



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Administrator Update- Bylaw Modifications

TO: Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators

FR: Doug Ute, OHSAA Executive Director

Modifications to Bylaws Per Constitution Article 6-1-9

With the decision to move forward with the 2020-21 sports seasons as originally scheduled, and recognizing that there will likely be some cancellations as a result of this decision, the Executive Director's Office has elected to utilize Constitution Article 6-1-9 and waive strict compliance with the following OHSAA Bylaws:

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

At the May 20, 2020 Board of Directors meeting the Board voted 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 primarily 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.

Bylaw 4-4- Scholarship

The Executive Director's Office has elected to utilize Constitution Article 6-1-9 and waive the scholarship bylaws found in 4-4-1, 4-4-5 and 4-4-3 for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. We applaud the schools that have been able to uphold these standards thus far, and each school is still permitted to continue enforcing these scholarship bylaws, 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. However, this decision to waive the scholarship bylaw through the school year is being made because we recognize that quarantines, differing educational models, varying access to the internet, etc. have made this a very challenging school year for our STUDENT-athletes.

With this decision, all student-athletes will be eligible for the first grading period of the 2021-22 school year (unless your district elects to uphold the standard). After that time, students will then be required to pass the appropriate number of credits/classes in order to remain eligible for the second grading period of the 2021-22 school year.

NOTE: 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 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.

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 to not be 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 for 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 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!