

October 28, 2021, OHSAA Appeals

The OHSAA Appeals Panel met with appellants on October 28, 2021, virtually through Microsoft Teams. Appeals Panel members were Phil Ackerman, superintendent of Switzerland of Ohio Local Schools; Dr. Keith Bell, former superintendent of the Euclid City Schools and Westerville City Schools; Dr. Dale Fortner, former superintendent of the Wadsworth City Schools; and Dr. Kathy McFarland, deputy chief executive director of the Ohio School Boards Association. Mr. Ackerman served as the appeals hearing officer.

Also in attendance for all or portions of the appeals: Steve Craig, OHSAA legal counsel; Bob Goldring, OHSAA director of communications and special projects; Kristin Ronai, OHSAA director of compliance; Ronald Sayers, OHSAA manager of membership and compliance; and Alexis Holderman, OHSAA membership and compliance administrative assistance.

A. Bylaw 4-4-1, Scholarship, A 12th-Grade Student, Strongsville High School (Northeast District)

A 12th-grade student at Strongsville High School did not pass five one-credits courses or the equivalent during the first grading period of the 2021-22 school year. The Executive Director's Office ruled that the student was ineligible for interscholastic athletics for the second grading period of the 2021-22 school year in accordance with Bylaw 4-4-1, Scholarship.

The student; their father, Rodney Turner; Denny Ziegler, Strongsville athletic administrator; and Chris Miller, an interested party, appealed the ruling so that the student could be fully eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Strongsville High School.

There was a motion to **deny** the appeal.

Motion passed 4-0.

B. Bylaw 4-3-3, Semesters, A 12th-Grade Student, Cincinnati Spencer Center High School (Southwest District)

A 12th-grade student exhausted their eight semesters of eligibility at the high school level during the 2020-21 school year. By operation of Bylaw 4-3-3, Semesters, the student is ineligible to compete at the high school level at any member OHSAA school. The Executive Director's Office determined that the requirements of any of the exceptions to Bylaw 4-3-3, and specifically exception 2, could not be met.

The student; their parents, Anne and Matt Maddox; and Caelan King, Spencer Center athletic administrator, appealed the ruling so that the student could be fully eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics during the 2021-22 school year at Spencer Center High School.

There was a motion to **deny** the appeal.

Motion passed 4-0.

C. Bylaws 4-9-2 and 4-9-4 #3, Recruiting, Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School (Northeast District)

The OHSAA Executive Director's Office issued penalties against Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School after being made aware of a violation of Bylaws 4-9-2 and 4-9-4 #3, Recruiting, in the sport of football after the head football coach met with students, and their parents, who were not enrolled at Villa Angela-St. Joseph and tried to influence the enrollment of the student into the school. In accordance with Bylaw 11, the Executive Director's Office suspended the coach from the first three (3) contests of the 2021-22 OHSAA post season football tournament.

The coach, Jeff Rotsky; Rytas Petraitis, Villa Angela-St. Joseph athletic administrator; Tom Carone, Villa Angela-St. Joseph president; Lorenzo Jones, Villa Angela-St. Joseph principal; and Eric Long, legal counsel for Mr. Rotsky, appealed the ruling so that the coach could be fully eligible to coach during the first three (3) contests of the OHSAA post season football tournament.

There was a motion to **deny** the appeal.

Motion passed 4-0.