

Viewpoints

Private School Students to Participate in Public School Sports in Iowa



A bill that requires public schools to allow private school students to participate in their sports programs under certain circumstances was recently signed into law in Iowa. House File 189 mandates that if a private student lives within a district, or in a contiguous district, and their school has not offered the sport in the last two years, then the student must be granted access to participate in the public sports program. The student's parent or guardian will be responsible to cover fees related to participation but private students will be charged the same amount as public students.

The law has raised concerns among some who worry that allowing this access will only serve to place a greater strain on public taxpayer supported resources. They argue that it is unfair for those who choose to opt out of public schools to then take advantage of what those public schools have to offer.

On the other hand, others believe that the costs do not outweigh the benefits. They have emphasized how the change will help students from small towns by allowing them to try new sports and gain experience on

larger teams, leading to future productivity, problem-solving skills, and relationship skills that come with participating in team sports.

For school districts, it will be important to anticipate how this change could potentially impact their budget and resource expenditures. They will also need to collaborate with private schools to ensure that eligible students are accommodated and that compliance with the law is maintained.

Iowa public schools will be required to allow private school students to compete on their sports teams

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