



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Doug Ute, Executive Director

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

2024-25 School Year, No. 22

TO: Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators

FR: OHSAA Executive Director's Office

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

Thank You for Your Work!

Since we have reached the end of the 2024-25 school year, I want to take the opportunity as I do each year to thank all administrators for the work you do with the student-athletes at your schools. Providing students with meaningful participation opportunities and a platform to teach life lessons is the best way to create our leaders of tomorrow. Your work is no doubt difficult and challenging, but you not only impact the lives of our young people but also set them on a path for success. It's a tremendous honor to work for the OHSAA, which emphasizes education-based programs for our students, but our programs are only as good as the tremendous work you do at your schools. Thank you so much for all that you do!

I also want to thank those of you who take the time to serve as hosts for our tournaments. We could not get along without you, so please know how much you are appreciated along with your staff and community members who assist. Our OHSAA District Athletic Boards also deserve a tremendous thank you for organizing and overseeing the early rounds of the tournaments, and I also want to thank our staff's sport administrators for their great work with our tournaments.

Thank you so much again, and all the best for a great and relaxing summer!

Respectfully,

Doug Ute, Executive Director

NEW! Congratulations 2024-25 State Champions

Fall Sports

Cross Country (boys) – Mason (I); Lancaster Fairfield Union (II); Mount Gilead (III)

Cross Country (girls) – Lancaster (I); Minerva (II); Minster (III)

Field Hockey – Worthington Thomas Worthington

Football – Powell Olentangy Liberty (I); Avon (II); Columbus Bishop Watterson (III); Gnadenhutten Indian Valley (IV); Ironton (V); Coldwater (VI); Maria Stein Marion Local (VII)

Golf (boys) – Akron Archbishop Hoban (I); Kettering Archbishop Alter (II); Warren John F. Kennedy (III)

Golf (girls) – Rocky River Magnificat (I); Gahanna Columbus Academy (II)

Soccer (boys) – Cleveland St. Ignatius (I); New Albany (II); Cincinnati Indian Hill (III); Warsaw River View (IV); Cincinnati Summit Country Day (V)

Soccer (girls) – Springboro (I); Columbus Bishop Watterson (II); Bay Village Bay (III); Cincinnati Summit Country Day (IV); Cincinnati Madeira (V)

Tennis (girls) – Addison Cassidy, Mason (I singles); Pratyusha Chaudhuri/Emma Wagner, Mason (I doubles); Amiya Bowles, Bexley (II singles); Grier Peckham/Caroline Koch, Gates Mills Gilmour Academy (II doubles)

Volleyball (girls) – Cincinnati Seton (I); Cincinnati St. Ursula Academy (II); Gates Mills Gilmour Academy (III); St. Bernard Roger Bacon (IV); Mentor Lake Catholic (V); Coldwater (VI); Fort Loramie (VII)

Winter Sports

Basketball (boys) – Lewis Center Olentangy Orange (I); Westerville North (II); Louisville (III); Zanesville Maysville (IV); Cleveland Heights Lutheran East (V); Woodsfield Monroe Central (VI); Russia (VII)

Basketball (girls) – Pickerington High School Central (I); Cincinnati Winton Woods (II); Cincinnati Purcell Marian (III); Bellevue (IV); Portsmouth (V); Columbus Grove (VI); Waterford (VII)

Bowling (boys) – Ashland (I); Bellefontaine Benjamin Logan (II)

Bowling (girls) – Vandalia Butler (I); Urbana (II)

Gymnastics – Brecksville-Broadview Heights

Ice Hockey – Upper Arlington

Swimming & Diving (boys) – Columbus St. Charles (I); Hunting Valley University School (II)

Swimming & Diving (girls) – Upper Arlington (I); Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown (II)
Wrestling (boys) – Lakewood St. Edward (I); Columbus Bishop Watterson (II); St. Paris Graham Local (III)
Wrestling (girls) – Lewis Center Olentangy Orange

Spring Sports

Baseball – Lewis Center Olentangy (I); Whitehouse Anthony Wayne (II); Newark Licking Valley (III); Mentor Lake Catholic (IV); Apple Creek Waynedale (V); Berlin Hiland (VI); Minster (VII)
Lacrosse (boys) – Cincinnati St. Xavier (I); Columbus Bishop Watterson (II)
Lacrosse (girls) – Powell Olentangy Liberty (I); Columbus St. Francis DeSales (II)
Softball – Lebanon (I); Painesville Riverside (II); Dover (III); Springfield Kenton Ridge (IV); Wheelersburg (V); New Madison Tri-Village (VI); Portsmouth Notre Dame (VII)
Tennis (boys) – Greg Bernadsky, Mason (I singles); Abhinav Dandu/Jackson Clements, New Albany (II doubles); Nason Lo, Gahanna Columbus Academy (II singles); Sam Lessard/Henry Lessard, Bexley (II doubles)
Track & Field (boys) – Huber Heights Wayne (I); Brookville (II); Huron and McDonald (III)
Track & Field (girls) – Hilliard Davidson (I); Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown (II); Coldwater (III)
Volleyball (boys) – Cleveland St. Ignatius (I); Cincinnati Archbishop McNicholas (II)

NEW! Football Playoff Format to Change; Each Region to Qualify 12 Teams

Significant changes were approved for the OHSAA football tournament beginning this coming fall by the OHSAA Board of Directors during their regularly scheduled meeting last Thursday, June 12. The number of qualifiers per region will be 12 instead of 16, with the top four seeds in each region earning a first-round bye. In addition, the first three rounds of the postseason will be hosted by the higher seeded team instead of the first two rounds. The OHSAA football tournament expanded from 12 to 16 qualifiers per region from 2021-24, but feedback from the membership and conversations with stakeholders around the state led the recommendation to return to 12 qualifiers.

For more information, go here:

<https://www.ohsaa.org/news-media/articles/ohsaa-announces-changes-to-football-playoff-format>

NEW! OHSAA Extends Partnership with Hometown

The OHSAA announced last week that it has extended its partnership with Hometown to continue serving as the Association's official ticketing partner through 2031. With its headquarters in Columbus, Hometown is an all-in-one digital platform for ticketing, fundraising and event management for over 700 OHSAA member schools. The renewed agreement reflects the success of Hometown's Box Office platform and marks a new chapter of innovation following Hometown's 2024 merger with fee-free fundraising platform Schoolfundr. Under the extended partnership, Hometown will continue to provide the OHSAA and over 700 member schools with a streamlined, full-service digital solution for ticketing and event management that reduces the need for cash handling, enhances transparency through real-time reporting and simplifies game-day logistics for both school administrators and fans.

For more information, go here:

<https://www.ohsaa.org/news-media/articles/ohsaa-extends-partnership-with-hometown-for-digital-ticketing>

NEW! 2025-26 Guidance and Forms Updated in Eligibility Resource Center

To assist administrators in preparing for the 2025-26 school year, and in accordance with changes which were approved by the membership in May, the OHSAA has updated its eligibility resource center guidance and forms. Those forms and the guidance are located here: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility>. Please discard all old forms and guidance that you may have in your files since they are no longer valid. Under the Transfer Guidance, please pay special attention to the following forms/guidance which were updated:

- **Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1** (parents' bona fide change of legal residence) and the Affidavit of Bona Fide Legal Residence (ABFR) form (available at the same link as shown above). The 2025-26 version does have a few new questions, so please be sure to print out/save the new version of the form.
- **New Bylaw 4-7-5, Provisions 1 and 2** have been moved from old Bylaw 4-7-2 Exceptions 5 and 9. These new provisions reflect the ability of a student to return to the same system of private education they attended in elementary school, or transfer to the public school in which their legal custodian has resided for at least one year, respectively. The forms appear similar to prior versions, but they are in a different spot on the Transfer Bylaw Resource Center. Here are the direct links to the forms for your convenience:
 - Bylaw 4-7-5, Provision 1 (Old Exception 5):
https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/Bylaw4-7-5_Prov1.pdf
 - Bylaw 4-7-5, Provision 2 (Old Exception 9):
https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/Bylaw4-7-5_Prov2.pdf

We thank you in advance for taking the time to review these documents and, as always, invite you to contact Kristin Ronai, Associate Executive Director; Ronald Sayers, Senior Manager of Eligibility and Technology, or Lizzy Wilson, Manager of Eligibility, for answers to questions you might have regarding student eligibility.

NEW! Board Approves Athletic Enrichment Fund Donation

At its regularly scheduled meeting June 12, the OHSAA Board of Directors approved providing each member school with \$1,250 from the OHSAA's Athletic Enrichment Fund. This is the third year the Board has approved the donation after the fund was established to provide an equal financial contribution to each member high school's athletic department to assist with costs of equipment, uniforms, game transportation, officials and improving sporting behavior. Schools that return their membership cards and past due invoices by June 30 will be receiving the check from the OHSAA office in August.

NEW! Fall Statewide Meetings Schedule

The OHSAA will again conduct the annual Regional Update Meetings around the state in August and September. The two-hour meetings are intended for superintendents, principals and athletic administrators and will consist of updates, reminders and a review of key changes from Executive Director Doug Ute and other staff members within the Association as we begin the 2025-26 school year. Also in August, the Executive Director's staff will host three Administrator Workshops that are intended for new school administrators and those interested in brushing up on key OHSAA bylaws and regulations along with hearing various updates and reminders. Two of the workshops will be in-person at the OHSAA Offices in Columbus and one will be virtual. Registration information will be forwarded to the membership later this summer. All meetings will begin at 10:00. Here are the dates, sites and times for the meetings:

Regional Update Meetings

Tuesday, Aug. 19, Westerville, Quest Conference Center

Tuesday, Aug. 26, Waverly High School

Tuesday, Sept. 2, Streetsboro High School

Tuesday, Sept. 9, Findlay High School

Thursday, Sept. 11, Cincinnati Princeton High School

Monday, Sept. 15, Cambridge, Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center

Administrator Workshops

Thursday, Aug. 7, OHSAA Office

Wednesday, Aug. 20, OHSAA Office

Monday, Aug. 25, Virtual

NEW! 2025-26 Sport-by-Sport and General Sports Regulations Approved by Board of Directors

At its June 12, 2025, regularly scheduled meeting, the OHSAA Board of Directors approved changes to the OHSAA sport-by-sport regulations that will appear in the 2025-26 *OHSAA Handbook* after approving changes to the OHSAA General Sports Regulations that will also appear in the handbook during a special virtual meeting held May 21, 2025. The changes become effective August 1, 2025. Please check the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) for these updated documents later this month and then feel free to share the links with other staff members and coaches that you believe may have an interest in them.

NEW! OHSAA Staff Member to Receive NFHS Citation Award

At the upcoming National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) annual Summer Meeting in Chicago, OHSAA Director of Media Relations **Tim Stried** will be one of eight administrators from state high school athletic or athletic and activity associations across the country to receive an NFHS Citation, an award designed to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions and provided excellent service to the NFHS, state high school associations and interscholastic athletics. Stried, who began working at the OHSAA in September 2008, has been selected as the Citation Award recipient from state associations in Section 2, which includes Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and the District of Columbia. He is a graduate of Marion Pleasant High School and Bluffton University. Past recipients from the OHSAA who have received the NFHS Citation Award include current Director of Communications and Special Projects Bob Goldring and former administrative staff members Deborah Moore, John Dickerson, Duane Warns and Blair Irvin and former Commissioner Clair Muscaro.

NEW! Coach Beyond News: Free Upcoming Event and Assisting Coaches for Tryouts

Coach Beyond: Southeast Ohio FREE Coach Event on June 30

Are you a coach in Southeast Ohio looking to learn more about student-athlete mental health? Coach Beyond is partnering with the Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center to host a training on Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health on June 30 at 6:00 p.m. This training is approved to meet the PAP requirement for mental health. Click on this link for more details: <https://lifespports.osu.edu/cdn/MVESc-June-2025-1.pdf>.

Are Your Coaches already Looking Ahead to Fall Tryouts?

If your coaches are preparing for tryouts and you want to lead them with purpose and fairness, don't miss out on this resource on best practices, Tryouts: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpiLj_mm7cA.

Curious about what Coach Beyond Resources there are Beyond Mental Health Training?

Visit go.osu.edu/coachbeyond for more trainings and resources, and see why 28,000 coaches in Ohio have chosen to learn from Coach Beyond, a partnership between LIFEsports at The Ohio State University and the OHSAA designed to change the landscape of coach training and education in Ohio.

REMINDERS

Fall Coaching Dates for Practices and Start of Season

<u>Sport</u>	<u>First Practice Date</u>	<u>First Contest Date</u>	<u>OHSAA Sport Administrator</u>
Cross Country	Friday, Aug. 1	Monday, Aug. 18	BJ Duckworth (bjduckworth@ohsaa.org)
Field Hockey	Friday, Aug. 1	Friday, Aug. 15	Emily Mason (emason@ohsaa.org)
Football	Friday, Aug. 1	Monday, Aug. 18	Beau Rugg (brugg@ohsaa.org)
Golf	Monday, July 28	Monday, July 28	Monroe Britton (mbritton@ohsaa.org)
Soccer	Friday, Aug. 1	Friday, Aug. 15	Kelly Schoenly (kschoenly@ohsaa.org)
Girls Tennis	Friday, Aug. 1	Friday, Aug. 8	John Kronour (jkronour@ohsaa.org)
Girls Volleyball	Friday, Aug. 1	Friday, Aug. 15	Emily Mason (emason@ohsaa.org)

Mark The Date: OHSAA Student Leadership Conference is October 7 in Akron

The annual OHSAA Student Leadership conference will take place on Tuesday, October 7, at Firestone Community Learning Center in Akron. Student-athletes, coaches, administrators and staff from the northeast district are invited to attend this event. Registration will be available at a later date.

Hosted by the Akron Public Schools, this free conference will offer valuable leadership insights and networking opportunities. Attendance is limited to 1,000 participants, with a maximum of 15 attendees from each school. Here are additional details:

Date: Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2025

Site: Auditorium, Firestone Community Learning Center, 470 Castle Blvd., Akron, OH 44313

Check-in: 9:30 a.m.

Conference: 9:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch: Provided at no cost

Contact: Joe Vassalotti, Coordinator of Secondary Education and Athletic Administrator, Akron Public Schools (jvassalo@apslearn.org)

Thank you for your attention to this information. Have a great summer, and please contact us if we can be of service!