

The following are the preliminary minutes from the May 20, 2026, OHSAA Board of Directors Special Virtual Meeting. The Board is expected to officially approve them at its June 11, 2026, meeting.

## OHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES (May 20, 2026)

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of Directors held a special virtual meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, that was called to order by President Stephanie Evans at 8:32 a.m.

**Board Members Participating:** Stephanie Evans, president; Randy Tevepaugh, vice president (joined at 8:43 a.m.); John Carter; Ray Hibbs; Matt Hutchinson; Tom Nerl; Mark Rose; Lane Warner; Jeff Wheeler, and Glen Gillespie (ex-officio). **Board Member Excused:** Jared Cole (ex-officio).

**Staff Members Participating:** Doug Ute, executive director; Kristin Ronai, associate executive director; Bob Goldring, John Kronour, Beau Rugg and Ronald Sayers, directors; Laura Vermilya, chief financial officer, and staff members Monroe Britton, Michael Cornathan, BJ Duckworth, Amanda Harding, Steve Hoffbauer, Alexis Holderman, Claudia Markoff, Kelly Schoenly and Lizzy Wilson.

### I. ACTION ITEMS

A. Recommendation to Approve and Adopt OHSAA Budget for 2026-27

Chief Financial Officer Laura Vermilya provided the Board with the proposed budget for the OHSAA for the 2026-27 school year that includes the Columbus office and the six District Athletic Boards. She said the annual budget is meant to guide the financial health of the organization and provide measures of accountability and transparency and was developed through a collaboration of sport administrators, department directors, district treasurers and the finance department. She noted the following key assumptions: 1.) Tournament ticket prices will remain the same, although attendance is planned at a modest decline of two-to-five percent, flat fees for hosting at high schools will remain the same and team travel stipends will remain the same; 2.) Tournament revenues are budgeted to decline minimally by one percent, while corporate sponsorships are planned to increase modestly by approximately \$100,000; 3.) Tournament expenses are budgeted to increase about two percent, and all other operating expenses are planned to increase five percent.

Ms. Vermilya said the Executive Director’s Office recommended that the Board approve the budget. The budget is as follows (shown are the anticipated final figures for the 2025-26 school year that ends July 31, 2026, and the estimated budget for 2026-27):

<u>Summary of Profits and Losses</u>	<u>2025-26 Projected</u>	<u>2026-27 Budget</u>
Tournament Revenue	\$20,556,712	\$20,274,520
<u>Tournament Expenses</u>	<u>\$17,457,600</u>	<u>\$17,737,453</u>
Net Tournament Revenues	\$3,099,112	\$2,537,066
<u>All Other Revenues</u>	<u>\$5,033,045</u>	<u>\$5,225,500</u>
Total Operating Revenues	\$8,132,157	\$7,772,566
Total Operating Expenses	\$7,363,080	\$7,709,719
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	<b>\$769,077</b>	<b>\$52,847</b>

Motion by Jeff Wheeler, second by John Carter to **approve** the recommended budget as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

B. Recommendation to Approve Tournament Divisional Dividing Lines for Winter Sports

The Board was provided with 2027 and 2028 tournament divisional dividing lines for the winter sports of boys bowling, girls bowling, boys swimming & diving, girls swimming & diving and boys wrestling and the 2027 tournament divisional dividing lines for the Competitive Balance Sports of boys basketball and girls basketball.

While the divisional dividing lines will not change, at its June meeting the Board will be asked to approve final school assignments to each division and representation once the deadline has passed for schools to request to move to Division I or to a higher division in those individual sports in which a school currently has one gender in a lower division, and it chooses to have them both compete in the higher of the two divisions.

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Director Ronald Sayers said the Executive Director's Office recommended that the Board approve the tournament divisional dividing lines as follows:

### **Boys Bowling**

Division I, 242 teams (244 males or more from October 2025 enrollments)

Division II, 240 teams (243 or less males)

Total Teams: 482

### **Girls Bowling**

Division I, 213 teams (215 females or more from October 2025 enrollments)

Division II, 213 teams (214 or less females)

Total Teams: 426

### **Boys Swimming & Diving**

Division I, 129 teams (339 males or more from October 2025 enrollments)

Division II, 130 teams (338 or less males)

Total Teams: 259

### **Girls Swimming & Diving**

Division I, 145 teams (300 females or more from October 2025 enrollments)

Division II, 145 teams (299 or less females)

Total Teams: 290

### **Boys Wrestling**

Division I, 155 teams (338 males or more from October 2025 enrollments)

Division II, 158 teams (191 to 337 males)

Division III, 155 teams (190 or less males)

Total Teams: 468

### **Boys Basketball**

Division I, 64 teams (616 males or more from October 2025 enrollments plus 2025 Competitive Balance factors)

Division II, 72 teams (417 to 615 males)

Division III, 132 teams (263 to 416 males)

Division IV, 129 teams (192 or 262 males)

Division V, 132 teams (136 to 191 males)

Division VI, 134 teams (93 to 135 males)

Division VII, 134 teams (92 or less males)

Total Teams: 797

### **Girls Basketball**

Division I, 64 teams (566 females or more from October 2025 enrollments plus 2025 Competitive Balance factors)

Division II, 75 teams (383 to 565 females)

Division III, 126 teams (251 to 382 females)

Division IV, 127 teams (179 or 250 females)

Division V, 127 teams (130 to 178 females)

Division VI, 127 teams (89 to 129 females)

Division VII, 127 teams (88 or less females)

Total Teams: 773

Motion by Mark Rose, second by Ray Hibbs to **approve** the winter tournament dividing lines as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

## C. Recommendation to Approve Modifications to the 2026-27 General Sports Regulations that Appear in the OHSAA Handbook

Members of the Executive Director's Office met to discuss changes to the General Sports Regulations that will appear in the 2026-27 OHSAA Handbook, and, at this meeting, Director John Kronour reviewed the proposed changes and said the Executive Director's Office recommended that the modifications be approved.

### 3. Mandatory Requirement for Tournament Officials Selection

#### 3.2) Voting by Head Coaches (**NEW/REPLACE CURRENT COPY**):

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

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### 7.3.1) Team Sports

(Under the Limitation of Sport listing, **REMOVE** \*In football, all activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear are helmets and cleats.)

(Under Notes, **REMOVE** current a.) and **REPLACE** with this new language):

a.) In football, no full contact is permitted. Any contact must be within number 1, A, B or C below in the contact definitions from the Football Regulations below.

#### Contact Definitions

##### 1. Unrestricted Activities

- A. Air (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Players run a drill unopposed within contact.
- B. Bags (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against a bag or other soft contact surface.
- C. Control (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the “winner” by the coach.  
Contact remains above the waist, and players stay on their feet.

##### 2. Restricted Contact

- A. Thud (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner.” Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
- B. Live Action (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Games, scrimmages and drills run in game-like conditions. These are the only times that players are taken to the ground.

(**NEW – REMOVE** current 7.4 that was shaded in gray in 2025-26 and **REPLACE** with this new language):

7.4) Tackle Football School-Sponsored Showcases or Combines – Schools that host a Showcase or Combine outside the “summer contact days” window (prior to the week of May 15 or when schools do not want to use a summer contact day) must stay within General Sports Regulations 7.9.1 and 7.9.2.

Note 1: Showcases/Combines may not have team play, including 7-on-7 or 11-on-11 play.

Note 2: Helmets and cleats are permitted.

Note 3: No full contact is permitted. Any contact must be within number 1, A, B or C below in the contact definitions from the Football Regulations below.

#### Contact Definitions

##### 1. Unrestricted Activities

- A. Air (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Players run a drill unopposed within contact.
- B. Bags (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against a bag or other soft contact surface.
- C. Control (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the “winner” by the coach.  
Contact remains above the waist, and players stay on their feet.

##### 2. Restricted Contact

- A. Thud (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner.” Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
- B. Live Action (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Games, scrimmages and drills run in game-like conditions. These are the only times that players are taken to the ground.

### 7.5.1) Team Sports (13-Day Rule)

(**NEW**) d.) In football, all activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear is helmets and cleats. Any contact must be within number 1, A, B or C below in the contact definitions from the Football Regulations below.

#### Contact Definitions

##### 1. Unrestricted Activities

- A. Air (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Players run a drill unopposed within contact.
- B. Bags (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against a bag or other soft contact surface.
- C. Control (Coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run against speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the “winner” by the coach.  
Contact remains above the waist, and players stay on their feet.

##### 2. Restricted Contact

- A. Thud (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner.” Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
- B. Live Action (Non-coach pre-determined outcome) – Games, scrimmages and drills run in game-like conditions. These are the only times that players are taken to the ground.

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7.10.1) From August 1 through May 14 From School Coaches

**(NEW)** Note: In football, all activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear is helmets and cleats.

8. Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Deadline

**(ADD NEW SENTENCE AT THE END OF THE FIRST PARAGRAPH)** Please note that this regulation to cease non-interscholastic competition prior to the non-interscholastic date is applicable to all student-athletes, both in-state students and out-of-state students who move to Ohio during the sport season.

14.1.1) Standard Ejection Policy

**(NEW)** Note 3: The OHSAA prohibits the use of any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in locker rooms, restrooms or other areas where there is an expectation of privacy. Prohibited items include cameras, cell phones, tablets and any other recording equipment. Note that the expectation for privacy can be suspended during a team celebration when all individuals are aware that the expectation for privacy is suspended. This shall be announced by a coach or administrator.

**(NEW)** 14.1.4) Baseball Ejections

Any player ejected for malicious contact 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 are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

If video is presented to the Director of Officiating, or their designee, and the video clearly shows the ejection action did not meet the NFHS definition of malicious contact, the suspension length may be reduced. The player(s) in question is ineligible until such time as the designee rules on the submitted video or the four-game penalty (two in football) has been fulfilled.

**(RENUMBER)**

14.1.4 as 14.1.5; 14.1.5 as 14.1.6; 14.1.6 as 14.1.7; 14.1.7 as 14.1.8; 14.1.8 as 14.1.9; 14.1.9 as 14.1.10, and 14.1.10 as 14.1.11)

14.1.6) (FORMERLY 14.1.5) Soccer Disqualifications **(REVISIONS)**

In the sport of soccer, a player is considered “disqualified” upon receiving a subsequent caution, or “double yellow” (NFHS Rule 12-8-2(b)) and shall be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the current contest. **(REMOVE THE REST OF THE PARAGRAPH)**

**(NEW/REPLACE CURRENT LANGUAGE)** Note: Players that receive a “double yellow” do NOT have to sit out for one subsequent contest. In addition, no ejection report is required for a “double yellow” and officials shall instead file a sportsmanship report.

14.2.1) Standard Ejection Policy **(REVISIONS)**

(Second Paragraph) Further, the coach shall be fined \$100, with the fine payable to the OHSAA no later than 14 days after the ejection report has been submitted, 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 14 days after the ejection report has been submitted and can be taken at [www.nfhslern.com](http://www.nfhslern.com).

14.2.4) Soccer Disqualifications **(REVISIONS)**

In the sport of soccer, a coach is considered “disqualified” upon receiving a subsequent caution, or “double yellow” (NFHS Rule 12-8-2(b)) and shall be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the current contest. **(REMOVE THE REST OF THE PARAGRAPH)**

**(NEW/REPLACE CURRENT LANGUAGE AND REMOVE NOTE 2)** Note: Coaches that receive a “double yellow” do NOT have to sit out for one subsequent contest, nor do they have to pay the \$100 fine and take the NFHS class. In addition, no ejection report is required for a “double yellow” and officials shall instead file a sportsmanship report.

17.2) School Assignments – Divisions

Under Football — The top 72 **(REMOVE)** percent) football playing schools . . .

19.7) **(NEW)** Sixth-grade students may NOT participate on 7th and 8th grade interscholastic teams.

Motion by Tom Nerl, second by Jeff Wheeler to **approve** the proposed modifications to the General Sports Regulations as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

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### D. Recommendation to Approve Modifications to the 2026 Football Regulations that Appear in the OHSAA Handbook

Director Beau Rugg reviewed proposed modifications to the football regulations that will appear in the 2026-27 OHSAA Handbook and said the Executive Director's Office recommended that the modifications be approved. Most of the modifications reflect date changes or were made to provide clarity. Some modifications: 1.) Ohio will utilize an experimental kickoff modification that would enhance player safety by eliminating the need for many re-kicks and 2.) The division playing date assignments for state championship games have been set for the next three years.

Motion by Matt Hutchinson, second by Lane Warner to **approve** the modifications as presented.

Motion passed 9-0.

### E. Recommendation to Approve Continued Use of an Appeals Panel for 2026-27 School Year

The OHSAA Constitution permits the Board of Directors to appoint an Appeals Panel that will have jurisdiction over appeals pertaining to all rulings made by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office, including student eligibility. The Article also says that decisions by the panel will be final, and bylaws cannot be waived, amended or set aside and must be applied as written. At this meeting, Executive Director Doug Ute and Associate Executive Director Kristin Ronai recommended that the Board approve appointing an appeals panel for the 2026-27 school year, which would be the 15th consecutive year for such a panel.

Motion by Mark Rose, second by John Carter to **approve** the recommendation as presented.

Motion passes 9-0.

## II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Executive Director Doug Ute updated the Board on various items that included the OHSAA's corporate sponsorship partner, Teall Properties Group (TPG); changes to OHSAA staff job assignments and a new organizational chart; upcoming board and national meetings; girls flag football, and other issues.

Motion by Tom Nerl, second by Randy Tevepaugh to **adjourn** the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

Motion passed 9-0.

Bob Goldring, recorder.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

**(Unless noted, all meetings are on Thursdays and begin at 9:00 but are subject to change.)**

**2025-26 School Year:** June 11, 2026 (8:30 at 7 17 Credit Union Park in Akron).

**2026-27 School Year:** August 27, 2026; October 1, 2026; October 29, 2026; January 14, 2027; February 18, 2027; April 22, 2027, and June 10, 2027 (8:30 at 7 17 Credit Union Park in Akron).