

# OHSAA SPORTS REGULATIONS

## Introduction

Article 5-6-1 of the Constitution grants authority to the Board of Directors to determine the contest rules and regulations for each sport.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following playing rules and contest regulations effective August 1, 2020, except as specified within this section. The Executive Director is authorized to modify these regulations when it is deemed necessary by the Executive Director, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors.

These regulations apply to all interscholastic teams and contests, including but not limited to varsity, junior varsity, reserve, junior, sophomore, freshman and 7th & 8th grade teams. **For additional regulations specifically for grades 7 and 8, see General Sports Regulation 32.**

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

### 1. Official Playing Rules and Rule Books

The official playing rules and rule books as published by the listed organization have been approved by the Board of Directors for all interscholastic athletic contests in the following sports.

CROSS COUNTRY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
FIELD HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
FOOTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
GOLF	UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
SOCCER	NATIONAL FEDERATION
TENNIS	UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION
VOLLEYBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASKETBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BOWLING	UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS
GYMNASTICS	U.S.A. GYMNASTICS
ICE HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SWIMMING AND DIVING	NATIONAL FEDERATION
WRESTLING*	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASEBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
LACROSSE (BOYS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION
LACROSSE (GIRLS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SOFTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
TRACK AND FIELD	NATIONAL FEDERATION

\*Denotes to refer to Bylaw 1-4-3 which states “Interscholastic competition shall be conducted using playing rules adopted by the Board of Directors and/or modifications or changes in sport rules are not permitted except those provided in the rule book and approved by the Board of Directors.”

### 2. Mandatory Attendance at or Participation in OHSAA-Sponsored Rules Interpretation Meetings

- 2.1) Any school sponsoring a sport recognized by the OHSAA in which a state tournament is held must have the head varsity coach, assistant varsity coach or athletic administrator attend or participate (online) in an OHSAA-sponsored state rules interpretation meeting in that sport by the communicated deadline date.
- 2.2) The deadline to complete an online state rules interpretation meeting without penalty is prior to the start of the sport’s first regular season contest.
- 2.3) To receive credit for an online state rules interpretation meeting after the first deadline, there will be a \$50 penalty assessed, with a final deadline communicated by the OHSAA office.
- 2.4) Failure to attend or participate in the sport’s state rules interpretation meeting by the final deadline shall result in ineligibility to participate in the OHSAA-sponsored tournament in that sport.
- 2.5) Those attending a meeting in person will be responsible to be in attendance within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting and remain until the conclusion of the meeting to receive credit for attendance.

### 3. Mandatory Requirement for Tournament Officials Selection

To assist in the process in determining which contest officials will be assigned to OHSAA tournament contests the following school year, schools are required to vote for officials, and coaches are highly encouraged to rate officials. Voting by athletic administrators and ratings by coaches are combined with votes from local officials associations and officiating leaders to create a composite score which develops a pool of tournament-eligible officials for the next school year. The sports in which voting is required and ratings are needed; the deadlines in which voting and ratings must be completed, and the procedures on how to vote for and rate officials are published on the OHSAA website, in the sport-specific OHSAA coaches/officials manual and

provided in memos disseminated to athletic administrators.

### 3.1) Voting by Athletic Administrators

By the established deadlines, athletic administrators are responsible for submitting a ballot listing a maximum of 15 officials in each required sport, preferably after consulting with their coaches.

Failure to participate in the required voting process will result in the school being fined \$50 per occurrence. The fine will be reduced to \$15 per occurrence if voting is submitted within 15 days after the deadline.

### 3.2) Ratings by Head Coaches

Following each varsity contest, head coaches are highly encouraged to rate the contest officials from that day's or evening's contest on a scale of 1-5. Coaches may rate as many as 50 officials throughout the season.

**Note:** The OHSAA reserves the right to modify the rating and voting procedures based on the technology that is available.

## 4. Penalties for Failure to Acquire Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit (PAPP)

High school and 7th-8th grade coaches, paid and volunteer, who do not possess the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit, which is part of the State Board of Education requirements to coach in Ohio, shall not be permitted to coach at any level at an OHSAA member school. Individuals who have applied for a Permit but who have not yet been issued a valid credential shall NOT be permitted to interact with athletes, even under the supervision of a credentialed coach, until his/her Pupil Activity Permit number is formally issued. The OHSAA encourages all athletic administrators to utilize the tools in *myOHSAA* to view and track their coaches' certification. All Board-approved and properly credentialed coaches shall be listed on the Emergency Contact form for each sport. Further, any high school coach who does not possess this Permit at the first level of the tournament shall not be permitted to coach at any level of the tournament until such time that the Permit is obtained and verification of such permit is provided to the OHSAA. Falsification of this information shall result in a coach's removal from the OHSAA tournament.

**Note:** It is the intention of the OHSAA to perform random audits of the coaching permits throughout the school year and to fine schools that have not complied with the bylaw in the amount of \$250 per coach. In addition, the penalty for a coach not listed on the Emergency Contact form is removal from coaching in the OHSAA tournament.

## 5. Penalties for Failure to Conduct Pre-Season Meetings

When it has been verified that the member school has failed to conduct a pre-season meeting(s) in accordance with Bylaw 3-1-4, the school shall be fined \$500 for each violation.

**Note:** Please refer to the OHSAA website for a checklist of items that must be covered and sample agendas and other resources to assist with compliance. Each member school shall record on *myOHSAA* the date and location of each meeting as well as the person responsible for each meeting.

## 6. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Entry/Withdraw Procedures and Draw/Seed Meeting Dates

6.1) In order for a member school to participate in an OHSAA tournament, the school principal or athletic administrator shall indicate and authorize their student-athletes' tournament participation in *myOHSAA* prior to the established deadlines.

6.2) A tournament entry/withdraw deadline will be established for each OHSAA tournament sport. The tournament entry/withdraw deadlines for each OHSAA tournament sport for the upcoming school year are listed later in Regulation 6.

6.2.1) Schools may change their tournament participation in a sport prior to the established deadline without penalty. Changes to OHSAA high school tournament participation after the established deadline will result in a monetary penalty as shown later in Regulation 6.

6.2.2) Schools that desire to enter an OHSAA tournament after the deadline and prior to noon on the Friday before the draw/seeding date may do so by filing a "Petition Letter of Entry or Withdraw" with the OHSAA Office only (not the tournament manager or District Athletic Board) provided the school has met all tournament participation requirements prior to noon on the Friday before the draw/seeding date. The OHSAA Office shall have the authority to approve or disapprove such "Petitions of Entry." Decisions to disapprove an entry may be appealed.

6.2.3) Schools that withdraw from an OHSAA tournament after the deadline may do so by filing a "Petition Letter of Entry or Withdraw" with the OHSAA Office only (not the tournament manager or District Athletic Board).

**Note:** Schools that participate in the OHSAA Middle School Cross Country Invitational or 7th and 8th Grade Track and Field State Championships shall follow all entry procedures as published and disseminated by the Executive Director's Office.

6.3) All schools that enter the OHSAA tournaments shall complete all tournament and souvenir program forms (roster, pass lists, schedule, submission of team photo, etc.) as directed.

6.4) A school coach, administrator or authorized school representative shall attend a mandatory draw/seed meeting for each sport for which a meeting is held. District Athletic Boards will provide schools with seeding information, will notify schools of the exact locations and times of the meetings and will notify schools in what sports the meetings will not be

conducted. The specific dates for each sport’s draw/seed meeting dates during the upcoming school year are listed later in Regulation 6. Common tournament draw/seed procedures shall be used as approved by the Board of Directors and listed within each sport’s tournament regulations.

- 6.4.1) Schools that fail to send a coach, administrator or authorized school representative to a mandatory draw/seed meeting and/or fail to seed as instructed will be assessed a monetary penalty for each offense as shown later in Regulation 6. See the specific tournament regulations for additional procedures and/or penalties.
- 6.5) Schools that fail to participate in a tournament (individual or team) after indicating that they will enter a tournament may be ineligible to participate in that particular sport’s OHSAA-sponsored tournament the following year.  
 Additional penalties may be assessed and may include: 1.) a monetary fine issued by the OHSAA Office; 2.) payment of officials’ fees for the missed contests; 3.) payment of the opponent’s travel expenses for the missed contests, and 4.) additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director in collaboration with the respective District Athletic Board. See General Sports Regulation 16.4 for additional information on “Failure to Appear.” The penalties rendered by the OHSAA Office may be appealed.
- 6.6) Tournament fines and penalties shall be assessed by the OHSAA Office. District Athletic Boards do not have authority to determine or set fines. All fines shall be uniform across all sports of the OHSAA.
  - 6.6.1) Fines and penalties are adopted and designed to: 1.) mitigate unnecessary costs in conducting a tournament when a school team does not attend according to the schedule adopted by the Executive Director, and 2.) provide a financial disincentive from a school making a decision to not participate in the OHSAA tournament.
  - 6.6.2) All violations of General Sports Regulation 6 for a sectional or district tournament shall be communicated to the OHSAA Office. The OHSAA Office and the District Athletic Board shall coordinate the entry and withdrawal of teams and individuals from the tournament.
  - 6.6.3) The Executive Director’s office shall prepare and invoice the school being issued the monetary penalty.
  - 6.6.4) All fines for activities in General Sports Regulation 6 may be waived by the OHSAA Office only for extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary circumstances are defined as unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence.
  - 6.6.5) Failure to pay fines prescribed in General Sports Regulation 6 shall prohibit the school from participating in subsequent tournament competition in the sport for which the fine was issued.
  - 6.6.6) Fines for tournament withdrawal after the deadline shall not be imposed in addition to other penalties listed within this sports regulation.
- 6.7) The appeals procedure shall be established and communicated by the OHSAA Office.
- 6.8) The table of fines and penalties for tournament activities is as follows:

ISSUE	PENALTY
Late entry petition to participate in tournament	\$50
Withdraw from tournament after deadline to withdraw	\$50
Failure to submit seeding information when prescribed by OHSAA regulation	\$50
Failure for coach, administrator or authorized team representative to attend the tournament draw	\$50
Failure to pay specific sport fees required for tournament participation by the deadline (e.g., golf greens fees or bowling lineage fees)	\$150 plus the cost of the sports fee
Failure to show up for tournament contest Refusal to finish a contest which has been started and suspended for any reason	\$150, plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cost of officials scheduled to officiate; plus,</li> <li>• cost of any site expenses incurred by the OHSAA; plus,</li> <li>• team expenses incurred by the opposing team, except for presale ticket revenue.</li> </ul>

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2020-21 Sport	First-Round Tournament	Tournament Entry/Withdraw	Tournament Entry/Withdraw (w/ Penalty) See 6.2.2	Draw/Seed Meeting Date (all at 2:00 unless noted)
<b>FALL SPORTS</b>				
Golf	Sectional 9/28-10/3 & 10/5-10/10	7/1-9/14	9/15-9/18	9/20
Girls Tennis	Sectional 10/5-10/10	7/1-9/21	9/22-9/25	9/27
Soccer	Sectional 10/19-10/24	7/1-10/5	10/6-10/9	10/11 (G-3:00 p.m.)
Volleyball	Sectional 10/19-10/24	7/1-10/5	10/6-10/9	10/11
Field Hockey	State Qualifying 10/19-10/31	7/1-10/5	10/6-10/9	10/11
Cross Country	District 10/24	7/1-10/5	10/6-10/9	10/11
<b>WINTER SPORTS</b>				
Wrestling (Team)	Regional 2/6	7/1-1/11	1/12-1/15	1/25-1/28*
Swimming & Diving	Sectional 2/8-2/13	7/1-1/25	1/26-1/29	1/31
Gymnastics	Sectional & District 2/15-2/27	7/1-2/1	2/2-2/5	2/7
Wrestling (Individual)	Sectional 2/22-2/27	7/1-1/25	1/26-1/29	1/31
Bowling	Sectional D II 2/7-2/14 D I 2/14-2/21	7/1-1/25	1/26-1/29	1/31
Girls Basketball	Sectional 2/8-2/20	7/1-1/25	1/26-1/29	1/31
Ice Hockey	District 2/12-3/6	7/1-2/1	2/2-2/5	2/10
Boys Basketball	Sectional 2/15-2/27	7/1-2/1	2/2-2/5	2/7
<b>SPRING SPORTS</b>				
Softball	Sectional 5/8-5/15	7/1-4/26	4/27-4/30	5/2
Boys Tennis	Sectional 5/10-5/15	7/1-4/26	4/27-4/30	5/2
Baseball	Sectional 5/15-5/22	7/1-5/3	5/4-5/7	5/9
Lacrosse	Regional Qual. 5/15-5/20	7/1-5/3	5/4-5/7	5/9 (3:00 p.m.)
Track and Field	District 5/17-5/22	7/1-4/26	4/27-4/30	5/2

\*See the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) for additional seeding information.

**7. Non-School (Non-Interscholastic) Programs or Teams**

7.1) Definitions

7.1.1) **Definition of a Non-School Program or Team** – A non-school (non-interscholastic) program, also known as a non-school team, is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is not under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school does not sponsor (one that is Board of Education- or other governing board-approved), supervise or have financial responsibility for that non-school program or team.

The non-school program or team, in which participation occurs outside the school season, may be composed of participants in grades 7 through 12 and may be operated within or outside the OHSAA member school facility. Admission may be charged and fees or expenses may be collected for training and/or competitions sponsored by that non-school program or team. It is not necessary for a coach to be present or for instruction to be given for a program or team to be considered a non-school program or team.

Examples of or names associated with non-school programs or teams are: church, intramural, rec (recreation), YMCA, CYO, AAU, USAVB, USSF, USASwimming, all-star, club, non-interscholastic or any combination of players involved in team play.

**Note:** See Sports Regulation 7.3.1.a) for the number of team members (50 percent) permitted on the non-school

team who came from the same school or who participated in that sport as a team member at another school in the preceding season. A roster is defined as all the members of the entire non-school team that would practice together or participate together in the entirety of a non-school event. “Rotating players” from the same school team is not permitted in the 50 percent player limitation.

- 7.1.2) **Definition of a School Program or Team** – A school (interscholastic) program or team is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school sponsors (one that is Board of Education- or other governing board-approved), supervises or has financial responsibility for that program or team. See Bylaw 3 for administrative responsibilities as they relate to a school program or team.

Member schools may sponsor more than one varsity or sub-varsity team for interscholastic competition, but each team must have its own schedule and may not exceed the contest limitations for that sport.

**Note:** See the specific sport regulations for participation limits for individuals.

- 7.1.3) **Definition of a School Contest** – For purposes of these regulations, the OHSAA considers a school (athletic) contest as any type of activity, which takes place during the school season, involving participants from one school against participants from either another school or from a non-school program or team during the school season, and these contests shall count in the season limitations. **Examples of school contests are games, meets, matches, previews, scrimmages, jamborees, Foundation Games or any other type of competition.** A practice involving two or more school squads is also an athletic contest unless those squads share the same board-approved coach. A game, meet or match must follow the rules as written in the playing rules adopted by the Board of Directors while competing in the state of Ohio. When competing outside Ohio against non-member schools or non-interscholastic teams, member schools shall follow the playing rules (NFHS or national governing body) as adopted by the host state Association but shall also follow all OHSAA eligibility bylaws and both general and individual sports regulations. Athletic contests may be scheduled and conducted only during the time periods as specified in the individual sport regulations.

- 7.1.4) **Definition of a Member of a School Team/Team Member (Bylaw 4-1-3)** – For purposes of these regulations, a student is a member of an interscholastic squad when the student participates in an interscholastic contest. Such status as a squad member continues until the start of the next school season in that sport.

This general sports regulation is suspended for 2020 spring sports athletes who have become members of their school teams so that those students may commence participation in non-interscholastic competition as soon as it is permissible in the spring of 2020. 2020 spring sports athletes who are already members of the school are permitted to commence participation on non-interscholastic program as soon as it is permissible.

- 7.1.5) **Definition of Coaching** – Coaching is providing instruction or being present with a team or individual during contests, tryouts, training and practices. If a school coach, whether paid, volunteer or designated, is approved for his/her coaching position by a Board of Education or similar governing board prior to June 1, the coach is accountable to all OHSAA rules and regulations beginning June 1. For additional regulations on school coaches, see Bylaw 6.

## 7.2) Regulations Prohibiting Students from Participating on Non-School Teams During the School Team’s Season

- 7.2.1) **Team Sports** – A member of a school team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may not participate in an athletic contest, a tryout or any type of team or group training or practices (including open gyms/fields) with a non-school team in that same sport during the school team’s season.

**Note:** This regulation applies to students invited to participate in a tryout, group training or practice at a college or in contests, tryouts, group training or practices with any non-school program or team.

- 7.2.2) **Individual Sports** – A member of a school team in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and wrestling may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-school team or in non-interscholastic competition in that same sport during the school team’s season.

However, athletes in these individual sports ARE permitted to participate with a non-interscholastic program in a tryout or a practice(s) during the school season.

## 7.3) Regulations Permitting Students to Participate on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team’s Season

- 7.3.1) **Team Sports (Other Than Football)** – A member of a school program or team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may participate with a non-school program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school team’s season under the following condition:

- a) The number of team members on the non-school team who came from the same school or who participated in that sport as a team member at another school in the preceding season is limited to a maximum of 50 percent of the members of a team as defined in the playing rules of the sport. Rotating players from the same school team is not permitted in the 50 percent player limitation. The 50 percent team limit is as follows:

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50% Limitation on Sport	Number of squad members
Baseball	4
Basketball	2
Field Hockey	5
Boys Lacrosse	5
Girls Lacrosse	6
Soccer	5
Softball	4
Volleyball	3

**Note:** Students who did NOT play for a school team the previous year do not count in the 50 percent limitation of that sport.

### Exceptions:

- a.) The team members limit for the sport of ice hockey shall be five (5).
  - b.) The 50 percent team limit is not in effect for the sports of basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer and volleyball from June 1 through August 31, 2020, only. Beginning June 1, 2021, the period will remain from June 1-July 31.
  - c.) The 50 percent team limit is not in effect for the sports of baseball and softball from the Friday before Memorial Day through August 31, 2020, only provided the members of the school team have completed their school team's season. Beginning June 1, 2021, the period will remain from June 1-July 31.
  - d.) A member of a school team may continue to participate with a non-school team in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the team is eliminated from the tournament but no later than Labor Day.
  - e.) Graduating seniors are exempt from the 50 percent participation limitation once their school season in the same sport has been completed.
  - f.) These regulations do not apply if the "members" of the non-interscholastic squad are all siblings (by blood or adoption) and no other player from the same interscholastic squad is a participant on behalf of the non-interscholastic squad.
- 7.3.2) **Individual Sports** – A member of a school team in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling may participate with a non-school program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school's season with no restriction when coached by either a school coach or a non-school coach.

**Notes:** Students from school teams shall not be required to attend the coaching/instruction. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

If a student-athlete quits or is dropped from a school team and joins a non-school team during the school team's season, he/she may not rejoin that school team for the remainder of the season.

### 7.4) Regulations Prohibiting Football Players from Participating on Non-School Teams

- 7.4.1) A member of an interscholastic football team may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-school team in that same sport between August 1 and May 31. Any contact football, flag football, touch football and arena football are examples of non-permissible events. (See General Sports Regulation 7.2.1 for in-season restrictions.)
- 7.4.2) A member school or program or team in the sports of football may participate with a non-school program in camps, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school team's season under the following conditions:
  - a.) They may not play in any contest including 7 on 7 (except between June 1 and July 31).
  - b.) All activities must be non-contact.
  - c.) The only football equipment the player may wear are helmets and cleats.
- 7.4.3) From June 1 to July 31, a member of an interscholastic football team may participate in an athletic contest, a tryout or any type of team or group training or practices with a non-school team. This would include 7-on-7 participation. (See General Sports Regulation 7.5 regarding coach's involvement the 10-day rule.)

**Note:** All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear are helmets and cleats.



## 7.5) Regulations Permitting Coaches to Coach Their Own Student-Athletes on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team's Season

- 7.5.1) **Team Sports** Members of a school team's coaching staff in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may coach students from their school teams from June 1 through August 31\*, 2020, without restrictions except that participation cannot be mandatory. In addition:

**\*Note:** The extension of these dates through August 31 is valid only for the 2020 summer period. Beginning with the 2021 summer period, the period of unrestricted coaching for interscholastic team sports coaches with their student athletes will return to the period from June 1-July 31.

- a.) In the sport of football, only non-contact football is permitted.
- b.) See General Sports Regulation 8.2.1 for regulations pertaining to out-of-season instruction, which is different than this regulation on coaching.
- 7.5.2) So long as the 50 percent limitation is observed (See 7.3.1), a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach approved by a Board of Education or other governing board may coach students from his/her school teams in team play at any time except during the mandatory no-contact period. See General Sports Regulation 7.3.1 for more details on the 50 percent limitation.

- 7.5.3) **Individual Sports** – Members of a school team's coaching staff in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling may coach students from their school teams outside the school (interscholastic) season. In addition:

a.) Students from school teams shall not be required to attend the coaching instruction.

## 7.6) Regulation Limiting Coaches to Coach Their Own Student-Athletes on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team's Season ("All-Star" Games)

- 7.6.1) Interscholastic team coaches may coach players from his or her school in special "All-Star" contests. Coaches are permitted to coach in "All-Star" contests if they meet all the following provisions:

- a.) Participants shall be selected from at least four schools.
- b.) All participants shall be graduating seniors or students completing their athletic eligibility at the end of the semester.
- c.) Participants shall not participate until after they have participated in their final contest for their school.
- d.) Participation during the no-contact period for coaches is permitted.

**Note on "All-Star" Games:** "All-Star" games are non-interscholastic events by rule. Student-athletes in team sports who wish to participate in one of these "all-star" competitions outside the school season may do so without jeopardy to eligibility provided the students maintain compliance with General Sports Regulation 7.3 above.

## 7.7) Exceptions to Participation on Non-School Teams for Students

- 7.7.1) **Special Olympics or Paralympics** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student may participate in tryouts and/or a contest(s) sponsored by either the Special Olympics or the United States Paralympics provided:

a.) A request for waiver is submitted to the Executive Director's Office that includes that student's name, nature of the disability and the date of the event(s) in which the student desires to compete. The waiver must be submitted by the school's principal or another senior administrator.

- 7.7.2) **National Governing Body Selection or Other Waivers** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student may participate as a member of a national team, as determined by the National Governing Body in that sport, or in a national or international competition by virtue of his/her past performance in an OHSAA sport.

**Note:** Students who wish to participate in contests/events that are not national competitions approved by a National Governing Body may, if applicable, request a waiver for such participation in accordance with the specific regulations of that respective sport.

## 7.8) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section

- 7.8.1) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations for any non-senior member of a school team may be ineligibility in that sport for the remainder of the season or the ensuing season.
- 7.8.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations for a senior may be ineligibility for all interscholastic athletics for the remainder of the school year.
- 7.8.3) The penalty for a coach for a violation of these regulations may include suspension, probation, public reprimand, a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per occurrence or any other penalty as the Executive Director may deem appropriate.

**8. Regulations for Participation in Camps, Clinics, Workshops and Programs Where Individual Skill Instruction is Provided**

The Executive Director's Office has suspended GSR 8 in accordance with the Constitution Article 6-1-9 for all interscholastic coaches during the period from June 1-August 31, 2020, provided such instruction is not mandatory.

**\*Note:** The extension of these dates through August 31 is valid only for the 2020 summer period. Beginning with the 2021 summer period, the period of unrestricted instruction for interscholastic team sports coaches with their student-athletes will return to the period from June 1-July 31.

## 8.1) Definitions

- 8.1.1) **Definition of Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – Instruction or coaching provided to a member of a school team in which the techniques and skills of the sport are being taught and the activity does **not** involve team instruction.
- 8.1.2) **Definition of Providing Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – It is considered to be providing individual skill/coaching instruction by a school coach when the techniques and skills of the sport are taught in a one-on-one or individual setting. This means instruction or coaching comes directly to a student-athlete from a coach or instructor. A student-athlete watching video/film with a coach or instructor is also an activity defined as individual skill/coaching instruction.

In the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball and the selected individual sports of cross country, track and field and wrestling, individual skill/coaching instruction is permissible when no more than **four members of a school team** or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the individual skill/coaching instruction is taking place (**see 8.3.1 and 8.3.2 below for an exception in the sport of football**).

## 8.2) General Individual Skill Instruction Regulations

- 8.2.1) Students from school teams receiving individual skill/coaching instruction from a school coach shall not be **required** to participate in sessions where individual skill/coaching instruction is provided. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or similar governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.
- 8.2.2) There is no limit on the number of school coaches that may be present when individual skill/coaching instruction is provided to student-athletes.
- 8.2.3) Non-school coaches or instructors may provide individual skill/coaching instruction to a member of a school team at any time provided the individual skill/coaching instruction does not violate any Board of Education (or similar governing board), school administrators' or school coaches' policies or the Ohio Revised Code.
- 8.2.4) Students from school teams may be used for out-of-season demonstration purposes if approved in advance by the Executive Director's Office.

## 8.3) Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction – Team Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball

- 8.3.1) **From September 1\* through May 31 From School Coaches** – Individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time prior to and after the school season and **outside the defined no-contact periods** from school coaches provided that no more than **four members of a school team** or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the individual skill/coaching instruction is taking place.

**Exception:** In the sport of football, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of a school team or individuals at any time prior to and after the school season and **outside the defined no-contact periods** from school coaches provided that no more than **seven members of a school team** or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the individual skill/coaching instruction is taking place.

**Note:** All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear is helmets and cleats.

**\*Note:** For the 2020-21 school year, the end of the summer period shall conclude on August 31, 2020. Thus, the "school year" shall be considered, for the purpose of this regulation from September 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021.

- 8.3.2) **From June 1 through August 31 From School Coaches** – Individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of a school team or individuals at any time from school coaches provided that instruction is not mandatory. For additional coaching opportunities permitted from school coaches between June 1 and July 31 (August 31 for 2020 only), see General Sports Regulation 7.5.1.

**Exception:** In the sport of football from June 1-August 31, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of a school team or individuals from school coaches provided that instruction is not



mandatory.

**Note:** All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear is helmets and cleats.

8.4) Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction – Individual Sports of Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Track and Field and Wrestling

8.4.1.) Individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time from either school or non-school coaches or instructors.

8.5) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section

8.5.1) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a member of a school team shall be ineligibility for interscholastic athletics for a maximum of one year.

8.5.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or similar governing board shall be suspension from participation in camps, clinics, workshops and programs where individual skill/coaching instruction is provided to members of the school team where employed for a maximum of one year and any other penalties in Bylaw 11-1-2, Penalties, as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director's Office.

**9. Conditioning, Weight Training and/or Physical Fitness Programs**

9.1) **Definition of a Conditioning, Weight Training or Physical Fitness Program** – These programs include specific training for strengthening the body, developing the cardiovascular system, improving flexibility and agility and do **not** include specific sports skills training or instruction.

9.2) **Specific Regulations**

9.2.1) These programs may be conducted at any time and are not a violation of OHSAA Bylaws and Regulations so long as no coaching and instruction of sports techniques and skills is provided.

9.2.2) These programs may have oversight by any individual approved by the Board of Education or governing body including coaches, provided the oversight by coaches of members of a school team in their sport in conditioning and physical fitness programs does not occur during a designated no-contact period.

9.2.3) Equipment used in playing a sport is prohibited in these programs.

**Exceptions:**

a.) Mats may be used for safety purposes.

b.) Cross country and track and field athletes may be directed in aerobics, stretching exercises and running, but interval training, sprinting and specific drills are prohibited.

c.) Sticks may be used in field hockey and ice hockey.

9.2.4) Weight rooms and machines may be utilized.

9.2.5) These programs may not be conducted for a select group of students (example: members of the football team only).

**Notes:** Students from school teams shall not be required to attend these programs. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

**10. Open Gymnasiums or Facilities**

**Member Schools**

10.1) **Regulations**

10.1.1) A school may open its athletic facilities for unstructured free play provided the activity is supervised by a school employee who may remove participants or spectators for disciplinary reasons.

10.1.2) The school may designate the sport or sports that will be played during the free play period, but may not limit participation to a select group of students from within the school. The school may also designate the grade levels involved and may limit participation to students enrolled in the school.

10.1.3) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.

10.1.4) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted to any student who is not enrolled and in that school district.

10.1.5) A coach, paid or unpaid, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.

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- 10.1.6) Mandatory attendance at open gymnasiums or facilities is not permitted.
- 10.1.7) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.
- 10.1.8) It is not a violation for the coach or supervisor to participate in unstructured free play in the open gym or facilities.
- 10.1.9) Member schools may restrict individuals from observing the open gym activity.

### 10.2) Penalty for Violation

- 10.2.1) A squad member who violates the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
- 10.2.2) A coach who violates any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be prohibited from involvement for one year in any open gymnasium or facilities programs in or out of school.
- 10.2.3) A school which permits use of athletics facilities in violation of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

## Non-School

### 10.3) Regulations for School Squad Members (Bylaw 4-1-3)

A school squad member may participate in unstructured free play at non-school athletic facilities without jeopardizing athletic eligibility providing there are no violations of the following regulations:

- 10.3.1) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.
- 10.3.2) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted to any student who is not enrolled in that school district.
- 10.3.3) A coach, paid or volunteer, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic team is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 10.3.4) Mandatory attendance at non-school facilities is not permitted.
- 10.3.5) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.

### 10.4) Penalty for Violation

- 10.4.1) A squad member who participates at a facility where there is one or more violations of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
- 10.4.2) A school coach who is responsible for causing a violation of any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations by a squad member may be prohibited from involvement in any open gymnasium or facilities program in or out of school for one year

## 11. Mandatory No Contact Periods — Coaches

- 11.1) Any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education to coach basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, soccer or volleyball is prohibited from providing coaching, providing instruction or supervising conditioning and physical fitness programs or open gyms to members of a school team in their sport for the period of time starting with the first day after the school's last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition.

**Note: The Executive Director's Office has suspended GSR 11.2 in accordance with Constitution Article 6-1-9 for all interscholastic coaches in the spring team sports of baseball, lacrosse and softball and for the winter team sports of ice hockey and basketball for the period from August 1-August 31, 2020, only.**

**EXCEPTIONS** — Activities which may be conducted by a coach with members of a school team in their sport during the mandatory no-contact period include: **all-star contests**; awards ceremonies; fund-raisers; providing oversight during weight training; verbal contact with underclass athletes for the purpose of reviewing the season that just concluded and goal setting for the next season; verbal contact with a senior athlete for the purpose of facilitating the college recruitment process; contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum (ex.: physical education courses such as weight training, fitness, etc.); contact as a certified athletic trainer involved with athlete rehabilitation and treatment, pick up and return of school-issued equipment, and attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

**PENALTY** — Any coach who violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations may be prohibited for one calendar year from out-of-school season contact with athletes from the school where employed. A school whose coach violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

## 12. Cheerleader Pyramids and Acrobatic Routines

### 12.1) Regulations for OHSAA Tournaments:

- 12.1.1) Pyramids and mounts by cheerleaders are prohibited. Individuals may not stand on another's shoulders or support another individual in any type of mount.

12.1.2) Mini trampolines are prohibited.

#### 12.2) Penalty

In OHSAA-sponsored tournaments, individual cheerleaders violating the regulations shall be removed from the field or court immediately.

#### 12.3) Recommendation

It is recommended that schools adopt the same regulations for cheerleading activities at regular season contests sponsored by schools.

### 13. Ejection Procedures for Schools

After a contest official provides electronic notification of an ejection, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator, who shall have seven days to respond to the notification. If no response has been received after seven days, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator a second time, and the athletic administrator shall be given seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the second 7-day period lapses, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's principal, who shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the third 7-day period lapses (21 total days), the OHSAA shall electronically notify both the principal and athletic administrator one final time, and the school shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the fourth 7-day period lapses (28 total days), the OHSAA shall assess the school a \$150 fine per unanswered report.

**Note:** It is the responsibility of each member school to notify the OHSAA Office each time a coach or player(s) has been ejected from a contest played out of state within seven days once the team has returned to the school. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being fined \$150 and subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

### 14. Ejection for Unsporting Conduct (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)

#### 14.1) Players

Any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

In the sport of football, a player disqualified for flagrant personal fouls other than fouls in Rule 9, Section 4 Articles 1, 2 and 3-j, shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. Such fouls will not carry the automatic one game suspension. The disqualification for these fouls may be extended through the next scheduled game at the same level of the disqualification by the OHSAA Football Administrator or his/her designee. Video of these fouls is required to be sent (preferably via an email) to the OHSAA Football Administrator or his/her designee within 48 hours of the contest. The OHSAA Football Administrator may add a one game suspension upon review.

In the sport of wrestling, any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until two regular season/tournament contest points or two event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

Any player ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests (two in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

In the sport of wrestling, any player ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until four regular season/tournament contest points or four event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

**Note:** The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact."

A student who has been declared ineligible for two games (one in football; see wrestling policy above) may be on the sidelines/team bench, accompany and/or travel with the team but may not participate in pregame warmups and may not wear a team warmup or game uniform while on the sidelines/team bench, accompanying and/or traveling with the team. When ejection or disqualification of a player results from illegal substitution in baseball, softball or basketball, the two contest ineligibility does not apply.

Any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct during a scrimmage or preview shall be ineligible for all scrimmages or previews for the remainder of that day. If a scrimmage occurs prior to the season, the player shall also be ineligible for the first regular season contest (previews are only permitted prior to the first regular season contest).

If a scrimmage occurs after the first regular season contest, the player shall be ineligible for the next regular season or OHSAA tournament contest.

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student participates.

A student who is ejected or disqualified a second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A student who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Executive Director. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

**Note:** When national playing rules (see the specific national playing rules) refer to a disqualification for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation, this is considered an ejection as referenced in this regulation.

#### 14.2) Coaches

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the remainder of that day. In the sport of wrestling, any coach ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until two regular season/tournament contest points or two event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

In addition, the coach shall be suspended from coaching for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football; see wrestling policy above) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and shall be fined \$100.00. In addition, the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association's "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course, which must be completed no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's "Season Ends" date and can be taken at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

Any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests (two in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

In the sport of wrestling, any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until four regular season/tournament contest points or four event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

**Note:** The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact."

Coaches ejected for fighting shall be fined \$100.00, and the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association's "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course, which must be completed no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's "Season Ends" date and can be taken at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

Any coach ejected for unsporting conduct during a scrimmage or preview shall be ineligible for all scrimmages or previews for the remainder of that day. If a scrimmage occurs prior to the season, the coach shall also be ineligible for the first regular season contest (previews are only permitted prior to the first regular season contest). If a scrimmage occurs after the first regular season contest, the coach shall be ineligible for the next regular season or OHSAA tournament contest.

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year.

On the day of the ejection, a coach who has been disqualified shall be ejected from the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, including electronic communication with team members, managers and other coaches during the remainder of the contest. The coach must return to the locker room or team bus or leave the premises. The coach shall not go to the spectator area.

The penalty for failure of the coach to comply with the ejection regulation shall result in the forfeiture of the contest.

If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited.

After the initial ejection and suspension, a coach who has been suspended from coaching for the next contest(s) may attend the next contest(s), but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

A coach who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory confer-

ence with the Executive Director at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with Bylaw 11.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

### 15. Participants Leaving The Playing Area — Spectators Entering the Playing Area

No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'playing area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'spectator area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the 'playing area' and enters the 'spectator area' of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

- 15.1) The student-athlete's privileges to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be revoked and the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year.
- 15.2) The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future happenings.
- 15.3) No spectator at any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'spectator area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'playing area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a spectator leaves the 'spectator area' and enters the 'playing area' of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:
  - 15.3.1) The OHSAA shall recommend to the member school sponsoring the contest that the individual shall be denied admission to any contests sponsored by the member schools of the OHSAA for a period of time to be determined in consultation with school administration and the Executive Director's Office.
  - 15.3.2) The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future happenings.

### 16. Tournaments

#### 16.1) Recognized and Emerging Sports

- 16.1.1) As specified in Bylaw 1-5-1, a recognized sport is one adopted by the Board of Directors and for which the OHSAA sponsors a tournament.
- 16.1.2) While also a recognized sport, an emerging sport may be adopted by the Board of Directors. The emerging sport category was designed to provide an OHSAA tournament for a sport, while also establishing parameters to help facilitate growth of the sport. While in the emerging sport category, the sport shall be conducted as a "recognized" sport as follows:
  - a.) All applicable OHSAA bylaws and general sports regulations shall be adhered to.
  - b.) Specific sport regulations shall be developed and adopted.
  - c.) A process for training and registering contest officials shall be developed/ continued and a director(s) of officiating development shall be hired.
  - d.) Tournament regulations shall be developed and adopted.
  - e.) A process for assigning officials to tournament contests shall be developed/continued and adopted.
  - f.) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to suspend compliance with General Sports Regulation 16.2, Divisions Determination (251 schools needed to add a second division).
  - g.) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to approve regulations, tournament regulations and/or tournament procedures that help the growth of the sport and/or ensure the sport maintains financial solvency. Among the possible considerations are: 1.) Schools may be assessed an annual fee to participate in a tournament series; 2.) Schools may be provided no or limited reimbursements to participate in a tournament series, and 3.) Stipends for sites to host tournament contests may be limited. **Note:** There may be other considerations that are not listed.
- 16.1.3) The Board of Directors may conduct a review to determine if the sport shall continue in the emerging sport category. Among the items the Board may consider for moving the sport out of the emerging sport category is whether a minimum of 150 schools sponsor teams or individuals in the sport.
- 16.1.4) Boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse and dual team wrestling shall be Emerging Sports for the **2020-21** school year.

#### 16.2) Regulations for Sponsoring and Conducting

OHSAA high school tournaments will be sponsored and conducted in divisions according to the number of schools sponsoring a team in the recognized sport.



**Team Sports**—Those that require a certain number of players to form a team. Presently, those sports are baseball, boys and girls basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, boys and girls lacrosse, boys and girls soccer, softball and volleyball.

**Individual Sports**—Those that involve primarily participation and scoring by individuals and in which team scoring could be obtained by totaling the efforts of individuals. Presently, those sports are boys and girls bowling, boys and girls cross country#, boys and girls golf, gymnastics, boys and girls swimming and diving, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls track and field and wrestling.

The minimum number of individuals required for a team designation\* follows:

Bowling	5	Swimming and Diving	7
Cross Country#	5	Tennis	4
Golf	4	Track and Field	9
Girls Gymnastics	3	Wrestling	7

\*The number for a team designation has been selected to reflect either the minimum number of participants needed to score in a contest or the number of participants needed to compete in at least half of the contest’s events.

#**Note:** See the Cross Country Tournament Regulations for the procedures utilized for determining team designation in the sport of cross country.

**Divisions Determination**—The number of divisions in OHSAA high school tournaments in a sport shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournaments the preceding year or years, depending upon the sport.

Number of Teams Participating in Tournaments	Divisions
250 or less	I
251-500	I, II
501-750	I, II, III
751 or more	I, II, III, IV

Sports tournament changes relative to adding a division or discontinuing a division or adding a tournament or discontinuing a tournament may be made only after the number of schools has been higher or lower for two successive years.

**EXCEPTIONS:**—In football and wrestling, the Board of Directors may schedule tournament play in divisions other than specified in the table above.

**Note:** Bylaw 2-1-1 indicates that in team sports, schools are permitted to enter only one team in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments and that in individual sports, schools are only permitted to enter the maximum number of individuals in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments as prescribed in the respective sports’ playing rules and/or tournament regulations.

**16.3) School Assignments—Divisions**

After the number of divisions is approved by the Board of Directors, schools are assigned to high school tournament divisions based upon the specifications in Bylaw 2-1-2.

The number of schools assigned to each division shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournament either the previous year or two years earlier, with each tournament division to have as equal number of teams as possible.

**EXCEPTIONS:** In all sports, except football, a school sponsoring a sport is eligible for tournament participation regardless of regular season performance. The top 10 percent of football-playing schools based on enrollment will be placed in Division I of the football tournament. The remaining schools will be divided as evenly as possible and placed into six additional football divisions based on enrollment. Each of the seven divisions shall qualify 32 teams to the OHSAA tournament.

**16.4) Failure to Appear and School Closures – OHSAA Tournament Contests**

Teams and competitors shall be expected to play tournament contests at the scheduled time, date and location.

“Closure,” “closed” or “school closing” shall mean that a local school or school district’s board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school has canceled all high school classes and/or school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to inclement weather; a strike; a natural or technological/man-made disaster; an issue deemed catastrophic or an emergency\*, or the local health authority has canceled all high school classes and school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to a specific public health/safety concern.

\***Note:** A local school or school district may be open but a local school or school district’s board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school may also determine that it is unsafe for its school’s team to travel to the site of the tournament contest.

The following tournament regulations apply to team (16.4.1) and individual (16.4.2) sports unless national playing rules address “failure to appear” or school “closures”:

**16.4.1) Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball, Dual Team Wrestling**



If a team “fails to appear” without notifying the opposing team, officials and/or site management or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament contest, the space on the bracket may be declared vacant. A “forfeit” shall be declared, and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition.

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/tournament schedule.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament contest within 48 hours of a tournament contest(s) in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament contest(s) for the schools thus affected.

**Note:** In the event a school is not closed but unforeseen or extenuating circumstances arise within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/ tournament schedule.

#### 16.4.2) **Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Track and Field, Individual Wrestling**

If a team or individual participant “fails to appear” or is not ready to compete at the time of their scheduled competition, the team or individual participant shall be disqualified and removed from the event or tournament competition.

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the tournament shall proceed as scheduled.\*

**\*Note:** The Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, reserves the right to delay or reschedule a tournament competition when all factors related to the severity of the situation are considered and provided it is practical to delay or reschedule such competitions.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament competition within 48 hours of a tournament competition in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament competition for the schools thus affected.

#### 16.4.3) Information on any changes regarding OHSAA tournaments will be posted on the Association’s website (OHSAA.org).

#### **A Note on Public Health Issues**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ohio Governor, Ohio General Assembly, Ohio Department of Health and/or the local health district will offer guidance as to whether or not to close a school or university due to a public health issue. Local decisions can also be made by the local health authority or each board of education/governing board. Closures are not recommended except in extreme circumstances.

#### **Help Links**

These resources are provided to guide operations during this Covid-19 pandemic.

- Ohio Department of Health – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home>
- Centers for Disease Control – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- National Athletic Trainers Association – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.nata.org/practice-patient-care/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness and Response: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/planning/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Preparedness for All Hazards: [https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/documents/ahpg\\_final\\_march\\_2013.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/documents/ahpg_final_march_2013.pdf)
- Ohio Department of Health Guidelines and Publications: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/home/>

#### **17. Athletic Uniforms**

Uniforms worn by participants in a high school athletic contest must conform to the playing rules adopted by the OHSAA for that sport. In general, any lettering or emblems on uniforms must pertain to the school name, school nickname, indi-

individual's name, the sport, drug use prevention, sportsmanship, ethics or integrity or be of a patriotic nature and provided it does not violate the rules of the sport in regard to location. Any visible manufacturer's logo on a uniform or undergarment must conform to the rules adopted by the national rules committee for that sport. However, if there is no specific rule, the maximum size is 2 1/4 square inches with no dimension exceeding 2 1/4". Additional regulations are indicated within the playing rules of the sport and may be included in the individual sport's regulations.

#### Head Decorations and Headwear

Refer to the National Playing Rules of the particular sport to determine what head decorations or headwear are permissible.

**Exception:** In the event a head coach represents to the referee in advance of the start of the competition that a player wishes not to expose his/her uncovered head, the referee shall approve a covering or wrap which shall not:

1. Fundamentally alter the sport;
2. Be abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other participant;
3. Be attached in such a way that it is likely to come off during play, and
4. Be deemed to be unsporting/offensive.

For other exceptions not addressed above, school administrators and/or head coaches shall contact the OHSAA sport administrator via email well in advance of the competition date to discuss if a waiver is available and, if so, the details of the waiver process.

**Note:** If there are any concerns about head decorations or headwear well in advance of the start of competition on that day, contest officials shall approach the head coach (or assistant coach if the head coach is not available) to address the issue.

### 18. Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Date

An athlete who has not participated for a school in a given sport that season must cease all non-interscholastic competition in a given sport by a sport-specific date in order to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition provided applicable bylaws and regulations have been followed. The sport-specific date (e.g. deadline) to cease all non-interscholastic competition is listed in that specific sport's regulations published elsewhere in these regulations.

In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in an individual sport (bowling, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling) and who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in that sport in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed.

### 19. Non-Recognized Sports

There is no bylaw that requires a school to comply with all OHSAA bylaws and applicable sports regulations when conducting interscholastic athletics programs in sports which are not recognized, (not recognized means a sport that is not one of the OHSAA tournament sports – See Bylaw 1-5-1 for a complete list of the current Board of Directors adopted "recognized" sports).

Schools are asked to register a non-recognized sport with the OHSAA but are not required to comply with eligibility standards for students in those sports. A local school district could, however, require participants in non-recognized sports to meet certain eligibility standards and conform to certain sports regulations.

Catastrophe insurance under the OHSAA plan for Recognized and Emerging sports will not be available for non-recognized sports. Schools are offered an opportunity to purchase catastrophe insurance coverage for non-recognized sports under a separate plan.

### 20. Regular Season Participation Limitation Penalty

A team that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of contests permitted) or participates in regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests in the respective sport is subject to the penalties outlined in Bylaw 11, **which will include denial of participation in the OHSAA tournament.** Athletes from sub-varsity teams may not be used to replace the varsity team in the OHSAA tournament.

An athlete who exceeds the regular season participation limitation (periods, quarters, halves, or contests) as specified in the individual sports regulations becomes an ineligible athlete. The athlete is ineligible for further regular season competition if the violation occurs prior to the end of the season or tournament competition if the violation occurs during the last regular season contest in the sport concerned. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 10.

Should a team in an individual sport exceed the regular season participation limitation but a specific individual athlete on that team did not exceed the individual participation limitation, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

Should a team in an individual sport participate in a regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests but a specific individual athlete on that team did not participate in a contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

### 21. Transportation To and From Interscholastic Contests

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education or other governing board of a member school to provide for the safe transportation of student-athletes and other contest participants to and from athletic events. The OHSAA Catastrophe Accident Insurance Policy covers team or group travel directly to and from a covered event. A covered event is defined by the OHSAA (the authorized policy holder) as any regular-season (includes scrimmages and previews) or tournament competition in an interscholastic athletic event in an OHSAA-recognized sport, sponsored by the Board of Education or governing board of a member school. Travel must be supervised by staff members or designated representatives of the member school.

Therefore, it is recommended that schools require student-athletes and other participants in interscholastic athletic events to travel with their school squads in school-authorized carriers. It is not recommended that students be released to travel with parents or other persons; however, permission to make alternative travel arrangements remains the purview of the Board of Education/governing board of the member school. In the event that such alternative arrangements are approved, it is strongly recommended that the Board of Education secure proof of insurance from those who will be providing the transportation.

## 22. Interscholastic Scrimmage

- 22.1) An interscholastic scrimmage is defined as a contest in sports in which the rules of the sport are not required to be followed in all respects. In all sports with the exception of golf, the length of the scrimmage is limited to a maximum of three hours per squad or individual per day for grades 9-12, and two hours per squad or individual per day for grades 7-8.
- 22.2) A scrimmage may involve any number of teams from various schools. A scrimmage does not count in the won/lost record for any school involved in the scrimmage.
- 22.3) No admission of money, materials or supplies may be charged for a scrimmage. Voluntary donations of supplies or money may be accepted at a scrimmage but cannot be required for admission.
- 22.4) This regulation prohibits two or more school teams from practicing together unless it is a scrimmage or unless both schools have the same board-approved coach.
- 22.5) A scrimmage must be considered the same for all schools involved.
- 22.6) See each sports' specific regulations to determine if that sport permits scrimmages. The regulations for those sports in which scrimmages are permitted will specify whether scrimmages must be completed prior to the first regular season contest or scrimmages may be held after the first regular season contest.

## 23. Preview

- 23.1) A preview is an athletic contest played according to the adopted rules for a sport except that one-half the length of a regular season contest is permitted. Previews are permitted only in those sports in which scrimmages are allowed. Refer to the specific sport relative to length of preview and when it may be scheduled.
- 23.2) A preview may be scheduled and played only starting with the first day after the official start date of coaching and ending with the date of the first regular season contest of the teams involved. See the Football Regulations for the exception to this regulation. A preview does not count in the won/lost record.
- 23.3) When a preview is scheduled, admission may be charged.

## 24. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Curfew Regulations

The priority when making the decision to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a contest is the safety of the student-athletes, coaches/school administrators, parents/fans and officials.

- 24.1) No tournament contests/events shall start later than 11:00 p.m.
- 24.2) When deciding whether to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a tournament contest/event, the tournament manager must consult with the school administrator/designee. Items to consider in the decision:
  - 24.2.1) The estimated time to complete the contest.
  - 24.2.2) The travel time of all schools involved.
  - 24.2.3) The current and expected weather conditions.
  - 24.2.4) The availability of the officials.
  - 24.2.5) Other events scheduled at the host site and the participating schools.
- 24.3) In the case of unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, the following factors shall be used to develop a tournament contest/event contingency plan:
  - 24.3.1) Overnight accommodations.
  - 24.3.2) A list of all parties involved and local emergency telephone/cellular numbers.
  - 24.3.3) Plans established by the participating schools' emergency plan.

**Note:** A sample tournament contest/event contingency plan is posted on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org).

**The OHSAA recommends that all member schools develop an athletic contest/event contingency plan for use during the regular season.**

### 25. Sunday Contests

Sunday contests are permitted by the Board of Directors. Local Board of Education policies and administrative decisions will be determining factors.

### 26. Exhibition Competition

Any event or competition involving students representing member schools may involve only students who are eligible in all respects insofar as age, enrollment and attendance, scholarship, residence and individual sports limitation. So-called “scratch” or “exhibition” competition permitted or conducted by any school could result in ineligibility for athletes and suspension of the school.

**Exception:** The Board of Directors may authorize competition in events within specific sports in order to accommodate students with disabilities without affecting team scoring in those sports.

### 27. Team Member

A student who has participated in an interscholastic athletic contest representing a school.

### 28. Team Play

Any activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player (2-on-2, 2-on-1, 3-on-2, 3-on-3, 4-on-4, 5-on-5, etc.).

### 29. Pick-up Games

Unsupervised, unstructured contests in which there is no adult planning, scheduling or organization involved.

### 30. Interrupted Contest

If an interscholastic contest (game, match, meet, etc.) is interrupted for any reason beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority, the contest shall be resumed from the point of interruption. **EXCEPTION:** Those sports which have a specific procedure for determining the outcome of an interrupted contest: e.g., baseball, football, lacrosse, soccer and softball.

### 31. Regular Season No Contests/Tournament Forfeits

Any scheduled regular season contest which is not started shall be considered a “no contest.” A “no contest” shall not be included in won-lost records.

Any tournament contest in which a team fails to appear for reasons other than those outlined in Sports Regulation 16.4 or a team has been removed from the tournament in accordance with Bylaw 11-1-2, Penalties, shall be considered a “forfeit.” Should a “forfeit” occur, the “forfeit” shall be included in won-lost records and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition.

### 32. Grades 7 & 8

32.1) A student shall not participate in more than one interscholastic contest on any one day unless permitted by specific sports regulations. **EXCEPTIONS:** baseball, basketball, softball, volleyball, tennis. (See specific sport regulations.)

32.2) Sports Season Waiver — Schools, leagues or conferences may adjust seasons to accommodate school teams because of the lack of availability of physical facilities or personnel. Proposed changes in seasons shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director and include the proposed dates of the 7th & 8th grade season not to exceed the length of the interscholastic season for the sport concerned. All other regulations regarding contest limitations, required practice time and coaching requirements shall be followed.

32.3) 7th & 8th grade students may not practice with, participate on the same team with or compete against 9th through 12th grade students.

**Note:** 7th & 8th grade students in the sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and wrestling may practice at the same facility, at the same time as 9th through 12th grade students and under the supervision of the same coaching staff so long as there is no head-to-head competition or physical contact.

32.4) Students below the 7th grade may not practice with or participate with 7th through 12th grade students.

32.5) It is strongly recommended that the coaches of 7th & 8th grade sports complete the OHSAA rules interpretation meetings for the sports they are coaching.

### 33. Penalties

PENALTIES for violations will be administered in accordance with Bylaw 11 if not otherwise stated.

## CONCUSSION REGULATIONS

### Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to Concussion and Concussed Athletes and Return to Play Protocol

It is important for all individuals involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review

their responsibilities in protecting students. Further both students and parents have responsibilities in this area as well.

**Note:** It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that students are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all individuals involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors adopted a sports regulation which incorporated the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules related to concussion recognition and management. On April 26, 2013, legislation adopted by Ohio's General Assembly on concussion and head injuries in youth sports became effective. On February 14, 2013, the OHSAA Board of Directors mandated that these regulations become effective on April 26, 2013, for the remainder of the spring sports season and thereafter. This OHSAA regulation, as amended to incorporate this recent legislation, now reads:

Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest by either of the following:

- 1) The individual who is serving as the student's coach during that practice or competition.
- 2) An individual who is serving as a contest official or referee during that practice or competition.

### RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

If a student is removed from practice or competition due to a suspected concussion or head injury, the coach or referee who removes the student shall not permit the student, **ON THE SAME DAY THE STUDENT IS REMOVED**, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or contest official is responsible. Thereafter, which means no earlier than the next day, the coach or contest officials shall not permit the student to return to practice or competition until both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- 1) The student's condition is assessed by either of the following:
  - a. A physician, who is a person authorized under Chapter 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code (OCR) to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine or surgery (M.D. or D.O.)
  - b. Any other licensed health care provider that the school district board of education or other governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school, authorizes to assess the student who has been removed from practice or competition.
- 2) The student receives **written authorization** that it is safe for the student to return to practice or competition from a physician or other licensed health care provider authorized to grant the clearance. Go to the "Sports Medicine" Section of the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) to retrieve the OHSAA's Medical Authorization to Return To Play (RTP) form.

A school district board of education or governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school may authorize a licensed health care provider who is NOT a PHYSICIAN to make an assessment and grant authorization for a student to return to participation ONLY if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider's authority to practice in Ohio:

- 1) In consultation with a physician;
- 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
- 3) In collaboration with a physician, or
- 4) Under the supervision of a physician.

**Note:** A physician or other licensed health care provider who makes an assessment or grants clearance for a student to return to participation may be a volunteer.

### COACHES REQUIREMENTS

All coaches, paid and volunteer, must possess a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit. When renewing this permit, the coach will be required to complete an online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Course**. This course is valid for three years and expires at the time the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit expires.

### CONTEST OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS

**Legislation signed into law by the Governor provides that no school "shall permit" an individual to referee interscholastic athletic contests unless the individual holds a Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has successfully completed within the last three years a training program in concussion recognition.** Therefore, all OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or **show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course** as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Courses**. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion and must be entered on the official's *myOHSAA* profile.

## STUDENT AND PARENT REQUIREMENTS

All students and their parents or legal guardians shall review and sign the “Concussion Information Sheet” which has been developed by the Ohio Department of Health and which shall be distributed by OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents shall review and sign this form each year and should keep a copy of the form. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to complete an approved concussion education course. The Concussion Information Sheet can be found here: [https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/PPE\\_2020-21.pdf](https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/PPE_2020-21.pdf)

## APPROVED ONLINE CONCUSSION EDUCATION COURSES

**The following free online training courses have been approved by the Ohio Department of Health for coaches and contest officials:**

### **National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports:**

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61151/concussion-in-sports>

This free online course is available through the NFHS. Complete a brief registration form to take the course. In addition:

- 1) Click the “order course” button to access the free concussion course. Continue following prompts. Although it may look like you will be charged for the course, there is no cost.
- 2) Once you’ve completed “Checkout,” you will be able to take the free online course.
- 3) When you have completed and passed the course, you have the option of printing a certificate of completion.
- 4) All Ohio Officials should select this option to print, retain a copy of the certificate and carry it with them to all contests.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports Online Training Program:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

**PLEASE NOTE:** Both courses offer a “certificate of completion” upon successful passage. The **NFHS course** allows organizations to search for and track coaches and other individuals such as contest officials who have completed the course, while the CDC course does not.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. *What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion?”*

The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following list of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

#### **SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit
- Cannot recall events after hit

#### **SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE**

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

### 2. *Who is responsible for administering this rule?*

All individuals who have responsibilities and duties in the interscholastic athletics environment are responsible: coaches, contest officials, administrators, students, parents and medical personnel.

### 3. *What is the role of coaches in administering this rule?*

- Coaches are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to prohibit any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms from participating in a practice or a contest.
- Coaches are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The coach is responsible for insuring that the student’s parents are notified and the student is referred to a medical professional.



- Coaches shall be aware that any student removed from a practice or a contest due to a suspected concussion or head injury shall not return to participation on the same day as the removal.
- Coaches shall possess a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit and shall take one of the approved online concussion courses upon renewal of the permit.

**4. What is the role of contest officials in administering the rule?**

- Officials are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to direct immediate removal of any student who displays these signs or symptoms. When informing the head coach about removal of an athlete, the official shall be accompanied by another (second) official if possible.
- An official shall not permit the athlete who has been removed under this rule to return to competition that same day.
- If a contest official is aware that a student has been permitted to return to competition on the same day as removal, that official shall immediately stop play and remove that student from competition and report the incident to the OHSAA.
- Note that officials are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The official is responsible for directing removal when he or she observes signs and symptoms that may indicate a student is concussed.
- All Officials shall possess either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or shall complete one of the online concussion courses which are valid for three years from the date of completion.
- At initial licensure or renewal of the OHSAA officiating permit, the official shall indicate that he or she has either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has completed one of the approved online concussion courses.
- All officials should carry with them evidence of completion of one of these options at all times while officiating a contest.
- Officials are required to submit to the OHSAA the “OHSAA Concussion Report” within 48 hours whenever a student has been removed from a contest under this regulation.

**5. What are the expectations of student-athletes in concussion management?**

- While all individuals involved in the interscholastic athletics program have a responsibility to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions, it is also the responsibility of student-athletes to recognize the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Student-athletes who exhibit symptoms such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems, have the responsibility to report these immediately to their coach and/or health care professional. Teammates also share the responsibility to report these symptoms when they are exhibited by a fellow student-athlete.
- Student-athletes shall review and sign, on an annual basis, along with their parents or legal guardians, the Ohio Department of Health’s Concussion Information Sheet found on the OHSAA website and at this link: [https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/PPE\\_2020-21.pdf](https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/PPE_2020-21.pdf)

**6. Who decides if an athlete has not been concussed and/or who has recovered from a concussion?**

- **Only** an M.D. (Medical Doctor), D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy), or another health care provider approved by the school’s Board of Education or other governing body who is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider’s authority to practice in Ohio:
  - 1) In consultation with a physician;
  - 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
  - 3) In collaboration with a physician;
  - 4) Under the supervision of a physician is empowered to make the on-site determination that an athlete has **not** received a concussion. **Even if that determination has been made, however, the student may not return to practice or competition on the same day he/she has been removed from a practice or competition** (see No. 7 below).
- If any one of these physicians or authorized medical providers has answered that “yes” there has been a concussion, that decision is final.

**7. Can an athlete return to play on the same day as he/she has been removed from a practice or competition for a suspected concussion?**

- No, under no circumstances can that athlete return to play that day.
- No coach or contest official shall allow a student to return to practice or to competition on any day after the initial removal until that student has been assessed and cleared for return with **written authorization** by a physician or licensed health care provider authorized by the school.

## GENERAL SPORTS REGULATIONS 2020-2021

- If the event continues over multiple days, then the designated event physician has ultimate authority over return to play decisions.

### **8. Once the day has concluded, who can issue authorization to return to practice/competition in the sport for a student who has diagnosed with a concussion?**

- Once a concussion has been diagnosed by a physician or other approved health care provider, only a physician or approved provider can authorize subsequent Return To Play (RTP), and such authorization shall be in writing to the administration of the school. This written **RTP authorization shall be kept at the school indefinitely** as a part of that student's permanent record. Go to the "Sports Medicine" section of the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) to access the OHSAA "Medical Authorization to Return to Play" Form.
- School administration shall then notify the coach as to the permission to return to practice or play.

### **9. What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?**

- After a clearance has been issued, the student's actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol.
- The National Federation of State High School Associations has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports: (**Note:** This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.)

## **NFHS SUGGESTED MEDICAL CLEARANCE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL**

1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as running or skating, and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
5. Full contact in practice setting.
6. Game play/competition.
  - Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
  - If symptoms recur, athlete must return to previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
  - Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)

## **QUICK LINKS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

### **Information for Coaches, Officials, Parents and Students, Plus Additional Resources –**

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/child-injury-Prevention/youthconcussions/>

### **Ohio's Return to Play Law –**

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/child-injury-prevention/resources/rtp-law>

## **ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES**

### **Nationwide Children's Hospital – Concussion Information Toolkit**

<http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/concussion-toolkit>

### **CDC Materials on Returning to School for Parents, School Nurses and Educators**

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/schools/index.html>

## **SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST REGULATIONS**

Ohio law requires additional coaching requirements for all interscholastic coaches (paid and volunteer) and new educational standards for parents and student-athletes regarding Sudden Cardiac Arrest. This law, known as Lindsay's Law, became effective beginning with the 2017-18 school year.

The OHSAA has collaborated with the Ohio Departments of Health and Education, along with other major Ohio healthcare organizations and the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology, to provide education that is relevant and easily accessible so that interscholastic coaches and the parents of our student-athletes can come into compliance with the statute.

With the leadership provided by ODH, ODE, the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology and other major Ohio healthcare organizations, we have developed our own "Ohio" materials to be used to comply with this requirement. The materials include

a short video for parents, which is posted to the ODH, ODE and the OHSAA (OHSAA.org) websites; an informational handout and a sign-off form (much like the current Concussion Form) which must be signed by parents and student-athletes and is included in the package of consent forms found in the OHSAA PPE and the paper forms; and a training video and informational handout for coaches which is posted on the ODE website and includes a completion certificate for verification. **This training will be the only acceptable coursework to meet this standard and is provided at no cost to anyone.**

The videos can be accessed through the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) under the “Sports Medicine” section. Likewise, the educational materials for parents and students, which include a short memo and video, and the sign-off forms for parents and students, are also available on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) under the “Sports Medicine” section.

### HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION AND EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

The following information should be reviewed with coaching and sports medicine staff prior to any interscholastic practice this August. Please remember that there are four OHSAA sports that have a required acclimatization period prior to the commencing of any contests or physical contact, which is the case for football. The other sports are boys and girls cross country and 7-8th grade track and field, which require a minimum of 10 days of interscholastic practice prior to any competition for a student. The following is the regulation that addresses the mandatory five-day period in football.

**Five Days of Acclimatization Required** – *Acclimatization is a period of time when players can become accustomed to the heat and humidity. Health professionals recommend at least a five-day period. All football candidates must participate in five days of pre-season, non-contact acclimatization prior to any physical contact. No pads may be worn on the first two days. Shorts, helmets, shoes may be worn. Shoulder pads may be added on day three and four, but no contact is permitted. Full equipment may be worn on the fifth day, but contact is prohibited. Candidates reporting late must participate in five days of non-contact acclimatization. This rule applies to all school teams from grades 7-12.*

All coaching and medical staff personnel shall observe the following precautions for **all sports competed outdoors and/or in a hot, humid environment:**

- **Stress to participants the importance of properly hydrating** themselves during the day leading up to the contest, and also to drink 8-to-12 ounces of water or sport drinks 20 minutes prior to the contest. This practice can help prevent problems during practice and contests.
- **Schools should have unlimited amounts of water** and sport drinks on hand during a contest, and coaches in team sports should be prepared to play a lot of players rather than just the starters.
- **Contest officials are permitted to establish predetermined breaks** during a contest, such as halfway through each period. At that time players can drink water and remove their equipment, which should also take place at halftime (the more skin that is exposed, the more cooling that can take place). This provision applies to all sports.
- **NFHS football playing rules allow the referee to shorten periods** per mutual agreement by the opposing coaches. In addition, by mutual agreement a game may be terminated at any time.
- **Contest managers are advised to monitor conditions** for others affiliated with the contest, like cheerleaders, band members, coaches, officials and especially spectators.
- **In football, if schools decide NOT to play a contest, it becomes an open date for both.** If one school desires to play but the other does not, there are no forfeits involved. Again, it would become an open date for both schools. However, schools do have the option to reschedule contests, and OHSAA regulations do permit schools to play more than one contest per week. There also are no OHSAA regulations that prohibit games from being played on Sundays. The same concepts apply to all other OHSAA sports.
- **Please review the OHSAA policy on inclement weather and lightning.** In short, upon the first indication that thunderstorm development is within 15 miles of the game site, the activity shall be suspended until 30 minutes after the storm has left this 15-mile zone. Individuals should move to a safe area until the storm has moved away.
- **Know both the Temperature and Humidity.** The greater the humidity, the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Test the air prior to practice or a game using a wet bulb, globe, temperature index (WBGT index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement. The following precautions are recommended when using the WBGT Index: (ACSM’s Guidelines for the Team Physician, 1991):

Below 64 - Unlimited activity

65-72 - Moderate risk

74-82 - High Risk

82 plus - Very high risk

The OHSAA advises careful monitoring of the weather and plans to modify training and competition including:

- 1) Modification of equipment, if applicable to the sport;

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- 2) Allowance for more frequent rest breaks and the use of shaded areas for those breaks;
- 3) Modification of practice time;
- 4) Availability of water always;
- 5) Availability of cold water immersion tubs for onsite cooling;
- 6) **If exertional heat stroke is suspected, immediate onsite cooling using cold water immersion before transport by EMS, and**
- 7) Review and practice of the OHSAA's recommended Emergency Action Plan, "*Anyone Can Save A Life*," or similar plan for all sports teams with special emphasis on the heat illness section.

### TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS AND STEROIDS

#### 1. Tobacco/Vaping

School participants (coaches, players, trainers, managers, statisticians, scorekeepers, cheerleaders, etc.) and contest officials in an athletic contest are prohibited from using any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices (e.g. vaping) at the playing site of an interscholastic contest. Penalty for violation by school participants is disqualification from that contest. Violations by contest officials shall be reported to the OHSAA.

#### 2. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

The sale of, the distribution of, or the consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is not permitted at the site of any contest involving OHSAA member schools.

#### 3. Steroids

A student who uses anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs is ineligible for interscholastic competition until such time as medical evidence can be presented that the student's system is free of anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs.

**Note:** At its September 1998 meeting, the OHSAA Board of Directors endorsed the position statement issued by the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations on the use of drugs, medicine and food supplements in interscholastic sports. The statement is as follows:

"School personnel and coaches should not dispense any drug, medication or food supplement except with extreme caution and in accordance with policies developed in consultation with parents, health-care professionals and senior administrative personnel of the school or school district.

"Use of any drug, medication or food supplement in a way not prescribed by the manufacturer should not be authorized or encouraged by school personnel and coaches. Even natural substances in unnatural amounts may have short-term or long-term negative health effects.

"In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes."

### LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

#### Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas, and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to the designated safer area:
  - a.) A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
  - a.) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen\*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
  - b.) 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed\* prior to resuming play.

- c.) Any subsequent thunder or lightning\* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- d.) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning\* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

\*At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

- 4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
- 5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

## MEDIA REGULATIONS

The Ohio High School Athletic Association develops the regulations for media coverage of all OHSAA tournament contests. Some policies shall also be in effect for regular season contests. General media regulations shall be approved annually by the Board of Directors and published separately from the *OHSAA Handbook*.

### A. Videotaping and Photographing Regulations

#### Section 1. — Regular Season Contests

- a.) It is permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests (including previews and scrimmages) of the team or individuals from one's own school. Such videotapes or photographs may be used for "in-game" coaching purposes only if it is specified in the national playing rules of the sport or in the specific sport regulations.
- b.) It is permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests (including previews, scrimmages and/or practices) of teams or individuals **not** from one's own school **only with the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s)**.

#### Section 2. — OHSAA Tournament Contests

##### Videotaping and Photographing by Participating Schools

- a.) Videotaping OHSAA tournament contests of the team or individuals from one's own school participating in the contest is permitted provided prior arrangements are made with the tournament manager, and it is done at the expense of the school involved. A maximum of **two** individuals per school are permitted to videotape.
- b.) All photographs and videos taken by school representatives of the team or individuals from one's own school at OHSAA tournament contests are for school use **ONLY**. The use of photographs or videos taken by school representatives for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited. Such videotapes or photographs may be used for "in-game" coaching purposes only if it is specified in the national playing rules of the sport or in the specific sport regulations.
- c.) It is permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph tournament contests (including practices) of teams or individuals **not** from one's own school **only with the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s)**.
- d.) It is permissible for a school or school representative to *utilize* video and photographs of tournament contests (including practices) of teams or individuals **not** from one's own school **only with the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s)**.

#### Section 3. — Regular Season and OHSAA Tournament Contests

##### Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones)

- a.) For purposes of this policy, an unmanned aerial vehicle ("UAV"), commonly known as a drone, is any aircraft without a human pilot aboard the device.
- b.) **The use of drones can only be authorized by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).** If a license is granted to an individual by the FCC for use of a drone and that authorization is verified, it is the responsibility of each local school district to establish additional policies for the use of drones during home regular season contests (including previews and scrimmages) and practices.
- c.) The use of drones is prohibited for any purpose by any persons at OHSAA tournament contests or practices beginning an hour before the scheduled start time to an hour after the contest ends. At tournament contests, if management discovers that a drone is being used, management shall attempt to locate the operator to have the drone removed from the facility area, but the contest shall not be delayed. Management shall remove anyone attempting to use a drone and/or confiscate the drone until the event has been completed.

**Note:** An exception to this policy may be made in specific cases for the OHSAA's official television partner or official photographer, provided the operator of the drone is licensed by the FCC, that authorization can be verified and the management of the tournament facility permits the presence of drones for broadcast purposes under the control of the

OHSAA.

**Videotaping and Photographing by Spectators**

- a.) Spectators taking videos or photos at OHSAA tournament contests shall not interfere with the view of a contest by other spectators, nor will spectators or their equipment take additional space in seats that have been purchased. No spectators shall be provided “media” access to videotape or photograph an event, nor will spectators and/or their equipment be permitted in any playing area. In addition, no sources of power will be provided for spectators’ video or photo equipment.
- b.) All photographs and videos taken by spectators at OHSAA tournament contests are for personal use ONLY. The use of spectator photographs or videos for **commercial purposes** is strictly prohibited.
- c.) The tournament site accepts no liability for damage or theft of spectator equipment or injury as a result of privately owned equipment.
- d.) The OHSAA reserves the right to remove violators of these policies from a tournament contest, invoke additional penalties and seek maximum legal recourse.

**B. Coaches’ and Participants’ Comments to the News Media**

OHSAA Bylaw 8, Section 2, reads in part, “Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved. When the contest begins each school waives all of its rights so far as objecting to the officials.” Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the game.

Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding other officials, the players, coaches or schools. Coaches and participants are expected to follow the same procedure and make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding not only the officials, but also the players, coaches or schools. Failure to follow this request will result in penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

**C. Use of the OHSAA Trade Names and Trademarks**

The OHSAA owns certain trade names and trademarks that are registered and protected under state and federal law. Any unauthorized use of these trade names and trademarks is strictly prohibited. Notwithstanding this prohibition, the OHSAA does issue certain non-exclusive, non-transferable limited licenses for the use of its trade names and trademarks. The OHSAA’s policies regarding these licenses can be found on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) under “News and Media.”