



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

Administrator Update – Bylaw Updates

TO: Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
FR: OHSAA Executive Director's Office

The following is information on recent Bylaw modifications that were made due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Another OHSAA Administrator Update will be sent to the membership within the next 24 hours that will include general winter sports updates.

Modifications to Bylaws Per Constitution Article 6-1-9

With the recent decision to move forward with the winter sports season as originally scheduled and, recognizing that there will likely be some cancellations due to COVID-19 despite the OHSAA's decision, the Executive Director's Office has elected to utilize Constitution Article 6-1-9 and waive strict compliance with two additional OHSAA Bylaws.

(NEW) Bylaw 3-3-1 – School Representative Must Accompany Team

This bylaw traditionally requires a principal, or representative(s) authorized by the principal, in addition to the coach(es), to be present throughout all boys and girls varsity basketball games, home and away, and this same requirement is highly recommended for ice hockey. However, due to the decreased crowd sizes and the desire to limit unnecessary travel, the Executive Director's Office has elected to waive the away game administrator attendance requirement if this arrangement is mutually agreed upon by both schools. If a visiting school representative plans to miss an away varsity basketball contest, it is the responsibility of the visiting school representative to contact the opposing athletic administrator to determine if he/she believes a visiting administrator presence is necessary. If the arrangement is not mutually agreed upon, then the visiting school representative should try to make arrangements to fulfill this away game attendance obligation. Leagues/conferences are permitted to make this blanket decision in order to reduce game-by-game communication. This modification is being utilized through the end of the 2020-21 winter sports season.

(NEW) Bylaw 4-7-2 – Sub Varsity Transfers

This bylaw traditionally requires all transfer students to become ineligible after the first 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests have been competed, regardless of the participation level of the student. However, due to anticipated cancellations and the possibility for sub varsity games not being rescheduled, the Executive Director's Office has elected to waive strict compliance with this bylaw for athletes at the sub varsity level using the following conditions:

- If an athlete participates in ANY varsity contest, then he/she is subject to the traditional transfer consequence of becoming ineligible once the varsity team completes the first 50% of the maximum allowable number of regular season contests.
- If an athlete only plays sub varsity, then he/she will become ineligible after his/her respective team completes the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests at that level. For example, if an athlete only plays JV basketball, then he/she can play the first 11 JV basketball contests, regardless of where the varsity team is in its season. Then, the student will become ineligible beginning with JV contest #12.
- If an athlete only dresses varsity but does not participate in a varsity contest, then he/she can still benefit from this modification at the sub varsity level. Once an athlete plays in a varsity contest, however, the varsity schedule takes precedence.
- This modification is being utilized through the end of the 2020-21 school year, including spring sports.

Bylaw 4-4 – Scholarship

As was previously communicated earlier this fall, the Executive Director's Office elected to waive the scholarship bylaws found in 4-4-1, 4-4-5 and 4-4-3 through the first semester of 2020-21. Whether your school has a 6-week, 9-week, semester or other grading period, all schools will be required to determine their students' eligibility (using the 5-credit equivalency {high school}/4 class {7-8 grades} standard) at the conclusion of the first semester. However, in accordance

with Bylaw 4-4-1 and 4-4-5, the grades used to determine eligibility at that time will be those earned during the immediately preceding grading period (i.e. second 9 weeks; third 6 weeks; first semester, etc.). Semester grades should only be used if your school operates on semester grading periods.

The OHSAA Office is continuing to study this issue to see if any additional modifications need to be made. It is our hope to resume previously codified scholarship standards for the second semester of the 2020-21 school year. Please note that, regardless of this decision by the OHSAA Office, each school is still permitted to continue enforcing this scholarship bylaw, or any other modified version, if you believe your school/district has implemented effective educational delivery methods which would support a student's ability to meet the bylaw's requirements. Similarly, keep in mind that the OHSAA Office has no authority to waive ORC § 3313.535, which requires each district to set a minimum GPA standard for students to be afforded a participation opportunity.

Bylaw 2 – Divisional Alignments for 2021-22 School Year

This is a reminder that, per action by the Board of Directors on October 1, 2020, current enrollment data and tournament divisions will be utilized again in the 2021-22 school year. Constitution Article 6-1-9 allowed the Executive Director's Office to make this change, and it was subsequently approved by the Board. This change means that EMIS data will be collected in October 2021 and utilized in a new two-year cycle that would cover the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years.

With some schools not offering sports along with many students transferring to non-traditional learning modules this fall due to COVID-19, the Executive Director's Office had been deliberating on how to handle enrollment data, since October 2020 is when the OHSAA traditionally would have received that data (EMIS) from the Ohio Department of Education for use in tournament representation, tournament division breakdowns and classifications for OHSAA District Athletic Board elections. It was determined that utilizing the same data for a third and final year was the fairest for all OHSAA member schools since any new data collected would likely be severely skewed and/or an unreliable representation.

With this modification, District Athletic Board elections will not be held in May 2021. Those with expiring terms will be afforded the opportunity to remain on their respective District Athletic Board for an additional year and, when elections resume in May 2022, candidates will seek a five-year term rather than six. Interim appointees on the District Athletic Boards will also be afforded the opportunity to remain on their respective District Athletic Board for an additional year and then can run for their position in May 2022. For those whose terms are expiring or are interim appointments and choose not to remain on the District Athletic Board for another year, new one-year interim appointments will be recommended to the Board of Directors for approval.

Thank you for your attention to this information and for the service you are providing our student-athletes!