



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director
Friday, June 12, 2020
Administrator Update

To: OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director

Good afternoon to each of you as we head into a great weekend. While the 2020-21 school sports' seasons have ended, schools have been permitted to open their facilities for competitions in "low/non-contact sports" and for skill training/conditioning for "contact sports." The efforts by school districts, administrators and coaches to do this safely is commendable and an important step in returning fall sports on schedule.

COVID-19 Issues/Updates

Previous Guidance: Just a simple reminder that Guidance Documents recently sent out were just that: guidance. While events taking place in/on school facilities often are interpreted to be OHSAA-regulated – they are not. Everything is restricted under rules/regulations/policies of local school districts and current Governor and Department of Health orders.

Restart: While we remain 'on the outside looking in' as it relates to the "Adult & Youth Sports Leagues" advisory group (<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/advisory/Sports-Leagues-Advisory-Group.pdf>), we do have communication with the Governor's/Lt. Governor's offices on a regular basis. While we are not represented on this advisory group or part of its development of guidance, we are able to provide input but generally after guidance is already developed. We can only provide the information to you as quickly as we receive it, but it does appear that the recommendations will be going to the Governor's office soon to provide updates to permit more open opportunities for what currently are being defined as "Contact Sports." We will continue to provide them to you as soon as they are available. The biggest challenge remains that so many non-school teams/events/programs utilize school facilities. While we understand the importance of returning sports and the strong desire for coaches and student-athletes to get back to competing, we also are trying to give schools time to assure the safe opening of their facilities. It remains the opinion of this office that school sports should have the same opportunity to SAFELY open that non-school sports ("club/travel/etc.") have. There remains no separate designation between 'youth/summer sports' and 'school sports.' In other words, whether it is a group of high school players from School "A" playing a baseball game or a Pony League team, they all fall under the Governor's same orders.

I anticipate that recommendations will be made in the near future to open opportunities for competitions for contact sports (those defined by the Governor's previous orders). While we are not aware of any confirmed dates, the advisory group is working on restrictions/recommendations to permit them.

Fall Sports: We remain optimistic that fall sports will begin on schedule. While there remain many unknowns and anything may change overnight, communications with the Governor's office continue to reflect uncertainty with attendance. We anticipate guidance on this soon and, at the time of this communication, we believe attendance at events will likely follow some of the recent guidance for fairgrounds, etc., for indoor/outdoor 'grandstand' seating. Emphasis remains on "uncertainty," but this at least gives you a chance to start looking at ways in which you could structure seating at fall events.

NFHS Playing Rule Modifications: Soon, athletic directors and coaches will receive modifications from NFHS playing rules to accommodate the impact of COVID-19. For example, with recommendations that athletes should not share water bottles, towels, etc., a normal 60-second timeout may require more time to meet the purpose of the timeout. This would not be possible without modifications to the actual playing rules. The NFHS Rules Committees are working on these necessary modifications to keep each sport consistently officiated and conducted while understanding the changes that need to be made without being put into situations of just 'allowing exceptions.'

Transportation: This is a continued topic of discussion both for transporting students to and from school to transporting teams and marching bands to games. It is way too early to give guidance, but we will provide it as soon as we know.

Fan Attendance: This is everyone's concern, especially considering how limited attendance could also have serious consequences to athletic department revenues. Nothing, of course, is etched in stone, but most guidance for venues that have plans to reopen so far show restrictions on attendance. I would recommend at least planning on different models for this.

OHSAA Cutbacks/Savings: The OHSAA continues to do its part in evaluating every process, identifying ways in which we can cut various items and change the way we are doing things without reducing services to our members. Printing/ mailing costs are a high expenditure for the Association, and we are looking at many ways in which we can be more efficient. Besides significant salary and benefit cuts to our staff that were previously mentioned, some of our cost-savings measures will include transferring some of our printed materials to online resources. Keeping you updated on a few of those changes:

Pocket Calendars: *While many do use these, we have decided this is an item that we will not print this year at least and results in a savings of thousands of dollars in savings.*

OHSAA Handbook: *The handbook WILL continue to be printed but will now be printed in-house and in an 8 ½ x 11" format. Converting it to this format and printing in-house actually saves a great deal.*

The OHSAA Wall Calendar: *We have received a tremendous amount of feedback that schools do utilize this and we will continue to print this at least through this year.*

OHSAA School Directory: *While this has been 'in the making,' the hard copy of the traditional OHSAA School Directory will now be entirely online through the OHSAA Staff Management and not be printed and mailed. The link is: <http://officials.myohsaa.org/Outside/SearchSchool>.*

Athletic Trainers Bill passes House Vote

You may have read that HB 484 passed the House of Representatives this week. This bill, that still must pass the Senate, modernizes rules and regulations for athletic trainers for the more than 2,300 licensed athletic trainers in Ohio. Here is a little more of what it means for you: <https://local12.com/news/local/ohio-athletic-trainers-bill-passes-house-vote-cincinnati>

Compliance Issues – Important!

Dr. Debbie Moore has announced her retirement effective June 30. Due to vacation time, she may be out of the office prior to that. As we all know, compliance issues heat up tremendously in the coming weeks. Secondly, Kristin Ronai will also be on maternity/FMLA leave for an extended period of time and we have a staff member currently on layoff. We continue to put serving you as our top priority through all the various issues we have faced, but we must urge patience. You can also help us by:

- Getting eligibility requests in as early as possible, especially on Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1 requests.

- Make certain that all Exception 1 requests are completed correctly. Review these carefully before submitting. Most notable exclusions/errors are:

- * Missing dates, especially the 'date of transfer.'
- * Affidavit is not notarized.
- * Submissions that clearly do not meet requirements of the Bylaw typically due to the student-athlete being the only one making the move (those cannot be approved).
- * Failure to submit correct NEW voter registration and Driver's License from the NEW address along with the affidavit.

- Take time to view information at the following VERY helpful links:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20200529AdministrativeUpdate.pdf>

<https://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources/referendum-voting>

<https://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility>

Odds & Ends

OIAAA Summer Institute: The OIAAA Summer Institute is being conducted as a Zoom Conference on June 16-18 and registrations are still being taken. Just go to www.oiaaa.org for information. A great opportunity for great learning opportunities.

Contacting the OHSAA: The OHSAA staff is here to serve you. For contact information, visit this link: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Contact-Us>.