

differentiation since this is the one question that showed a preponderance of favorable votes. Perhaps the B schools could have Option B or a true 16-team tournament while the others relied on the Committee's unanimous wisdom with Option A.

We realize you have 17 other sports to consider and your time is valuable. Another survey would be prudent in spite of the added time and effort involved. We believe it is important enough to take all steps necessary to make the correct decision. We do not support or have confidence in the aforementioned survey and/or the WIAA Executive Board decision.

Respectfully,

Nalin Sood
Mountlake Terrace High School

Pat Fitterer
Retired

David Dickson
Squalicum High School

Bruce Siebol
Granger High School

Tim Gaebe
Shadle Park High School

Joe Harris
Chelan High School

Tim Kelly
Curtis High School

Keffrey Fazio
West Seattle High School

Bill Bakamus
Mark Morris High School

Gary Wusterbarth
Steilacoom High School

Dan Taylor
Kings High School

Jeff Pietz
Lakeside Nine Mile Falls High School

Andy Affholter
Granger High School

Bryan Peterson
Cascade Christian

Randy Edens
Lake Stevens High School

