



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Friday, February 26, 2021

Administrator Update

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

The following updates and reminders are being sent electronically to member school superintendents, principals and athletic administrators. Please share this update with other interested administrators and coaches on your staff.

OHSAA Executive Director to Provide Board of Directors Recommendation on Membership Dues

At the Feb. 18, 2021, OHSAA Board of Directors meeting, Executive Director Doug Ute notified the Board that a recommendation will be coming soon in regards to charging schools membership dues beginning with the 2021-22 school year. Final revenue and expense numbers from the 2021 winter tournaments will be analyzed by the staff before a recommendation is made. The membership will be informed of any updates regarding the proposal and/or Board of Directors action. As has been noted in previous editions of the OHSAA *Administrator Update*, the No. 1 goal of the OHSAA remains the same – to provide high quality services to our member schools and enrich interscholastic opportunities for students.

Governor Announces Spectator Capacity Limits to be Increased

As many of you are aware, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine announced yesterday (Feb. 25) new protocols will be coming that will increase spectator capacity to 25 percent for indoor sporting events and 30 percent for outdoor sporting events as long as facial coverings continue to be worn and other precautions are followed. **The membership is reminded that any modifications to spectator capacities cannot occur until the revised Ohio Department of Health Director's Sports Order is approved.** That is expected to take place soon, but an exact date for approval of the revised Order or the details within it are not known at this time. What also is unknown is, should this become effective soon, whether OHSAA winter tournament venues will be able to accommodate increased capacities. We will keep the membership updated when the revised Sports Order is approved.

Winter Tournament Information; Draw Links

Here are the dates and sites that have been finalized for state tournaments in the OHSAA winter sports:

- Feb. 24-27: Swimming & Diving – C.T. Branin Natatorium in Canton
- Feb. 26-27: Division II Bowling – Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl
- Mar. 5-6: Division I Bowling – Wayne Webb's Columbus Bowl
- Mar. 5-6: Gymnastics – Hilliard Bradley High School
- Mar. 13-14: Ice Hockey – OhioHealth Ice Haus in Columbus (attached to Nationwide Arena)
- Mar. 13-14: Individual Wrestling – Hilliard Darby High School (Division I), Marengo Highland High School (Division II) and Marion Harding High School (Division III)
- Mar. 11-13: Girls State Basketball – University of Dayton Arena
- Mar. 19-21: Boys State Basketball – University of Dayton Arena

For more information on OHSAA winter tournaments, including links to find tournament draws in the respective sports, visit:

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

Winter Tournament Ticketing/Hosting Contests or Events

All ticketing for OHSAA winter sports tournaments is being handled digitally by the OHSAA's digital ticketing partner, HomeTown Ticketing, and direct contact with the participating schools will come from OHSAA Assistant Director of Operations Jacki Windon. Schools were to enter facility information into myOHSAA so allotments for basketball tournament games can be established since tickets will be split 50/50 split between the participating schools. To clarify the comp tickets policy for administrators at the wrestling tournaments, these will not be issued due to capacity limitations and the volume of participants.

The **current** Ohio Health Director's Sports Order limits spectators at indoor events to the lesser of 15 percent permanent, fixed seats or 300 unless a variance was approved. The OHSAA is recommending that, at a minimum, host sites make tickets available to parents and family members with consideration also given to students. Again, additional information on ticketing is being shared directly with schools. Note that traditional student sections are not permitted in regular season or tournament contests since spectators not from the same household must maintain six-foot social distancing.

Please see these two documents for additional details and ideas for administrators to consider when hosting contests:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20210122WinterSports&TournamentsUpdate.pdf>.

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20201204administratorupdate.pdf>

As your school participates in OHSAA tournaments where spectators are permitted in team sports – either at a better seed’s facility or a neutral site – the OHSAA is requiring the principal, or a representative authorized by the principal (in addition to the coaches), to be in attendance to help monitor your crowd. Again, this requirement applies only to team sports as the winter individual sports will not have enough spectators to make this necessary.

Health Director’s Sports Order Reminders

All mandates in the Ohio Department of Health Director’s Sports Order must continue to be followed for winter and spring sports. Here is a link to the Health Director’s **current** Sports Order: <https://bit.ly/2RWa1jh>. Administrators are reminded of these mandates within the ODH Director’s Sports Order **(please share these with your coaches)**:

- Participants not in the contest **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings on the sidelines.
- Participants not in the contest and on the sidelines **ARE REQUIRED** to be socially distanced (as close to six feet apart as possible).
- Outside of game play, players are **NOT PERMITTED** to have physical contact with their teammates (such as high-fives and handshakes). Coaches and other team personnel are also not permitted to have physical contact with players.
- Non-participating players and cheerleaders in attendance **ARE REQUIRED** to be socially distanced and wear facial coverings.
- Any spectators in attendance **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings and to be socially distanced.
- Facilities/venues **ARE REQUIRED** to designate a Compliance Officer who is responsible for the compliance with the Sports Order. **Note that this becomes especially important for OHSAA tournament contests/events.**
- Disinfect and clean competition and high contact areas frequently.

Spring Sports State Online Rules Meetings in myOHSAA

2021 OHSAA state rules meetings for each spring sport (baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, track & field) have been available through the Rules Meeting icon in myOHSAA since Feb. 10, and boys tennis will be posted today (Feb. 26). The head coach, an assistant coach or the athletic administrator is required to complete the meeting prior to the final meeting date for each sport which coincides with that sport’s tournament entry/withdraw date (April 26 for softball, boys tennis and track & field; May 3 for baseball, boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse). As a reminder, a \$50 late fee will be charged to access each meeting beginning with these dates: *March 20*-boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse; *March 27*-boys tennis, and *March 28*-baseball, softball and track & field. Athletic administrators are encouraged to use the “View State Rules Meeting Attendance” link on the school’s myOHSAA account to ensure their school has received credit for these meetings prior to the final meeting dates listed above as completion of the state rules meeting is **required for tournament participation**. Please contact membershipservices@ohsaa.org if you have any questions or need assistance.

Spring Sports Schedules

Spring sports practices have either started or will be soon. Here is a calendar of important dates for the OHSAA’s spring sports:

Baseball and Softball

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 4 after practice begins (or 3 scrimmages and 1 preview)
First Contest – Saturday, March 27
Non-Interscholastic Deadline Date – Saturday, March 27
Fines Begin to Take State Rules Meeting – Sunday, March 28
Deadlines to Take State Rules Meeting – Monday, April 26 (softball);
Monday, May 3 (baseball)
Deadlines to Enter/Withdraw from Tournament – Monday, April 26 (softball); Monday, May 3 (baseball)

Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 3 after practice begins
First Contest – Friday, March 19
Non-Interscholastic Deadline Date – Friday, March 19
Fines Begin to Take State Rules Meeting – Saturday, March 20
Deadline to Take State Rules Meeting – Monday, May 3
Deadline to Enter/Withdraw from Tournament – Monday, May 3

Boys Tennis

First Day of Practice – Monday, March 8
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 1 after practice begins but before first contest
First Contest – Friday, March 26
Fines Begin to Take State Rules Meeting – Monday, March 27
Deadline to Take State Rules Meeting – Monday, April 26
Non-Interscholastic Deadline Date – Monday, April 26
Deadline to Enter/Withdraw from Tournament – Monday, April 26

Track & Field

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22
Scrimmages with Other Schools – none permitted
First Contest – Saturday, March 27
Fines Begin to Take State Rules Meeting – Sunday, March 28
Deadline to Take State Rules Meeting – Monday, April 26
Deadline to Enter/Withdraw from Tournament – Monday, April 26
Non-Interscholastic Deadline Date – Monday, May 3

Bylaw 4-7-2 -Transfer Bylaw for Spring Sport Athletes

Last May, the OHSAA Board of Directors approved a recommendation that spring sports athletes, including some who may have participated in a scrimmage, who transfer to a different school for the 2021 season **will not be held accountable to the transfer consequences in spring 2021**. This is because the 2020 spring sports season was cancelled. These students who do transfer will still be subject to the transfer consequence in any other sport in which they participate (unless they meet an exception), and they also

have to be eligible in all other respects in order to have a full participation opportunity at the new school. For questions, please contact Kristin Ronai (kronai@ohsaa.org) or Ronald Sayers (rsayers@ohsaa.org) in our compliance office.

Spring Sports Rules Modifications and Recommendations and General Requirements and Recommendations

The OHSAA staff has developed sport-specific rules modifications and recommendations and general requirements and recommendations for schools when conducting interscholastic competition in spring sports, and these documents are currently in the hands of the Ohio Department of Health for final approval. Links to the sport-specific spring sports rules modifications and recommendations and general requirements and recommendations will be available in this update soon. We thank you for your patience!

OHSAA Authority to Mandate COVID-19 Protocols/Contract Tracing Update

The OHSAA continues to receive questions about the Association's responsibility and authority to mandate and/or interpret COVID-19 protocols and restrictions. Since our role is simply to share the guidelines, **OHSAA member schools must work with their local health department when specific questions regarding protocols and restrictions arise, and the local health department will make final decisions.** Should the local health department have questions, they will contact the Ohio Department of Health for clarification.

Additionally, the OHSAA Office has received a number of questions regarding contract tracing and, again, that is something in which the local health department will make final decisions, NOT the OHSAA Office.

Ohio Schools Encouraged to Participate in University of Wisconsin COVID-19 Study

The OHSAA is encouraging member schools to participate in a University of Wisconsin research study titled "COVID-19 in Winter High School Sports." The objective of the study, conducted by UW's Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation within the School of Medicine and Public Health, is to identify the incidence of COVID-19 among U.S. high school athletes and the risk reduction procedures that schools utilized during the winter 2020-21 high school sports season. Participation entails having a high school staff member (athletic administrator, coach or athletic trainer) complete a short (less than 10 minutes) anonymous, online survey.

Specifically, the survey asks about each school's COVID-19 policies; sport start dates; sports played; the number of athletes; practices and games for each sport, and some details of COVID-19 cases in your athletes from November 1, 2020, through February 28, 2021. The survey is NOT asking schools to provide any specific information on your individual student-athletes, their private or protected health information or the names of individual students, school staff or coaches. The study was reviewed by the University of Wisconsin Health Sciences Minimal Risk-IRB. The online link to complete the survey is available here:

https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6SdgjCazjtnZzue. The deadline to complete the survey is Monday, March 15, at 5:00 p.m.

Once the results of the survey are available, the report will be shared with the National Federation of State High School Associations. It is anticipated that information collected from the study will better define the risks associated with COVID-19 among U.S. high school athletes and potentially aid local decision-making regarding the continuation of high school sports. Participation by Ohio's schools will provide vital information as we all continue to navigate the decisions to promote the health of our young student-athletes in the months and years to come.

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