



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Thursday, August 6, 2020
Administrator Update

TO: OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
FR: Bob Goldring, Interim Executive Director

Below are general updates and reminders to share related to our upcoming fall sports seasons. Please disseminate this information to the appropriate personnel on your staff.

OHSAA Cross Country Updates

The OHSAA has clarified with the Governor's Office and Ohio Department of Health that the sport of cross country has been removed from the list of contact sports. That means that schools are permitted to conduct school vs. school competition beginning Monday, August 24. Schools are reminded that there is a 10-day minimum requirement of practices for all student-athletes prior to any competition being permitted. The OHSAA recommends that schools consider holding smaller events. Additional recommendations on how to conduct a meet safely are posted on the OHSAA website here: <https://bit.ly/CovidXCRecs>.

Yesterday (August 6), we announced that the OHSAA Cross Country Invitational has been cancelled. The event was originally scheduled for August 15 at Fortress Obetz, and we look forward to holding the state championships at that facility later this fall.

Students Participating on Non-School Teams Becoming a Member of the School Team

A student does not become a member of a school team until the student actually participates in a school contest (e.g. scrimmage, foundation game, regular season contest, etc.). Thus, a student may participate as much as they would like "non-interscholastically" because the student has not yet joined the school team. **However**, every sport has a non-interscholastic date. So if a student who has not yet competed in a contest for the school team participates on or after the non-interscholastic date for that respective sport – while realizing the student may still join the school team "late" – the student who has participated on the non-interscholastic team on or after the non-interscholastic date is not permitted to participate in the OHSAA postseason in that sport . . . thus, they can only participate for the remainder of the regular season. Said another way, the non-interscholastic date for each sport indicates that students can continue to participate in non-school sports, but they eventually have to join the team and stop participating on that date. The non-interscholastic dates for 2020 fall sports are:

August 24 – Football	September 8 – Girls Tennis
September 7 – Field Hockey, Soccer and and Volleyball	September 28 – Cross Country and Golf

Additionally, it is not when "practice" starts that requires a student to stop participating with the non-school team, but rather when the student participates in a school contest. Some students can still practice and participate non-interscholastically because they have not yet participated in a school contest. Be advised that participating non-interscholastically AFTER the student has competed for the school team can create an eligibility issue.

Bylaw 4-7-2 Transfer, Exception 9 – Part 1

We are receiving several questions about transfers, such as non-public schools dropping sports and students transferring in order to play the sport at their residential public school. The COVID-19 pandemic has clouded the fact that students who attend non-public schools which drop a sport or all sports do not even have to transfer. State law permits the students to participate at their residential public school if the non-public school does not offer the sport. If students wanted to transfer, the students may be able to use Exception 9 of the Transfer Bylaw (if they meet the exception) to transfer to their residential public school. Please review the information and, if you believe the student meets the exception, complete the form and submit to Ronald Sayers (rsayers@ohsaa.org) in our office. The form can be found here: https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/Bylaw4-7-2_Exc9.pdf.

Bylaw 4-7-2 Transfer, Exception 9 – Part 2

We have also received many inquiries regarding students who transfer from their RESIDENTIAL public school to a community school. If these are students who would be considered to have “transferred” (they are students who already established high school eligibility) – and while state law permits students who attend a community school to have a participation opportunity at their residential public school – these students, if they are transferring from your high school to a community school, must meet a transfer exception to have full eligibility at your school. This would also fall under Exception 9 of the Transfer Bylaw. Be advised that once a student utilizes Exception 9 (if applicable) in order to continue full participation at the residential public school after transferring to the community/STEM school, the student may not use the same exception to transfer back to the residential public school. The student very likely will not have full eligibility if he/she desires to transfer back to the residential public school from the community school.

Additionally, students who were open enrolled to a school and transfer to a community school would have to use the exception to transfer their participation opportunity to the residential public school. These students would have no eligibility at the school in which they had open enrolled.

And More on the OHSAA Transfer Bylaws

As of today, there are no adjustments to the transfer bylaws found in Bylaw 4-7 with the exception of the waiving of the consequence for any 2020 spring sport athlete who may have participated in a scrimmage in boys and girls lacrosse, baseball or softball. Those students, if they should transfer, shall have full eligibility insofar as transfer is concerned for the spring sports season only in 2021.

Adjustment to OHSAA Scholarship Bylaw

As a reminder, the OHSAA Office has temporarily suspended strict compliance with Bylaw 4-4-1 as it relates to high school students required to have received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses or the equivalent during the immediately preceding grading period and Bylaw 4-4-5 as it relates to 7th-8th grade students required to have received passing grades in a minimum of four of those subjects in which the student received grades during the immediately preceding grading period. This means that all students entering grades 7-12 will be eligible for 2020 fall sports insofar as academic eligibility is concerned.

As a reminder, students enrolled in high school for the first grading period, whether the learning is virtual, in person or blended, are required to take and to be passing five one-credit courses or the equivalent to maintain eligibility during the second grading period. The 7th-8th grade requirement is four passing subjects. OHSAA Office will no doubt be reviewing this requirement to determine if potentially suspending strict compliance with this Bylaw is appropriate.

Reminder on Suspension of August No-Contact Periods

This is a reminder that the OHSAA Executive Director’s Office (in accordance with Constitution Article 6-1-9) suspended General Sports Regulation 11.2 for all interscholastic coaches in the spring team sports of baseball, lacrosse and softball and for the winter team sports of basketball and ice hockey for the period of August 1-August 31, 2020, only.

Preseason Meetings with Student-Athletes and Parents

This is a reminder that Bylaw 3-1-4 remains in place and that a mandatory preseason fall sports meeting must be held with student-athletes and parents no later than two weeks after the beginning of each sports season. Due to COVID-19, we are encouraging all such meetings to be conducted online. If social distancing can be maintained, or multiple smaller groups used (one for each fall team), in-person meetings can be utilized but are not necessarily encouraged. Please read Bylaw 3-1-4 for more details. Additional reminders regarding the meetings will also be forthcoming from our Membership Services team. The OHSAA Office has again developed sample meeting agendas and a preseason meeting PowerPoint presentation that are welcome (but not required) to be used for your meetings. See the School Resources area of the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) for more information.

Preparticipation Physical Examinations

Bylaw 3-5-1 remains in place as it relates to the requirement that a form signed by a medical examiner, student-athletes and their parents – certifying the student-athlete has been cleared for athletic participation by a medical examiner – must be on file for all student-athletes before any candidate for a team may participate in a practice. The forms must be certified by the medical examiner no less than once every 13 months. In addition, this bylaw requires that all consent forms – there are four of these – be signed by the student and parents. Please review Bylaw 3-5-1 for more details.

Heat Acclimatization and Exertional Heat Illness Prevention

Please review this section in the OHSAA Handbook (following the Concussion Regulations and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Regulations) with your coaching and sports medicine staffs prior to any interscholastic practices this August. The sport of football has a five-day required acclimatization period during the first five days of practice. All athletes joining the team at any point of the season also must participate in a five-day acclimatization period prior to any contact drills.

Mandatory Online Rules Meetings Requirements

Please remind your coaches that all 10 OHSAA fall sports have a mandatory on-line rules meeting requirement. Rules meetings have been posted in *myOHSAA*. More details will follow from the OHSAA Sport Management team to coaches. Note that this is the first time a mandatory online rules meeting is required for the sport of cross country.

Preseason Sport Manuals

The OHSAA Sport Management team is again producing preseason sport manuals in cross country, field hockey, football, golf, soccer, girls tennis and volleyball. These manuals contain all sorts of reminders and updates that all coaches and athletic administrators should review prior to the official start date of fall practices and contests. Visit the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org), where some manuals are already posted, and others will be soon.

New Free NFHS Learning Center On-Line Course Available

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Learning Center is proud to announce the addition of two new FREE course offerings – “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators” and “The Collapsed Athlete” – to assist high school coaches and administrators in preparing for the 2020-21 school year. “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators” presents material from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee's “Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities,” along with other helpful information to assist school administrators and coaches conduct workouts, practices and contests as safely as possible. “The Collapsed Athlete” teaches the importance of developing Emergency Action Plans and practicing them, including assigning responsibilities to team members. When your athlete collapses and you need to act, you will be equipped with an action plan designed to take you through the process of helping the collapsed athlete. You will be prepared when any emergency arises. For more information, visit www.NFHSLearn.com.

Fall Sports Identification Camp (ID Camp) Waiver

The OHSAA Board of Directors approved a recommendation from the OHSAA Sport Management team that will allow a student-athlete in the sports of field hockey, soccer and volleyball to use a one-time waiver during fall 2020 to attend an Identification Camp AFTER the student-athlete has participated in an interscholastic scrimmage, preview or game. Identification Camp refers to an individual workout and/or camp being offered by colleges or universities and do NOT include any other type of team showcase or non-school competition or practice. All events must take place prior to the start of 2020 fall tournament play in that sport. The recommendation comes after changes were made to the NCAA recruiting periods. The waiver form will be posted on the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) soon.

Electronic Scoring Waiver Approved in Golf

The OHSAA Board of Directors approved a recommendation from the OHSAA Sport Management team that will allow a student-athlete in the sport of golf to utilize electronic scoring. However, a waiver must be required from the OHSAA Office for contests in which the student will be responsible for inputting scores. The waiver form will be posted on the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) soon.

Athletic Administrator Welcome Packet

As was completed last year, the OHSAA Office has mailed a beginning-of-the-year Athletic Administrator Welcome Packet to the membership. The packet includes a booklet containing plenty of reminders and updates as we begin the 2020-21 school year, two 2020-21 OHSAA wall calendars, an OHSAA ‘who to contact’ directory, a directory of member school telephone numbers and a Mercy Health insert on the Youth Resiliency & Prevention Coalition.

OHSAA Virtual Administrators’ Workshop

Thanks to those school administrators who participated in the OHSAA’s annual Administrators’ Workshop that was held Wednesday, August 5. This was the first time the workshop was conducted virtually, and feedback from the format change and content has been positive.

Thank you for your attention to this information!